



GAUTA

2016-12-27 Nr. SV4-254



## **STUDIJŲ KOKYBĖS VERTINIMO CENTRAS**

**ŠV. IGNACO LOJOLOS KOLEGIJOS**

**VEIKLOS VERTINIMO IŠVADOS**

---

**INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW REPORT OF**

**ST. IGNATIUS OF LOYOLA COLLEGE**

Grupės vadovas: Team leader:	Prof. Robert Munn
Grupės nariai: Team members:	Lex Stomp Lars Lynge Nielsen Jonas Bartlingas Kornelija Bukantaitė
Vertinimo sekretorius: Review secretary:	Ewa Kolanowska

## **CONTENTS**

<b>I. INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>II. BACKGROUND INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSTITUTION.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>III. STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>IV. ACADEMIC STUDIES AND LIFE-LONG LEARNING .....</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>V. RESEARCH AND ART .....</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>VI. IMPACT ON REGIONAL AND NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT .....</b>	<b>34</b>
<b>VII. GOOD PRACTICE AND ENHANCEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS .....</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>VIII. JUDGEMENT .....</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>ANNEX. ST. IGNATIUS OF LOYOLA COLLEGE RESPONSE TO THE REVIEW REPORT .....</b>	<b>43</b>

## I. INTRODUCTION

1. This report presents findings of an institutional review of St. Ignatius of Loyola College (hereafter also referred to as the College) organised by the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education (SKVC) and conducted in 2016 by a team of experts from Lithuania and other European countries (the Team). The review was carried out in accordance with the Procedure for the External Review of Higher Education Institutions, approved by Resolution No. 1317 of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania of 22 September 2010, and with the Methodology for Conducting an Institutional Review in Higher Education, approved by Order No. 1-01-135 of the Director of the SKVC of 25 October 2010 (the Methodology).
2. The Team received a Self-Evaluation Report (SER), additional documents as requested, and the 2016 MOSTA Evaluation Report on the College's learning resources in advance of the site visit. The site visit was preceded by a briefing session and a preparatory meeting at SKVC. The Team visited the College between 27 and 29 September 2016 where it had meetings with all key stakeholders and a tour of facilities. Subsequently, the Team met to discuss findings and agree the main conclusions and recommendations, and the review report was finalised by correspondence.
3. The self-evaluation conducted as part of the review had involved a representative group of the College's internal and external stakeholders, including staff, students and social partners. The SER was clearly structured and provided the evidence necessary for the Team to prepare for the site visit. However, some sections could have focused specifically on aspects relevant to a given criterion and incorporated relevant evidence (which was found, in some cases, in other sections or the annexes). Moreover, as with the SER for the previous review of the College, the 2016 SER was mainly descriptive rather than analytical or reflective, except for brief lists of perceived successes and challenges at the end of each of the four main areas of activity. The PEST and SWOT analyses included in the 2012–2020 and 2016–2020 Strategic Activity Plans provided a better insight into how the College perceived its strengths and weaknesses and factors affecting its development.
4. The Team explored the four main areas of the College's activity defined in the Methodology: Strategic Management; Academic Studies and Lifelong Learning; Research and/or Art Activities; and Impact on Regional and National Development. In analysing evidence, it also gave due consideration to the recommendations of the previous institutional review of the College (2013) (see below). A number of key documents underpinning strategic management (e.g. Strategic Activity Plan 2016–2020, and documents related to internal quality assurance, human resources management and research activity) have only recently been revised or adopted by the College. Thus, this report takes into account both what was in place at the time of the review and the College's potential for further development as indicated by recent and ongoing changes and the progress made so far in implementing new arrangements.
5. The Team consisted of the following members:
  - Prof. Bob Munn (team leader), United Kingdom: independent consultant on quality in higher education, with experience of reviewing higher education institutions and programmes in the UK, Estonia, Lithuania, Spain, South Africa and Saudi Arabia; emeritus professor of chemical physics and former Vice-President for Teaching and Learning at the University of Manchester;
  - Mr Lex Stomp (team member), Netherlands: Director of International Department Education, and senior lecturer at the Division of Human Movement and Education, Windesheim University of Applied Sciences; member of programme and institutional review panels in Belgium, Lithuania and Latvia;

- Mr Lars Lynge Nielsen (team member), Denmark: former Rector/Head of Faculty of Education and Director for Internationalisation, Entrepreneurship and Innovation at the U.C. Lillebaelt; former President of EURASHE, representing the European College sector in the Bologna Process; member of institutional review panels in Lithuania, Belgium, Ireland, Kosovo and Romania. Mr Nielsen was prevented by illness from attending the visit to the College, but he took a full part in the planning beforehand and the subsequent decision-making and report-writing;
- Dr Jonas Bartlingas (team member, social partner representative), Lithuania: Deputy Director, Social Affairs and Health Department, Vilnius City Municipal Government, Lithuania; member of programme and institutional review panels in Lithuania;
- Ms Kornelija Bukantaitė (team member, student representative), Lithuania: student at Mykolas Romeris University, office manager at the Lithuanian National Union of Students;
- Ms Ewa Kolanowska (team secretary), Poland: independent higher education consultant; secretary to SKVC institutional review panels and ENQA agency review panels.

## II. BACKGROUND INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSTITUTION

6. St. Ignatius of Loyola College is a non-state higher education institution situated in Kaunas. It was established in 2010 by the Archdiocese of Kaunas, the Lithuanian Jesuit Province and the JSC Orthopaedic Clinic. The College operates as a non-profit public entity whose owners or shareholders are the three founders. It provides professional Bachelor's degree programmes and conducts other activities on the basis of a licence granted by the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania in 2011. (SER, Annexes 4.1–4.3)
7. The governing bodies of the College are the General Meeting of Shareholders (GMS), the College Board, the Academic Council and the Director. The GMS, among other things, amends the Statutes of the College; appoints and dismisses Board members; approves annual financial statements; and takes decisions related to the restructuring and property of the College. The Board is composed of five members, including social partners and an external expert. In particular, it appoints and dismisses the Director; approves the strategy and annual budgets of the College; and assesses the implementation of its strategy and its overall performance. The Academic Council consists of seven members representing the College's staff and students, and social partners. Its main responsibilities include: approving study procedures and programmes; approving the internal quality assurance system and supervising its implementation; defining qualification requirements for academic positions and procedures for the recruitment and performance appraisal of academic staff; assessing outcomes of the education provided as part of degree programmes and the quality of research and art activities; adopting the Code of Academic Ethics; and making suggestions concerning the vision and mission of the College to the GMS. The Director manages the College and is the head of the institution for staff and students; takes overall responsibility for the activities and performance of the College; and reports on its activities to College bodies and to external bodies. (SER, Annex 3; Additional information provided to the Team before the site visit)
8. As stated in the 2016–2020 Strategic Activity Plan (SER, Annex 2.2), the Vision of the College is to become '*the most reputable and innovative College*'; in its Mission, the College seeks to '*conduct the studies which integrate scientific and business ideas in compliance with St. Ignatius of Loyola pedagogical paradigm*'. It aims to train highly qualified professionals who are successfully integrated into the labour market and able to participate actively in society, adhering to universal and Christian values. Education at the College is based on a Christian worldview and Christian values. It embraces the Ignatian

pedagogical paradigm as a method that encourages students' active engagement in their learning so as to enable them to acquire knowledge, while developing their critical thinking skills, independence, creativity and learning motivation, strengthening their faith and shaping their moral values. In pursuing its Mission, the College seeks to accommodate harmoniously Ignatian pedagogy and the needs of society, adopt the principles of the European Higher Education Area and integrate in the EHEA and, in broader terms, foster values of teachers and students and community spirit, and promote high standards it has set for itself (SER).

9. The main units of the College providing degree programmes are the Departments of Health, of Social Wellbeing, and of Arts. Aside from administrative and other units or positions, there are three recently established units which provide support services, the Media Centre (MC), the Centre of Future Professions (CFP), and the Business and Innovation Department (BID). The MC disseminates information and ensures access to information resources to support teaching and learning and research and development activities. The main responsibilities of the CFP include: providing career guidance to students, supporting consultancy and training activities; organising events and volunteer activities; and maintaining and promoting links between the College and graduates. The BID supports the College in establishing business entities such as spin-offs and start-ups, and in organising student practical placements. (SER; SER Annex 1; meeting with Heads of Units).
10. The College offers seven professional Bachelor's degree programmes in three areas:
  - Biomedical Sciences: Orthopaedic Technology (established in 2011); Beauty Therapy (2012); and Emergency Medical Aid (2015);
  - Social Sciences: Social Work (2013); Hospitality Management (2014); and Pastoral Care (2015);
  - Arts: Image Design (2012).

Three programmes (Orthopaedic Technology; Emergency Medical Aid; and Pastoral Care) are 'unique' programmes (not offered by any other higher education institution) in Lithuania. All the programmes are offered as full-time; study plans have been developed for a part-time option in all seven fields of study, but there is no demand for part-time programmes. (SER, and SER Annex 8).

11. The College does not provide any stand-alone lifelong learning/adult education/retraining courses. However, it offers modules of its degree programmes to those who wish to upgrade their qualifications or skills. It also has in place procedures for the recognition of vocational training credits and of competences acquired as part of non-formal and informal adult education. Both have already been used to recognise credits and competences (SER).
12. In 2015, the College had 414 students, as compared to 228 in 2013 (an increase by 82%). The increase resulted from the enrolment of students on the new programmes established in 2014 and 2015 (see above) and a steadily growing number of students in two programmes offered since 2012 and 2013, Beauty Therapy (an increase by 129%) and Social Work (a 59% increase). Enrolment levels in the other 'older' programmes had varied between 2013 and 2015. According to most recent preliminary data (September 2016), there are currently 455 students (a 99.6% increase since 2013). As compared to 2015, enrolments have grown in Beauty Therapy, Hospitality Management, Emergency Medical Care, and Pastoral Care programmes, and have declined slightly in the other programmes. (SER, Annex 9; Additional information provided to the Team before the visit)
13. A total of 72 academic and administrative staff were employed at the College in 2015. Reflecting the growing number of students, the total number of academic staff increased by

96% from 26 in 2013 to 51 in 2015 (and 66 by March 2016). Among those, 44% held a PhD degree in 2015. Currently (2016), there are 18 academic staff (9.16 FTE) employed at the College as the place of their primary employment, including 6 on a full-time basis. (SER Annex 11; Additional information provided to the Team before the visit)

14. The income of the College comes mainly from tuition fees which increased steadily as a share of the total income from 26% in 2011 to 60% in 2013 and 85% in 2015. Other sources of income include EU funds (7% in 2015) and State-budget funding (6.5%), ‘study support received from Lithuanian businesses’ (1.6%), and research, consultancy and training activities (0.2%). (Additional information provided to the Team before the visit)
15. As a result of the 2013 SKVC review, the College was accredited for only three (rather than six) years because of the review team’s negative evaluation of the area of Strategic Management. The team made a number of recommendations concerning all four areas covered by the review. In particular, it recommended that the College:

#### ***Strategic Management***

- implement management information and quality assurance systems;
- prepare a detailed Action Plan to ensure efficient operationalisation of its Strategic Plan;
- introduce a systematic method of informing all interested parties about its progress each year;
- formalise the composition and terms of reference of the Academic Council;
- introduce procedures to assure itself that it takes decisions effectively;
- strengthen its staffing base;
- supplement its processes for change management, process analysis and optimisation by an explicit process for risk management;

#### ***Academic Studies and Lifelong Learning***

- define the intended learning outcomes of the curricula more clearly, in line with the Lithuanian Qualifications Framework;
- clearly distinguish higher professional education curricula from vocational education curricula;
- strengthen the supervision and management of each study programme, including the establishment of Boards of Study;
- review the transfer of credit points from vocational education to higher education and develop appropriate regulations for such transfers;
- strengthen its engagement with modern technology in teaching;
- identify the key partners with whom it will develop permanent cooperative relationships and mutual plans;

#### ***Research and / or Art***

- encourage research and art that focus on the core disciplines that it teaches;
- establish a clear policy on when staff should use its name as their affiliation on publications;
- improve its strategic planning of research and art;
- strengthen its engagement with modern technology in research;

#### ***Impact on Regional and / or National Development***

- formalise its collaboration with social partners, future graduates, municipalities, employers, and other potential partners.

## FINDINGS OF THE REVIEW TEAM

### III. STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT

#### STRATEGIC PLANNING

#### *Alignment of the strategic plan with the institution's mission, national policies and the principles of the European Higher Education Area and the European Research Area*

16. The College has a Strategic Activity Plan (SAP) for 2012–2020 (SER, Annex 2.1) and a detailed activity plan for 2014–2016 (approved at the end of 2013) based on this SAP, with progress noted as at the date of the SER (SER, Annex 31). The latter is one of the documents prepared in response to a 2013 review recommendation. A strategy event held late in 2015 with the new College Board reviewed the College vision, mission, values and distinctiveness and performed a SWOT analysis. As a result, the College organisational structure was revised and an updated SAP for 2016–2020 (SER, Annex 2.2) was adopted, taking effect from January 2016. As the Team learned from the Director during the site visit, the 2016–2020 SAP is now the basic strategic document for the College. There is also a detailed activity plan for 2016 (SER, Annex 30), which is not directly comparable to the one for 2014–2016 but is an extract from the updated SAP, restricted to 2016 figures with planned completion dates.
17. There are five priority lines of action in the updated SAP, each with a set of objectives and tools:
  - Develop the College philosophy (4 objectives)
  - Integrate science and business ideas into the process of studies (6 objectives)
  - Cooperate with social partners (5 objectives)
  - Financial management of the College (5 objectives)
  - Develop the culture of communication (4 objectives)

For each of these the SAP gives a table of expected outcomes year by year up to 2020. However, the priority lines are simply stated after the College vision, mission and values, with no explanation of how they are intended to reflect the vision, carry forward the mission, or embody the values. In particular, the first priority line is more general than any of the mission aims and more closely resembles the College vision, while the last two priority lines do not relate directly to any of the mission aims. However, detailed examination shows that between them, the first three action lines in the SAP do carry forward all the mission aims, with the last two serving as enablers. **The quality of strategic planning would be more secure** if the SAP showed explicitly how all the priority lines of action further the mission.

18. The College mission emphasises quality studies centred on practical activity that integrate science and business ideas, while contributing to creativity and human welfare consistent with Ignatian and Jesuit principles. The College asserts in the SER that the SAP is closely related to this mission, but there is no argument to support this assertion, nor any explanation in the SAP itself, as noted above. The SER describes how goals of the SAP are consistent with the Bologna principles. The SER also explores how the SAP supports relevant aspects of the national strategic goals, and emphasises the College's intention to implement the latest ICT by 2020.
19. The 2016–2020 SAP highlights aspects such as linkages between education and research and cooperation with social partners, internationalisation, lifelong learning, and personal development and the development of transversal skills (critical thinking, creativity, entrepreneurship). These connect the SAP to the priorities defined in the general

Lithuanian development strategies and programmes and those specifically focusing on education which are outlined in the SER and its annexes. The SAP is also broadly in line with the principles underlying the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) and the European Research Area (ERA) insofar as it embraces quality assurance, internationalisation, lifelong learning and graduate employability, and fosters the development of applied research and of partnerships with external stakeholders. However, beyond rather vague references to the creation of the EHEA and compliance with European policies, the 2016–2020 SAP (or the 2012–2020 SAP) does not provide any evidence that it was guided by any specific EHEA or ERA priorities (though the Team is aware that the SKVC review criteria related to the ERA are not fully applicable to colleges as these are mainly training institutions).

#### ***Validity and interoperability of the strategic plan components***

20. The SER gives an account of how the 2012–2020 SAP was revised and the 2016–2020 SAP developed in the light of external factors (including the opinion of various stakeholders obtained from surveys) and the development of the College itself from offering just one programme in 2010 to offering seven today. The analysis of the College's situation, including a PEST analysis of the environment and a SWOT analysis as integral parts of the 2016–2020 SAP, and the changes made in response to the analyses appear to be realistic and reasonably evaluative. However, since the College had operated for five years at the time of devising the Plan, **the contextual analysis would have benefited** from some evidence illustrating the current position of the College, including its advantages and disadvantages, as compared to other, in particular non-state, higher education institutions with which it may compete for students. Further to the comment above, more specific references to the EHEA context **would have also strengthened the analysis**. Regardless of this, the five priority action lines mentioned above are consistent with the PEST and SWOT analyses, and the objectives, measures (tools) and expected outcomes are clearly defined within each action line. As the SAP is quite ambitious, ideally it **would have also given some indication of resources** required for its implementation.
21. In addition to the SAP, the College has a Plan for Improvement of College Activity (SER, Annex 14) designed to address the recommendations from the previous review as agreed with SKVC. Given the negative evaluation of the area of Strategic Management during the 2013 SKVC review and the adverse consequences if the present review were to result in any negative evaluation, this plan is of strategic importance both in its own right and as a part of strategic management. However, the SER refers to this document only briefly under the heading of change management. The improvement plan itself reports what has been done to address each of the recommendations individually (combining the two on strengthening the use of modern technology in teaching and in research). All have been addressed, and the progress on each is taken into account in the Team's evaluation of the four areas covered by this review.

#### ***Reasonableness and comprehensiveness of indicators for monitoring the implementation of the strategic plan***

22. In Section 5 of its SAP for 2016–2020 the College identifies 18 performance indicators under the heading 'Implementation and Monitoring of College Strategic Action Plan', with annual targets for each. Of these indicators, 13 are objective quantitative measures and 5 are more subjective measures from surveys, expressed as percentages but described as qualitative indicators. Together the indicators constitute a reasonable set that spans most of the College's activity. However, they are not mapped onto the corresponding strategic objectives and implementation measures (tools) in the SAP. There are 18 indicators and 24 strategic objectives, so the indicators are not the same as the expected outcomes from the SAP. For example, there are no indicators related to the 5 expected outcomes concerning



financial management of the College. It is also difficult to see how the indicators can be used to assess progress in developing the College philosophy or integrating science and business ideas into the education process. To that extent, the title of this section of the SAP is misleading in implying that the indicators monitor the SAP as such.

23. This raises the question of the relationship between the expected outcomes from the SAP and the performance indicators, how they are monitored, and how they are used together for evaluation and strategic planning. For example, one part of the College mission is to 'prepare qualified specialists who meet current requirements of the labour market'. This is appropriately monitored through the first of the performance indicators, graduate employability. This is not mentioned explicitly elsewhere in the SAP, but would be supported by some of the expected outcomes in the SAP, such as 'Responding to labour market changes to update and improve... study programmes'. (SER, Annex 2.2, Section 4) In its discussion with the SER Group and the persons responsible for quality assurance, the Team did not find any cogent reasons for the College to use two different sets of performance measures (outcomes and indicators) for monitoring progress in the implementation of the SAP. **Strategic planning would be strengthened** by explicitly linking the mission, the performance indicators and the SAP.
24. **Recommendation:** The Team recommends that the College should amend its strategic planning documentation to show explicitly how the expected outcomes for the Strategic Activity Plan advance all aspects of the College mission and support its chosen performance indicators.

#### ***Relevance of procedures for monitoring the implementation of the strategic plan***

25. The 2012–2020 SAP was made operational through the above-mentioned 2014–2016 Activity Plan. The 2016–2020 SAP is currently operationalised through the 2016 Activity Plan which sets a good framework for monitoring progress in the implementation of the SAP as it closely follows the latter and clearly indicates objectives, tools, activities, indicators, timelines and responsible persons. The 2016 Activity Plan served as the basis for annual action plans prepared by departments/divisions.
26. Implementation of the strategic plan is monitored by a range of designated groups, including external stakeholders (SER; meetings with the College Shareholders and Board, the Director, the Academic Council, and Students). Implementation of the SAP as a whole is discussed at an annual strategic session which is both backward- and forward-looking as it serves a double purpose of reviewing progress and planning for the next year. Annual strategic sessions at institutional level bring together all internal and external stakeholder groups (all have representatives on the College governing bodies and Study Programme Committees, but staff and students are also encouraged to participate on an individual basis). At departmental level, Strategic Planning and Monitoring Teams (SPMTs), established by the Director's Orders, monitor progress towards strategic objectives following procedures laid down as part of the Quality Management System, and analyse data collected by departments for SAP outcomes and indicators. Heads of Departments report annually to the SPMTs on how they have implemented their action plans, and the teams then propose any necessary changes in the implementation of the SAP. Problem areas are discussed at least twice a year by Study Programme Committees, and an external 'coaching' expert helps to evaluate how divisional action plans match the SAP and to advise on how to eliminate problems.
27. The 2014–2016 Activity Plan (with a column presenting results to date) shows that, overall, the expected outcomes have been achieved as planned in the 2012–2020 SAP. As the 2016–2020 SAP has only recently taken effect, it is too early to see how the new set of indicators discussed above may contribute to effective monitoring.

28. In broader terms, as the Team learned in its meetings with the Director and the College Shareholders and Board members, a participatory approach to strategic planning and monitoring the implementation of the SAP is much appreciated by the governing bodies. While strategic management responsibilities are clearly divided at the institutional level, the Director emphasised the value of collective management, inclusiveness and collective accountability. The College Shareholders and Board members interviewed also highlighted the added value of annual strategic sessions as a learning experience where all stakeholder groups shared knowledge and different perspectives were integrated in the process of evaluating progress towards the achievement of strategic objectives.
29. **Commendations:** The Team commends the College for engaging all stakeholder groups in its efforts to push forward and monitor the implementation of the SAP as a way of enhancing strategic planning capacity of the institution, strengthening its corporate governance and, in more general terms, fostering a sense of community, collective responsibility and community spirit, in line with the general aims of the College. Another example of good practice is the appointment of the Strategic Planning and Monitoring Teams as a step towards ensuring a strategic focus below the institutional level.
30. Overall, the existing mechanisms provide a sound basis for effective monitoring of progress in the implementation of the SAP. A refined set of performance measures (see above) would help the College to make even better use of the mechanisms in place.

***Information on the implementation of the strategic plan***

31. The 2013 review report recommended that the College introduce a systematic method of informing all interested parties about its progress each year. Currently, as stated in the SER, activity reports and other strategic documents are published on the website of the College and, thus, can be easily accessed by all internal and external stakeholders (though only by those speaking Lithuanian as not all were available in English on the website at the time of the review). Once approved by the College Board, activity reports are also presented to College stakeholders, including the Academic Council, Study Programme Committees, the Students' Union and social partners.
32. The 2015 Activity Report (SER, Annex 5) gives a useful overview of the College's activities and some data illustrating its performance (e.g. student numbers, academic staff in different breakdowns, international projects, income and expenditure). However, it does not analyse progress towards the achievement of the strategic objectives set out in the 2012–2020 SAP, nor does it provide a clear overview of the outcomes achieved on an annual basis against those defined in the SAP. This can be found only in the 2014–2016 Activity Plan (see above). Unless the 2016–2020 SAP is similarly updated with data collected annually, the College's 2016 Activity Report **would need to be clearly based** on the SAP and the 2016 Activity Plan, focus on progress towards the strategic objectives and include data for the outcomes and indicators.
33. College staff, students and social partners are also informed about progress in the implementation of the SAP at annual strategic sessions mentioned above and informal meetings. Annual divisional reports are discussed within the individual units. Some information is provided through other channels such as regular formal and informal meetings with College community members, social networks and other media. (SER)
34. Overall, a wide range of channels are now used to share information on the implementation of the SAP. The Team found no evidence that any of the stakeholder groups interviewed would need to be more frequently or better informed than is currently the case.
35. In more general terms, the College was aware of its weaknesses in internal and external communication at the stage of devising its 2016–2020 SAP. Thus, it seeks to build a

culture of communication as a priority action line in the SAP; this includes, among other things, creating an integrated ICT-based information system, with a communication platform, and developing an internal and external communication handbook. A Media Centre has recently been established to disseminate information and, as the Team found during the visit, the College has already put in place an effective ICT-based system for internal communication.

## EFFECTIVENESS OF MANAGEMENT

### *Effectiveness of the internal quality assurance system*

#### *Policies on quality assurance*

36. The 2013 review team recommended that the College should implement a quality assurance system. Currently, it has a quality management system (QMS) certified under ISO 9001:2008 and ISO 14001:2004, standards originally designed for factory production that are concerned with having comprehensive documented quality and environmental management systems, respectively. The SER argues that internal quality assurance is based on systematic analysis of the condition of studies, a management culture centred on continuous improvement of the quality of studies, participation of social stakeholders, and (for some reason) public relations. It describes the scope and relevance of the QMS, and says that the main supporting documents are the Quality Policy and the Quality Handbook; the Quality Policy is implemented in line with the College Statutes, the SAP and the Quality Handbook. In general, the Team believes that an ISO-based system may be too cumbersome for a small institution. It notes, however, that the College seeks to make the QMS “sensitive to the context”, taking into consideration the capacity, specific needs and culture of the institution (final meeting with the Management Team).
37. The Quality Policy for 2016 (SER, Annex 7.3) builds on and develops the 2015 version (SER, Annex 7.2). It presents a list of eight “study quality objectives and assessment indicators”, some of which closely resemble the expected outcomes and performance indicators in the SAP (for example, on graduate employability). Others, although in areas covered in the SAP, are not the same as the expected outcomes or the performance indicators; for example, “ensure a positive change in working capital (>5 per cent compared to 2015)” aligns with SAP objective, “Ensure the increase of working capital and its effective use”. However, in the SAP the expected outcomes under objective 5.2 concern managing debtors and cash flow, with separate indicators that for 2016 concern establishing regulations and procedures rather than about actually increasing working capital as such. On this topic the Quality Policy specifies what is to be achieved rather than what is to be done to achieve it, and to that extent is less operational and more strategic in its focus. However, the Team considers that **the quality of strategic planning would be strengthened** if it was supported by a coherent set of clearly related documents without significant overlap.
38. **Recommendation:** The Team recommends that the College should revise its strategic planning documentation so that the separate action plan for 2016 and the Quality Policy for 2016 (and their successors for subsequent years) are clearly related to the Strategic Activity Plan without significant overlap.
39. Beyond general references in various documents to the QMS being based on ENQA’s European Standards and Guidelines (ESG), there is no document mapping QMS onto the ESG. However, as the Management Team of the College assured the Team in the final meeting, the person responsible for quality assurance is tasked with following European developments and the ESG are a key document taken into consideration in drafting and reviewing internal quality assurance documents. The documents available to the Team do

indeed cover the revised ESG, including a strong emphasis placed on student-centred learning (for further details, see Academic Studies and Lifelong Learning).

*Compliance of qualifications with the national and European qualification frameworks, enhancement of the quality of study programmes and student performance, and support to students*

40. Study Programme Committees (SPCs), composed of Heads of Departments, Programme Curators (see below), staff, students and social partners, are expected to show that the programmes for which they are responsible conform to the Lithuanian and European Qualifications Frameworks, using a suitable pro forma. The Academic Council is responsible for ensuring that this is done properly and that any revisions to programmes continue to conform as required. (SER; meetings with the Academic Council and the Chaplain, and Study Programme Committees)
41. The College has in place clear mechanisms for programme development and review. New programmes can be proposed by SPCs, the Academic Council, the Director, the Board and external stakeholders, and are approved by the Academic Council. In developing new programmes, the College takes into consideration the demand for a programme, its alignment with the mission and strategy of the College, linkages with existing programmes, and recommendations from social partners. SPCs form the starting point for systems to review performance at departmental and institutional levels. Ongoing programmes are reviewed at least each year, taking into account feedback from students, SPCs and social partners. Students are asked to review their experience every semester and their whole programme at the end; this is done through surveys conducted by the Students' Union which also analyses findings, discusses them with the College Management and is informed about follow-up action taken. Examples of changes recently made in the ongoing programmes (a new practical training option introduced in response to feedback from students and extended course contents) given to the Team during the visit, show that the College is responsive to feedback and the mechanisms in place are indeed effective. (SER; meetings with the Academic Council and the Chaplain, Study Programme Committees, Teaching and Research Staff, and Students) In this context, the Team also notes that the College has fully implemented the 2013 review recommendation to strengthen the supervision and management of each programme by establishing SPCs with clearly defined and extensive responsibilities.
42. There are extensive attempts to include the whole College community in quality enhancement through the Quality Laboratory. The Team learned that the Quality Laboratory is first of all a conceptual space where all parties can discuss issues of quality; this might involve individual students raising concerns about their academic performance with a member of academic staff, or two or more members of staff coming together to discuss aspects of a programme that concern them. There is also a physical space where private discussions can take place. Confidence in such discussions is reinforced by the College's expectation that members of the community will engage in conversations in which they listen respectfully to one another. A problem may be resolved privately, or it may become the subject of a larger meeting where the external quality coach helps the group to reach an agreed resolution together. The Quality Laboratory was nominated for an award as a non-governmental public-sector organisation in the 2015 International Innovation Competition. The College aims to ensure that more than 50% of its community are involved in Quality Laboratory activities in 2016, with a 10% increase each year until 2020. This is both commendable and ambitious, considering that building a quality culture and limited involvement of students in quality assurance are identified as potential challenges in the SER. (SER; SER Annex 2.2; meetings with the SER Group, Teaching and Research Staff, and Students)
43. Each degree programme has a 'curator', alternatively translated for the Team as 'tutor' and perhaps best understood as the administrative coordinator for the programme. The Curator

provides administrative support, ensuring that students understand the College's processes and procedures, and advising students on the organisation of lectures and other studies. If a student has a problem, then the preliminary discussion in the Quality Laboratory context is often with the Curator. As such, Curators provide a valuable interface between the student and the programme on one side and the College systems on the other. Corresponding activities during a practical placement are the responsibility of the supervisor, a member of the partner staff appointed by the College, who also monitors the quality of the practical training. (SER; meeting with Study Programme Committees) See also comments on student dropout and learning support in the section on Academic Studies and Lifelong Learning.

44. **Commentation:** The Team commends as good practice the Quality Laboratory and the Quality Coach for being mechanisms to involve all members of the College community in mutually respectful discussion of quality issues and how best to resolve them, and to foster a quality culture.

#### *Improvement of the teaching staff competence*

45. Teaching staff are appointed with a careful regard to their technical background and sympathy with the College ethos. Teaching sessions are observed directly each year, usually by the head of department. The observations are discussed between the teacher and the head, along with other information including feedback from the surveys that students complete every semester. Agreed outcomes are summarised and submitted to the head of staff for recording, in accordance with the provisions of the Quality Handbook. Teachers are provided with guidance in using the Ignatian pedagogical paradigm, and sessions are held for updating on teaching and learning. Good performance in teaching and in applied research is rewarded by access to funding to attend conferences and exhibitions. Ultimately, poor teachers may be asked to leave, and the Team was told of one teacher who left after consistently poor student feedback. (SER; meetings with Heads of Units, and Teaching and Research Staff) See also comments under Human resources management below.

#### *Organisation of data collection*

46. The 2013 review team recommended that the College should implement a management information system. Data management is now explicitly addressed as a process in the Quality Handbook. The documents available to the Team and its discussions during the visit show that the College collects a fairly large range of data. Data from student evaluation surveys and other sources, including activity reports, are collected and disseminated by the person responsible for quality assurance. The College has also made good progress in establishing a computerised system (UNIMETIS) for the management of data covering various aspects of the entire study cycle and all data on students, academic staff and social partners. The Team **encourages the College to continue its efforts** so that the system is fully operational within a few years, as planned. Overall, there is evidence that available data are indeed analysed and used to enhance the quality of education and research and, in broader terms, to support strategic management. However, this is not yet equally evident in the area of internationalisation, and, in particular, as regards the achievement of goals set out in the Erasmus Charter for Higher Education (see Academic Studies and Lifelong Learning).

#### *Published information*

47. The Lithuanian and English-language websites of the College provide information about its activities and degree programmes, including admission requirements and procedures, basic details on programme contents, ECTS credits and final qualifications awarded. The students and graduates that the Team interviewed confirmed that at the stage of applying for

admission they had either found all the necessary information on the website or received additional information from the College via email or Skype. Students are also fully satisfied with the information on programmes and assessment methods provided by the College during their studies.

### ***Relevance of changes in the organisational structure***

48. The organisational structure of the College has changed as it has developed since its foundation in 2010. The SER describes changes that seem appropriate to a new institution. Recent changes of note are the establishment of the Centre of Future Professions, the Media Centre, and the Business Development Office (now the Business and Innovation Department). The Centre of Future Professions focuses on student employment needs, consistent with the College mission and the leading performance indicator in the SAP. The Media Centre is tasked with improving the availability and accessibility of information for teaching and learning and research, consistent with the SAP action line 6.3 on communication. The Business and Innovation Department seeks new partners for providing the numerous student placements needed for all the degree programmes; in some cases, it also sets up companies to provide placements, for example in Palanga, a major resort where the need for hospitality management graduates is evident. (SER; meetings with the Director, and Heads of Units)
49. The English version of the College website (<http://www.ilk.lt/en>), accessed by the Team at the end of the site visit, called the institution ‘St Ignatius Loyola University of Applied Sciences’, which risked misleading potential incoming students about the exact status of the College. In its response to the draft review report at the stage of factual accuracy check, the College stated that only the term ‘College’ was used in all its external and internal documents. The Team noted that the College’s name had been changed into ‘St Ignatius Loyola College’ since the Team’s site visit. As an additional comment, common English usage would say St Ignatius *of* Loyola (cf. St Francis of Assisi).
50. **Recommendation:** The Team recommends that the College should continue to exercise vigilance in order to ensure that its website and other public information in English avoids using the misleading word ‘university’.

### ***Process management***

#### *Distribution of responsibilities, and stakeholder (partner) involvement*

51. The Statutes of the College (SER, Annex 3), revised in 2015, define clearly the powers and responsibilities of its four governing bodies, the General Meeting of Shareholders, the College Board, the Academic Council and the Director (see the Background information on the institution). By amending its Statutes and adopting relevant internal regulations (SER, Annex 14), the College has implemented the 2013 review recommendation to formalise the composition and mandate of the Academic Council. Social partners are particularly well represented in governance as members of both the College Board and the Academic Council, the two bodies taking key strategic decisions, and Study Programme Committees which, though not formal bodies, play a key role in the development and review of programmes. Staff and students have their representatives on both the Academic Council and Study Programme Committees. As noted earlier, staff and students also participate in annual strategic sessions, which guide major decisions, through their representatives on the governing bodies and on an individual basis. Throughout the visit, it was evident to the Team that the College made great efforts to build a culture of collective engagement and a strong sense of community (see Procedures for monitoring the strategic plan above).

52. **Commendation:** The Team commends the College for ensuring involvement of all stakeholders in its governance in line with the principles of inclusiveness and collegiality, and for strong presence of social partners who provide an element of externality at both institutional and departmental/programme levels.



*Decision-taking effectiveness, allocation of resources, orientation to strategic goals and outcomes*

53. The 2013 review recommended that the College introduce procedures to assure itself that it takes decisions effectively. Process management, including decision-making, is now part of the QMS. The SER gives details of formal process management structures and activities governed by the Quality Handbook. It also argues that the effectiveness of the processes is assured by coordination within the deliberative and executive functions of the College and by a range of other bodies including students and external stakeholders. The Quality Handbook meets the requirements of ISO quality and environmental management schemes, but these seem to have been taken over uncritically from the commercial field in ways that are not appropriate to a higher education institution. For example, the Quality Handbook refers to ‘Customer orientation’, ‘Selling the product’ and ‘Buying the services of a lecturer’, and to ‘Customer assets’ that may include “shipments and semitrailers”. Little is specific to higher education: the tabulated ‘Processes’ are clearly academic (half a page out of 35), and so are ‘Planning studies’ and ‘Establishing study contents and study schedule’ (another half page each), and there are flowcharts for some academic processes such as admissions, programme development and exams. Overall, the processes and structures seem very abstract and unduly complex to govern seven programmes for some 400 students, and while those who met the Team clearly valued the ISO certification, they **did not provide convincing evidence that the systems were used in the detail specified**, except in managing staff, change management, and programme development and review.
54. **Recommendation:** The Team recommends that the College should consider whether ISO certification adds sufficient value to its quality and environmental management to justify the effort required to maintain the certification.
55. While the burden of implementing the ISO system may be unnecessarily heavy for the College, the Team found no evidence of ineffectiveness or inefficiency in decision-making in practice. As explained during the visit, the College Board structures its business so that items remain visible until they are completed. This says more about the implementation of decisions than about their effectiveness, but it does treat them in a way that would highlight decisions that were clearly not effective.
56. The SAP is routinely kept in mind in decision-making, with strategic priorities working through into the budget allocations via the responses of heads of department in their budget submissions. While a bottom-up approach is taken in setting annual institutional budgets, there is a Budget Group, composed of the Director, accountant, Heads of Departments and Board members, which makes sure that the budget is aligned with the SAP; this is reinforced by a top-down mechanism for monitoring expenditure. (Meeting with representatives of administrative units/on MOSTA report),

***Human resources management***

*Analysis of needs, and compliance with the implementation of the strategic plan*

57. The development of human resources has reflected the development of the College, with an increasing total number of academic staff (26 in 2013 and 66 in March 2016) employed to teach a growing number of students. The number of academic staff for whom the College is the primary employer has increased to 18 (9.16 FTE), though still few (6) are employed on a full-time basis (additional information provided to the Team before the visit). At one extreme four professors occupy only 0.05 of a post between them, or about three days a year each on average (SER, Annex 11). Broadly speaking, staff employed to teach the professional parts of the programmes have part-time contracts with their main employer elsewhere, while those who teach the theoretical parts have the College as their main or sometimes only employer. Overall, the College has made reasonable progress to

address the 2013 recommendation to strengthen its staffing base, also considering that it is by no means easy for non-state colleges in Lithuania to attract academic staff that are both highly qualified and interested in a full-time contract.

58. Staff are managed by a Head of Staff (SER, Annex 7.1, Quality Handbook). Human resources management is a process regulated as part of the QMS. It covers recruitment, selection and employment arrangements, assessment of training needs and staff development, and staff appraisal. All these elements of a human resources management system have featured quite prominently in the College's strategic documents, addressed as a separate objective in the 2012–2020 SAP and under two priority action lines and related objectives in the 2016–2020 SAP. All have been put in place in recent years or are now being introduced (SER, Annex 31; meeting with Heads of Units). A large proportion of the 2013–2015 budgets has been allocated to staff development (SER). The academic staff that the Team met emphasised that they felt highly valued and the College was very responsive to their requests.
59. **Commendation:** The Team commends the College for putting human resources management high on its agenda, and providing funding to advance the related strategic objectives.

#### *Improvement of qualifications, and involvement of staff in decision-making*

60. Staff are reviewed annually through the process already described. Annual staff training plans have been developed and implemented since 2015 to increase teachers' qualifications and competences, information about which is derived from student surveys (SER). Recently, teachers have participated in staff development activities such as a methodology seminar organised twice a year jointly with other higher education and vocational training institutions; an adult education training course, also provided in collaboration with another higher education institution; and internal sessions focusing on the Ignatian paradigm. Staff are also encouraged to take up PhD studies, and three staff members are now studying for a PhD degree. (SER; SER, Annex 11; meeting with Teaching and Research Staff).
61. As noted earlier, staff are involved quite widely in planning and decision-making through representatives in College bodies and through open meetings such as the annual strategic session.

#### **Change management**

##### *Analysis of process quality, and prerequisites for improvement*

62. The College has undergone significant change over a short period of time, with the changes guided and implemented according to the SAP and the QMS. The SER outlines various rational ways in which processes are conducted and evaluated. In particular, measures have been implemented in direct response to the recommendations of the 2013 SKVC review (SER, Annex 14), as already noted. Further, there is evidence of internally driven change, such as the recent revision of the SAP based on PEST and SWOT analyses undertaken independently by the College; changes in the organisational structure addressing weaknesses identified in the SWOT analysis; and an extended range of degree programmes offered in response to feedback from social partners. The College has also enhanced its accommodation by expanding into buildings acquired from the Dominican order. These have been sympathetically modernised to provide attractive facilities for classes, learning resources, meetings and offices.

##### *Risk analysis*

63. The 2013 review recommended that the College should supplement its processes for change management, process analysis and optimisation by an explicit process for risk management. Risk management is now regulated as part of the QMS, and a detailed risk

assessment and management procedure is described in the Quality Handbook (SER). Overall responsibility for risk management is assigned to the College Board, advised by Academic Council, Study Programme Committees and the Students' Union. Both the Director and the Board members who met the Team showed a clear appreciation of the principal risks the College faces. They were also able to report that one of the current principal risks will be significantly mitigated from next academic year when, based on the recently signed concordat, the Government has agreed to recognise the College as an institution eligible for student funding from the state. To address risks related to the declining student population in Lithuania, the College regularly visits secondary schools to attract prospective students, and it is now making arrangements to join a worldwide association of Jesuit institutions, and to establish a new study programme delivered in Lithuanian and English (though the Director is aware that it will take some time to accomplish these ambitious tasks).

64. **Commendation:** The Team commends the College for efficient management of major changes introduced in a number of key areas over a short period of time.

#### *Infrastructure (learning resources) management*

65. The bodies responsible for resource management are the Shareholders, the College Board, and the Director, who have authority for making decisions on assets of progressively decreasing value. Detailed management of assets is governed by procedures in the Quality Handbook and supported by tracking software. The SER explains how major resource initiatives are developed and gives details of initiatives undertaken in the self-evaluation period. Some resources are secured by agreements with external educational and social partners.
66. A public institution, the Institute of Professional Innovations, has been established with various partners to facilitate the development of the College's ICT infrastructure and utilities. The Moodle Electronic Learning Environment (ELE) has been installed, and although the SER says nothing about how it is expected to be used, the Team found during the visit that it is well configured and becoming populated. There has been significant development of the information infrastructure for the College Library, including library management systems and consortium agreements. The Media Centre is responsible both for disseminating information and for providing physical access to information sources. The College has just launched a major information system UNIMETIS, with the student system module now implemented. This is already integrated with the finance system and able to generate significant efficiencies in working, a process that should continue as other modules are brought into use. Each year an amount is set aside in the budget of the College for the upgrading of teaching and learning facilities. All of this constitutes a significant and sustained programme of upgrading for the ICT facilities, in line with the relevant 2013 review recommendation and high priority given to wider use of ICT in teaching and learning in the 2016–2020 SAP.
67. In order to link infrastructure planning with the College's strategic goals, the investment plan for 2017 will be included in the activity plan for 2016, which would appear to be a helpful consolidation of the planning process. However, it is not clear which activity plan is meant. There is no mention of investment in the SAP for 2016–2020, nor in the separate activity plan for 2016 extracted from it, but investment in programmes is mentioned in the activity plan for 2014–2016 based on the 2012–2020 SAP.
68. The 2016 MOSTA report provided to the Team shows that the College complies with all requirements for learning resources and related infrastructure except for 'financial funds for studies per student'. The values of most indicators (e.g. floor area; number of study places or computers in the library per student; library resources; upgrading of premises and

of ICT equipment) varied between 2013 and 2015; there has been steady improvement in access to wireless Internet. For further comments on the MOSTA report, see Use of funds for the attainment of objectives below.

69. The teaching and research staff and students interviewed agree that the College provides ‘very good’ or even ‘perfect’ teaching and learning facilities. Students appreciate, in particular, high-quality ICT equipment and access to high-speed wireless Internet. Teachers consider that in some cases (e.g. for the Orthopaedic Technology and Image Design programmes), the College is far ahead of other higher education institutions in the country. Both groups are also fully satisfied with library resources available at the College or at other institutions through the agreements signed. Great improvement in teaching and learning facilities is also evident to the graduates that the Team met. While this extends slightly beyond the SKVC review criteria, the Team notes that students would be happy to have a cafeteria and some parking space in the main premises, though a lack of either is not considered a serious problem.
70. **Commendation**: The Team commends the College for making consistent efforts to upgrade facilities despite the limited funding available.

#### ***Use of funds for the attainment of objectives***

71. As a private institution, the College secures most of its income through student fees, supplemented by some state funding for the three programmes that are unique in Lithuania and by funding for specific projects and from Lithuanian businesses (see also the Background information on the institution). However, as already noted, from September 2017, the College will become state funded. Budgets are allocated to departments for their normal recurrent expenditure, while funds for special items and for capital items are allocated centrally under the authority of the Director up to a set limit beyond which College Board approval is required. The College Board is responsible for overseeing and reporting on the finances to the General Meeting of Shareholders. (SER; meeting with the College Shareholders and Board)
72. The distribution of spending across different strategic goals described in the SER reflects significant shifts of priorities for the past three years, with an initial stress on quality management and staff development followed by much more infrastructure development; there is also an intention to improve financial management. (SER; 2016–2020 SAP, Annex 2.2) In addition to these larger heads, the allocation for development of applied research has fallen from 3% to 1% of expenditure. The College Shareholders and Board members who met the Team confirmed that they were aware of this proportion and hoped it would increase. Separately, the 2015 Activity Report contains data showing that as much as 16% of expenses were for business travel, the third largest category after salary and social insurance (41%) and other services (17%). Again, the College Shareholders and Board members who met the Team confirmed that they were aware of this proportion, which represented the extensive activity to develop partnerships, especially abroad; for that year it was inflated by the cost of the Director attending (at their suggestion) an international Jesuit leadership programme. The Team was supplied at its request with an analysis of College revenues, which are increasingly dominated by student fee income as student numbers grow. The College also supplied a table showing expenditure on management decreasing from 29 to 25 and 23% from 2013 to 2015, on studies increasing from 59 to 61 and 62%, and on applied scientific activities from 12 to 14 and 15%, which all seemed reasonable.
73. The only area where the College fails to meet the MOSTA criteria is 1 *Adequacy and availability of the learning resources and associated infrastructure*, Indicator 9 *Financial funds for studies per student*. The score is zero in each of the three years considered, and

MOSTA comments, “The funds for one student are lower than nominal price for study cycle. But it is noted that it is increasing steadily.” This comment does not agree with the figures presented, which are not increasing. That seems to imply some error by MOSTA: if the figures are right, the comment is wrong, and if the comment is right, the figures are wrong. The Team was told that because of the opacity of the MOSTA calculations, the College does not recognise the figures quoted from those it submitted.

### *Academic ethics*

74. The College has a clear Code of Academic Ethics (including research ethics), dating from 2013 and updated in 2015, to which all members of the College community must adhere (SER; Code of Academic Ethics available in Lithuanian on the College website; meeting with the Academic Council and Chaplain). The Code is wide-ranging, concerning general academic ethics including academic freedom and non-discrimination; staff ethics in teaching and learning; research ethics; and student ethics in learning and assessment. There is naturally an emphasis on Christian values. As confirmed by students during the site visit, they are introduced to the Code at the start of their studies, and are encouraged to be alert to possible infringements not only by themselves but also by others; they are made aware of the possible sanctions for unethical conduct. The Team also learned from the Academic Council and students that ‘sanctions’ could be, for example, that a student is not awarded an Erasmus+ mobility grant or has a talk on ethics with the responsible persons in their department. However, the Code itself does not specify any sanctions. Instead, it appears that the College seeks to create a climate in which academic malpractice is seen as socially unacceptable because of the shared ethos and practically difficult because of the styles of assessment used. A lack of explicit sanctions **could nonetheless be considered a weakness** nowadays; thus, the Team **encourages** the College to be more explicit in the Code about sanctions that may be applied for unethical conduct.
75. The Code prescribes how it is to be implemented, including oversight by an ethics committee that contains a social partner representative and two students. The SER reports no “applications for dispute consideration” in the report period. A report from the Lithuanian Ombudsman for Academic Ethics (provided to the Team by SKVC) confirms that in the last three years no cases of plagiarism were detected; only two applications were made to investigate possible ethical violations (both in 2014) and neither was upheld.

*In summary*, the College has been in a process of development in recent years. It has revised its Strategic Activity Plan, introduced changes in its organisational structure, put in place procedures to support human resources management, extended its programme portfolio, and developed and implemented a Quality Management System. The College identifies as successes the expansion of its activities and the improvement of its management processes over the last three years. It notes as future challenges various areas that cover strengthening and embedding its quality assurance and enhancement procedures.

The recently updated Strategic Activity Plan is, overall, adequate to guide further development of the College. It embraces the mission of the College and a number of priorities identified in Lithuanian higher education and research policies and for the European Higher Education Area and the European Research Area. However, as the College continues to grow, it can strengthen its strategic planning by ensuring that its documentation is coherent and consistent so that all staff are working towards the same detailed objectives. Though performance measures would still need to be improved, sound arrangements are in place to monitor the implementation of the Strategic Activity Plan, and to inform stakeholders about the progress made.

The successful expansion and continuing success in many areas are evidence for effective management based on a clear strategic view. While the ISO-based Quality Management System could still be streamlined and related documents amended to support better strategic planning,

the elements which are in place enable quality enhancement and assist the College in building a quality culture. Recent changes in the organisational structure of the College are clearly geared towards better management of programmes and further development of applied research. Process management may not necessarily be facilitated by the cumbersome Quality Management System; however, its evident strengths are clear lines of responsibility, involvement of all stakeholders, and a strategic focus in resource allocation, even though the allocations for some activities of strategic importance have recently been reduced. There are mechanisms encouraging and supporting change, and the College has demonstrated its capacity to manage it effectively. Human and learning resources are both given high priority and well managed. Academic ethics is given due consideration, though sanctions for breaching the Code of Ethics could be more explicitly identified.

**Judgement on the area:** Strategic Management is given positive evaluation.

#### **IV. ACADEMIC STUDIES AND LIFE-LONG LEARNING**

##### ***Alignment of qualifications with the mission and strategic plan of the institution, and with national development needs***

##### *Alignment of qualifications with the mission and strategic plan*

76. The College currently offers seven professional Bachelor's degree programmes: Orthopaedic Technology, Beauty Therapy, and Emergency Medical Aid in the area of Biomedical Sciences; Social Work, Hospitality Management, and Pastoral Care as part of Social Sciences; and Image Design in the area of Arts. Four of the programmes have been established since the previous review in 2013 (for details, see Background information on the institution). Orthopaedic Technology, Emergency Medical Aid and Pastoral Care are unique programmes in Lithuania (SER). The 2016–2020 SAP provides for the establishment of continuing/adult education courses. As the Team found during the site visit, the College does not offer yet any stand-alone courses, though adult learners may follow full degree programmes or selected modules (Meetings with Heads of Units, and Study Programme Committees). See below for further details and comments.
77. The mission of the College is to provide programmes which integrate research and business ideas in compliance with the Ignatian pedagogical paradigm. Both the 2012–2020 and 2016–2020 SAPs include objectives and measures related to the introduction of the Ignatian paradigm into degree programmes and other educational activities. Two priority action lines of the 2016–2020 SAP directly relevant to degree programmes are integration of research and business ideas into education, and cooperation with social partners; the latter was also accommodated in the 2012–2020 SAP.
78. The Team found ample evidence for the pervasive use of the Ignatian pedagogical paradigm in the College's activities. As explained in the SER, education based on the paradigm is not limited to transferring knowledge but also seeks to shape values and develop critical thinking, independence, creativity and motivation for learning. Among other things, this leads to a student-centred approach to teaching and learning. In discussions with the Team, representatives of Study Programme Committees and teaching staff gave various examples of how the paradigm was actually implemented in degree programmes. In brief, this involves teachers making a genuine effort to learn about students' cultural backgrounds, individual experiences, needs and expectations, revising course contents in response to feedback from students, and giving them, accordingly, different assignments; extensive use of active learning methods and a focus on the development of transversal skills; and assessment methods which include self-reflection and self-assessment by students. The graduates interviewed all agreed that the College was very responsive to their needs, and highlighted personal development, ethical values,

compassion and empathy, and communication skills as ‘learning outcomes’ which are important not only in caring professions. In other words, the approach based on the Ignatian pedagogical paradigm leads to graduates who are reflective practitioners and treat clients as whole persons (or as ‘human beings’, as put by graduates themselves).

79. **Commendation:** The Team commends the College for pursuing consistently a student-centred approach and ensuring that it is firmly embedded in its degree programmes.
80. Lists of key research activities and other projects (SER, Annexes 10 and 12) show that in recent years these have addressed topics relevant to further development of the College’s degree programmes, as envisaged in its mission and 2012–2020 SAP. Teaching and research staff also gave some examples of how applied research findings fed into degree programmes (Orthopaedic Technology, and Social Work). While research activities appear to be more limited in some areas (e.g. Beauty Therapy and Hospitality Management) than in others, this is understandable as four programmes have only recently been established. In line with both the 2012–2020 and 2016–2020 SAPs, the College has established close links with social partners with a view to integrating business ideas into its programmes (for more detailed comments, see below). The Team notes, however, that cooperation with strategic partners, chosen for each degree programme, covers applied research in only one case (SER, Annex 18). It **would be advisable** to have more (research-oriented) partners for this strand of cooperation to ensure that research ideas are also effectively integrated in degree programmes, in line with the 2016–2020 SAP.
81. The 2013 review recommended that the College define the intended learning outcomes of the curricula more clearly and in line with the Lithuanian Qualifications Framework (LQF); clearly distinguish higher professional education curricula from vocational education curricula; review the transfer of credit points from vocational education to higher education, and develop appropriate regulations for such transfers; and strengthen the supervision and management of each study programme. As noted in the section on Strategic Management, the recommendations concerning learning outcomes and their compliance with the LQF, and programme management have been implemented. For credit transfer and recognition, see Variety of lifelong learning forms and conditions below.
82. As some of its programmes are unique in Lithuania, the College has sought to benchmark them against comparable ones in other countries, and there are plans for benchmarking against programmes provided by Jesuit institutions, in particular in the United States. The Team **encourages the College to continue to seek advice** on new programmes and explore inputs from colleagues abroad to ensure that each programme remains academically relevant and is based on best international practice.

#### *Alignment with national development needs*

83. It was evident to the Team that the College’s degree programmes directly respond to development needs in Lithuania as identified in a number of national policies and programmes and in regional development plans (SER, Annex 15). Most programmes (Orthopaedic Technology, Emergency Medical Aid, Beauty Therapy, Social Work, and Hospitality Management) address national priority areas, and the last of these is also in line with the priority of developing tourism in the Kaunas region. A tight link with development needs is further evidenced by the steadily growing number of students at the College (see Background information on the institution), state funding for the three unique programmes, and graduate employment rates. Employment rates are higher than the average of 74% for Lithuanian colleges: 88% for Image Design; 91% for Beauty Therapy, and 100% for Orthopaedic Technology (the only three fields where students have graduated to date) (SER, Annex 16). According to the same Annex, between two-thirds and three-quarters of all 2015 graduates have a job corresponding to their degree: 64% for

Beauty Therapy, 73% for Orthopaedic Technology, and 77% for Image Design. The figures are, in fact, higher if this is calculated as a percentage of working (not of all) graduates: 70% for Beauty Therapy, 73% for Orthopaedic Technology, and for 87% for Image Design.

84. To ensure their relevance to labour market needs, programmes are developed and reviewed by Study Programme Committees which involve, as noted earlier, social partners for each programme, and the development process takes into consideration current and prospective demand for professionals. The Pastoral Care programme was developed directly in response to the needs expressed by social partners. Graduates' knowledge and skills are highly regarded by employers, and some students are offered a job already during their practical placement. (SER; meetings with Study Programme Committees, Graduates, and Social Partners)
85. **Commendation**: The Team commends the College for expanding its degree programme portfolio within a short time, and for designing its programmes so that they attract growing numbers of students and respond to both national development priorities and labour market needs.

#### *Variety of lifelong learning forms and conditions*

86. The seven degree programmes offered represent quite a wide variety in terms of subject areas, in particular for an institution which is quite young and rather small, and which naturally focuses on caring professions in line with its Christian ethos. All programmes are offered only in a full-time mode. The SER states that part-time programmes in all fields have been developed but there is no demand for them. Some of the students that the Team met combine study and work, and this does not seem to pose any problem as the College is responsive to their needs. A degree of flexibility is also ensured by the modular structure of all programmes. Further, in accordance with the relevant procedure, students may move to another programme within the same field of study (SER).
87. Currently, all programmes are provided in a campus-based mode, but the College is preparing to introduce distance education. Some ICT facilities, including a Moodle-based system, have been or are being established, in line with the 2013 recommendation to ensure wider use of ICT in teaching (see Strategic Management). As the Team learned from the SER Group and representatives of Study Programme Committees, work is underway to introduce two distance learning modules on a pilot basis as from September 2017, drawing on the experience of US Jesuit institutions. If these are successfully delivered, the College will expand distance education provision; this is, obviously, a reasonable approach. As another noteworthy example of efforts to extend the range of options available, arrangements are being made to introduce the first programme delivered in Lithuanian and English (for further comments, see Compliance of learning conditions with EHEA provisions below).
88. Student dropout rates at the College varied from 6.1% in 2013 to 4.0% in 2014 and 11.1% in 2015, and were much lower than the average for higher education in Lithuania. Dropout is caused mainly by personal reasons; very few students leave the College owing to academic failure. (SER, Annex 17). This may serve as evidence for effective student support arrangements. The role of Programme Curators in supporting students and ensuring that their needs are given due consideration has already been discussed. The College also takes care to ensure that practical placements are a meaningful experience for students (as well as for organisations hosting placements). Host organisations appoint supervisors, contents are agreed beforehand, and placements are evaluated by both students and supervisors. Feedback is used to make improvements. (Meeting with Study Programme Committees) Further, as stated in the SER, some financial support is available



(42 students benefiting from various grants since the previous review). Finally, family-like relationships between students and staff and ‘much attention received from teachers and Curators’ were mentioned by students and/or graduates as great advantages of studying at the College. This is also an indication of a truly student-centred approach of the institution as a whole.

89. As noted above, lifelong learning options are limited to full degree programmes or selected modules. Moreover, while the Heads of Departments that the Team met understand lifelong learning as a broad concept, some documents received from the College (e.g. some paragraphs in the SER, and Additional information provided before the visit) might suggest that the concept is sometimes narrowed down to continuous professional development of teachers working at the College. The Team considers that there is untapped potential in the College to **offer much more in terms of lifelong learning**, especially in the areas where it provides its three unique degree programmes. The College is also well-prepared in terms of its teaching and learning facilities to offer more than it now does (see Infrastructure management in the section on Strategic Management).
90. **Recommendation**: The Team recommends that the College should explore the possibility of expanding lifelong learning opportunities, and in particular providing stand-alone continuing education/retraining courses to professionals working in the sectors targeted by its unique degree programmes.
91. The College has recently put in place procedures and methodologies for the recognition/validation of vocational training credits (for graduates of other higher education and vocational training institutions), and for the evaluation and recognition of competences acquired in non-formal and informal adult learning. The former, introduced to address the 2013 recommendation referred to above, has been used to recognise credits for 256 students since 2013, and the latter to assess competences of 10 people. (SER)

#### ***Graduate career monitoring***

92. The first College students graduated only in spring 2014 (Orthopaedic Technology, Beauty Therapy, and Image Design) (SER, Annex 16). As stated in the SER and confirmed by graduates, the College conducts a detailed survey among graduating students and regular surveys among graduates. Findings from graduate surveys are analysed by Study Programme Committees and presented to the Academic Council as the body responsible for approving programmes (SER). The Team did not find any examples of specific improvements made in programmes in response to feedback from graduates, but this could hardly be expected considering that the number of graduates is still small and they have only recently entered the labour market. Aside from surveys, the College collects information, through informal contacts, on graduates moving on to Master’s degree programmes. The Team **encourages the College to collect such data more systematically** so that it could be used as a reliable performance indicator.
93. As mentioned earlier, the College has recently established the Centre of Future Professions which, among other things, provides career guidance to students. Though some of the students interviewed did not seem to be aware of the support they could receive from the Centre, others assured the Team that they had been informed about its services at the beginning of their studies.

#### ***Cooperation with partners and their impact on education and training***

94. Cooperation with (social) partners has been high on the College’s agenda since its establishment, featuring under some strategic objectives in the 2012–2020 SAP, and has recently been ‘promoted’ to one of the five priority action lines in the 2016–2020 SAP. Measures planned as part of this action line include, for example, annual review of

cooperation agreements with partners, starting in 2016; at least two joint projects undertaken with social partners in 2016, with more to be launched in the next years; the establishment of ‘service companies’ related to degree programmes each year; and further development of the above-mentioned Centre of Future Professions.

95. Social partners are represented on the College Board and the Academic Council (for their remit, see Background information on the institution). In this way, obviously, they have a major influence on how the College expands its portfolio of degree programmes and pursues its strategic priorities through the programmes established.
96. Since 2013, the College has created a network of 61 partners based on cooperation agreements (SER, Annex 18). These include Lithuanian and international higher education institutions, business companies or organisations, associations and other organisations. A strong representation of business and academic partners in the network logically reflects priority given by the College to the integration of business and research ideas into its programmes. Partners are involved in the development and review of programmes as members of Study Programme Committees, in the organisation of practical placements for students and in supervision of their final theses. This is where a key role is played by two or three strategic partners chosen for each programme (SER, Annex 28), in line with the relevant 2013 recommendation. Some business partners teach at the College, and some academic partners provide, jointly with the College, training to its teaching staff. Agreements with several higher education and training institutions provide access for the College to their facilities, including libraries. Together with its partners, the College has established entities such as the Institute of Professional Innovations mentioned earlier in the context of ICT learning facilities and a unit in Palanga where students undertake placements (Meeting with Heads of Units). There are also plans to create more joint business entities. As the College is a small institution, partnerships are instrumental in increasing its capacity and competitiveness. The College is well aware of that, and has indeed made sure that below institutional level partners have a central role in both the development and delivery of degree programmes. They do evidently contribute to enhancing the relevance of programmes to labour market needs and, thus, graduate employability, extending the range of options available for the practical training of students, improving the quality of teaching and teaching and learning facilities. However, strategic partners, in particular, **could take advantage** of their ‘privileged’ position to encourage development of lifelong learning opportunities at the College.

For a related **commendation**, see the Impact on National and Regional Development.

#### **COMPLIANCE OF LEARNING CONDITIONS WITH PROVISIONS OF THE EUROPEAN HIGHER EDUCATION AREA**

##### ***Alignment of strategic documents related to degree programmes and lifelong learning with the principles of the EHEA and EU documents***

97. The 2012–2020 and 2016–2020 SAPs of the College refer very briefly and in very general terms to the European Higher Education (EHEA) and European documents related to higher education (e.g. there is only a reference to the Lisbon Strategy in the 2012–2020 SAP and to the activities of the College being based on European and Lithuanian policies in the 2016–2020 SAP). Thus, as also noted by the 2013 review team, the documents themselves do not provide any evidence that EHEA or EU higher education priorities did indeed inform the development of the College’s strategies. Despite that, the SAPs address explicitly a number of key European priorities, and in particular quality assurance, internationalisation (with a focus on mobility and introduction of modules to be delivered by international staff) and employability. While the term ‘student-centred learning’ is not used in the SAPs, the concept is, as discussed above, an integral part of the Ignatian

pedagogical paradigm and thus is incorporated into the 2016–2020 SAP as a priority action line. Lifelong learning features in the SAP but not very prominently and, as noted earlier, would need to be given greater consideration. Moreover, Annex 20 to the SER, which maps some European or EU documents onto the SAPs, shows that the College keeps itself abreast of developments in European policies and, as noted earlier, this is a task assigned to the person responsible for quality assurance.

### *International mobility*

98. The College was awarded an Erasmus Charter for Higher Education (ECHE) which gives access to Erasmus+, the main EU programme supporting student and staff mobility, at the end of 2013. It received its first Erasmus+ grant for mobility activities in 2015/2016. To encourage mobility, a coordinator with specific responsibility for international mobility has been appointed, seminars and other activities are organised for teaching staff and students, and information about mobility opportunities is also disseminated through posters and promotional materials. A procedure for the selection of staff for mobility has been adopted. (SER)
99. According to Table 4 in the SER, a total number of 36 students have participated in mobility funded by Erasmus+ and other sources. The total number of outgoing students has increased from 6 in 2014 (including 1 under Erasmus+) to 8 (4 under an Erasmus+ project not specifically supporting mobility) in 2015 and 22 (6 under Erasmus+) in 2016. The number of Erasmus+ students is still very small, but this is fully understandable considering that grants have been available only since 2015/2016. Most non-Erasmus+ mobility periods are short trips of a few days, related to participation in events or projects (SER, Annex 21). While, as the Team learned from students, such trips are all meaningful experiences, they could not be considered learning mobility in the context of the EU and Bologna Process benchmarks, according to which graduates should have had a study or practical training period abroad, lasting at least three months or representing 15 ECTS.
100. Erasmus+ mobility comprises both periods of study and practical placements. Erasmus+ mobility periods have been undertaken in Ireland, Italy, Latvia and Spain, and Germany, Italy, Poland, Romania and Russia are the destinations of short trips. The choice of countries for outgoing Erasmus+ students seems to be quite limited. This can be explained by the ‘uniqueness’ of the College’s programmes and the fact that it has only recently engaged in international activities. The number of agreements is likely to grow as new ones are signed as a spin-off effect of student and staff mobility (Meeting with the persons responsible for international mobility). However, the students interviewed suggested that **links could be established with more international partners**, and the Team **strongly encourages** the College to do so.
101. The recognition of Erasmus+ study periods and placements is based on ECTS (a learning outcome recognition sheet prepared by Programme Curators). (SER; meeting with the persons responsible for international mobility) In its meeting with students, the Team did not find any evidence that outgoing students might have any recognition problems upon return (though none of the students interviewed who had international experience had chosen a study period).
102. As regards inward student mobility, between 2015 and 2016, 3 higher education students (Latvia and Turkey) undertook a practical placement or a study period at the College, and 6 secondary school students from Slovenia visited the College (SER). There is evidently much to be done in this area, and thus the Team is glad to note that, as mentioned earlier, the College is now developing a programme in Management which will be delivered in Lithuanian and English and, thus, likely to attract more international students. See also General comments below.



103. As explained in the SER, staff mobility includes short visits, study visits, teaching assignments and lectures abroad, and participation in conferences and seminars. The total number of outgoing staff increased from 14 (0 under Erasmus+) in 2013, 23 (1 under an Erasmus+ project not specifically supporting mobility) in 2014 to 35 (9 under Erasmus+) in 2015, and has dropped to 14 (2 under Erasmus+) in 2016. Most of Erasmus+ mobility periods are study visits, and few are teaching assignments. Many destination countries for staff mobility are listed in the SER and Annex 22, including more than half of all EU countries, in different regions, as well as Armenia, Belarus, Russia, Turkey, Israel and the United States. This is not, however, indicative of the College's potential for developing lasting links for future mobility as the data also covers participation in conferences and seminars. As regards inward mobility, the College was visited by academic staff from more than ten countries who delivered lectures, ran workshops and attended conferences organised by the College (no statistics compiled) (SER).
104. In discussing the outcomes or impact of mobility, the College mentions improvements in degree programmes and the teaching process. However, it tends to highlight knowledge and skills, in particular foreign language skills, improved and international experience gained by students and staff, the promotion of staff's research achievements, and new links established by the College (SER; meeting with the persons responsible for international mobility). This is understandable as these are the first years of international mobility, and the volume of mobility is still too small to encourage clearly identifiable changes or improvements in degree programmes as a cumulative effect of individual outgoing students' and staff members' experiences.

#### ***General comments on internationalisation***

105. The 2012–2020 and 2016–2020 SAPs show that the College is well aware that internationalisation is 'an imperative' for every higher education institution. Both of the SAPs highlight student and staff mobility as a key issue and, as stated in the 2016–2020 SAP, at least one module in each study programme should be ready for delivery by international academic staff by 2020. In one way or another, internationalisation emerged in various contexts in the Team's discussions with internal stakeholders of the College. The College is also aware that this is not an easy process. Expanding international activities and increasing inward staff and student mobility are mentioned in the SER as new potential challenges, and in the meeting with the Team, the Director also emphasised that the College needed both time and resources to engage more extensively in international cooperation.
106. The College is at a very early stage of internationalisation. Aside from the limited mobility, it has signed cooperation agreements with only five international higher education institutions (in the Czech Republic, Germany, Latvia and Poland), all dated 2013 or 2014 (SER, Annex 18), though a few more have been concluded for mobility in Erasmus+. It does not offer any programme or course in a foreign language. During the visit, the persons responsible for international mobility mentioned only the College website and dissemination of information by outgoing students and staff as ways of encouraging inward mobility. This is unlikely to encourage a substantial increase. In particular for Erasmus+ student mobility, it **may be helpful to take a more active and structured approach** to 'international marketing' at institutional level; this could involve, for example, reaching out directly to higher education institutions across Europe which offer compatible individual courses (not necessarily full programmes), when some modules in a foreign language are already available at the College.
107. Although tangible results are yet to be seen, the College is moving ahead now. In addition to developing the above-mentioned programme in Lithuanian and English, it is making arrangements with German, French and US institutions to provide joint programmes which

will lead to double degrees. In this context, it **would be advisable to give more consideration to developing language and intercultural skills** of College staff so that they are fully prepared to teach and provide practical support to incoming students. The College is also actively working towards joining the official international network of Jesuit academic institutions, with some of whom there are already informal links. This will facilitate partnership working with a range of colleges abroad, including access to project funding. It will also balance the College's efforts to develop links within Europe. (Meetings with the Director and the persons responsible for international mobility)

108. There are some clear priorities for international activity, such as increasing mobility, developing programmes or courses in English and double degree programmes, and joining the Jesuit network. However, these are not yet part of a fully-fledged internationalisation strategy which would define the objectives of internationalisation – linked with overall development goals of the institution as identified in its strategic plan – and means to achieve strategic objectives, and methods of monitoring progress towards them.
109. Similarly, the College does not seem to have yet a strategic approach to the implementation of the ECHE which it has signed. The ECHE defines a number of general priorities or broader development objectives which set a framework for all Erasmus+ activities undertaken by higher education institutions, and which ECHE signatories are expected to pursue. These concern, among other things, improving the quality of education, linking higher education, research and business, and improving governance and funding. In the meeting with the persons responsible for international relations, it was not clear to the Team that Erasmus+ mobility was in practice seen as a means of pursuing or achieving such wider objectives or supporting overall development of the College. Rather, it seemed to be considered mainly a learning experience for students, a way of enhancing the expertise of staff and an opportunity to establish new links (and this is consistent with how the College defines the main outcomes or impact of mobility, as discussed above). There seem to be no mechanisms for reviewing progress towards the objectives of the ECHE, as annual reviews are limited to analysing numbers of outgoing students and staff and 'their achievements'.
110. **Recommendation:** The Team strongly recommends that the College should ensure that mobility and other activities undertaken in the framework of Erasmus+ explicitly pursue all the objectives stated in the Erasmus Charter for Higher Education, and should devise more elaborate plans for achieving them and monitor progress towards them.

*In summary*, the College has considerably expanded its portfolio of degree programmes in recent years, while ensuring that they all embrace its mission and the key priorities of its Strategic Activity Plan on the one hand and address both national development and employers' needs on the other hand. The programme portfolio that the College now offers to its current and prospective students represents a fairly wide variety in terms of subject areas, especially considering that it is a quite young institution and one which naturally focuses on caring professions in line with its Christian ethos. Programmes are offered only in a full-time and campus-based mode. However, this is balanced by a degree of flexibility inherent in a modular structure of programmes, and by the College's student-centred approach, as a central element of its Ignatian pedagogical paradigm, with much attention paid to individual students' needs; moreover, preparations are underway to introduce distance education. By contrast, much remains to be done in the area of lifelong learning, where the options available to adult learners are limited, even though it is worth noting good arrangements for the recognition of prior learning that have been introduced and tested. While the first students have only recently graduated and their number is still quite small, the College has already put in place mechanisms to monitor their careers; these could be usefully supplemented by arrangements for more systematic collection of data on graduates moving on to Master's degree programmes. All recent changes have been introduced in close

collaboration with social partners who have significant impact on degree programmes at both institutional and departmental levels.

Despite their rather brief and vague references to the European Higher Education Area and EU policies, the strategic documents of the College do actually address a number of key European priorities. International mobility of students and staff is limited and its impact seen mainly at individual rather than programme or institutional level, but this is understandable as the College has benefited from Erasmus+ grants only since 2015/2016. However, the College needs to ensure that mobility and, in broader terms, all international activities are managed more strategically.

*Judgement on the area: Academic Studies and Lifelong Learning is given positive evaluation.*

## V. RESEARCH AND ART

### RELEVANCE OF RESEARCH

#### *Alignment of research with the mission and strategic documents of the institution*

111. Colleges in Lithuania are required to conduct applied research by the Law on Higher Education and Research, but national legislation does not provide any definition of, or lay down any requirements for, applied research to be conducted by colleges (A document 'Research and art activities at the Colleges in Lithuania' provided by SKVC; meeting with the Director). As the Team learned from the College after the site visit (the Director's response to the draft review report at the stage of its factual accuracy check), the College has its own definition of applied research, adopted by its Academic Council in October 2015. The definition explains clearly what kind of activity is considered by the College to fall within the scope of applied research (also as opposed to teaching / learning, training and consultancy activities) and puts emphasis on the applicability of research results in 'professional contexts' and on the contribution of applied research to social welfare. Despite that, the SER and its Annexes and strategic documents of the College do not make a clear distinction between (applied) research, consultancy, training and other activities (see comments on various aspects below).
112. In the final meeting with the Team during the visit, the Management Team defined applied research of the College as focused on a learning environment and related to a specific working context for which graduates are trained, so that findings can guide the College in designing its degree programmes. There seems to be some discrepancy between the officially adopted definition and the working definition of, or approach to, applied research as explained during the visit. While the former is clearly geared towards serving the needs of external stakeholders, the latter might suggest that the scope of research is narrowed down to 'inward-oriented' activities which are aimed mainly at finding 'solutions' for the College as the main 'client'. This is also in a way reflected in the priority areas defined at institutional level (see the evidence and related comment below). Such an approach would provide limited space for applied research that serves the needs of social and business partners by proposing solutions to specific problems which they are faced with and which may not necessarily be addressed only by supplying highly qualified graduates.
113. **Recommendation:** The Team recommends that, in line with its officially adopted definition of applied research, the College should seek to accommodate its own development needs and those of its external stakeholders in its research planning and management, and ensure that its official definition and understanding of applied research, as opposed to teaching, training and consultancy activities, is reflected in its strategic and other documents.
114. The mission and the 2012–2020 and 2016–2020 SAPs of the College all feature applied research as geared towards the needs of degree programmes. In its mission, the College

seeks to provide programmes which integrate research (and business) ideas. Development of applied research as a strategic goal in the 2012–2020 SAP is oriented towards introducing innovations into programmes and enhancing their quality. The 2016–2020 SAP links the development of research to degree programmes under a priority action line of ‘Integration of science and business ideas into the process of studies’; it also puts emphasis on conducting research related to the areas of degree programmes within this action line. This is all consistently translated into priority areas at institutional level (and shows that the College has implemented the 2013 review recommendation to improve strategic planning of research). For the SAP 2016–2020, these include: Evaluation of competences in service provision, Development and introduction of a modular teaching/learning system, and Values in vocational training and activities (as stated in the SER, these three being a refined version of the 2012–2020 SAP priorities), and Factors determining services (added recently, as explained by the Academic Council). The Director of the College agreed with the Team that the institutional priorities might look somewhat ‘inward-looking’ but emphasised the responsibility of the College for the quality of its programmes and their relevance to labour market needs.

115. Priority fields have also been identified by Study Programme Committees at the level of degree programmes (SER, Annex 29). While the SER states that these are aligned with the institutional priorities, it is quite difficult to see how the former actually map onto the latter. However, as the Team found in the meetings with the Academic Council and Chaplain and the SER Group, the College is currently addressing the issue. A draft ‘matrix’ for mapping research has been developed as a result of discussions at a recent strategic session. Once the Study Programme Committees define the main areas of applied research for each programme and the matrix is approved at institutional level, it will provide the basis for all research activities. The Team was provided with the draft of the matrix; it did look promising, though in practice it still needed to be fleshed out.
116. Recent research projects (SER, Annex 12) have evidently been guided by the institutional priorities and the overarching priority of integrating research ideas into degree programmes. More specifically, applied research concentrates on the service sector, including education and training, with an interesting aspect (relevant to the College’s subject specialisations and ethos) concerning values in vocational training. The kinds of activity involved are commissioned research, labour market analysis, and more fundamental studies. However, there are also studies of the College’s own teaching quality, which can perhaps be seen as lying on the boundary between teaching and research, arguably counting as research for present purposes only if the results are publicised outside the College.
117. The applied research projects listed also focus on the core disciplines that the College teaches, as recommended by the 2013 review team. Although not all subject areas of its degree programmes appear to be addressed in applied research to the same extent, this is understandable, as noted earlier, since some programmes have only recently been established. This may also explain why examples given by teaching and research staff of how research findings feed into programmes concern mainly the fields of Orthopaedic Technology and Social Work. However, as also noted earlier, to have a tighter link in all programmes, it may be reasonable to add a few research-oriented institutions to the list of strategic partners for degree programmes (SER, Annex 28).
118. Education and research are, obviously, further ‘integrated’ through the participation of students in applied research and related activities. They are involved in commissioned applied research (and project and consultancy activities, as mentioned in the SER in this context), often undertake practical placements and prepare their final theses as part of commissioned research, and present research findings at conferences and in student



publications. (SER; meetings with the Academic Council and Chaplain, and Heads of Units)

119. The College undertakes the following types of applied research and related activities: commissioned research for companies, public sector bodies and other organisations; studies commissioned by professionals; in-house research on the quality of education; and research ‘for expansion of scientific knowledge’, including research papers and publications, conference presentations, research-based methodological aids (SER). These are typical applied research activities of Lithuanian colleges (SKVC document ‘Research and art activities at the Colleges in Lithuania’). In recent years, the College has conducted 9 projects, produced 8 studies and engaged in various artistic activities (e.g. exhibitions followed by an article or review, a concert, production of an album). The total number of publications, including articles in peer-reviewed publications, conference presentations, and monographs in English, increased slightly between 2013 and 2015 (SER, Table 6; Annex 24). In the same period, the College also organised a series of three practically oriented conferences. Overall, this applied research ‘output’ is modest but reasonable in scale, considering that the College is quite a young institution, has few full-time staff members and, as explained by the Director, as a non-state college is not eligible to apply for national research grants.
120. To encourage research, the College has adopted regulations whereby staff are required to develop a plan of applied research and art activities and report on their activities and achievements as part of staff appraisal (‘attestation’) (SER). Staff are also required to use the name of the College as their affiliation on the publications produced (but, of course, can add the name of another institution they work for, where applicable). In this way, the College has addressed the related 2013 recommendation. Strictly speaking, there are no bonuses or other specific financial incentives offered by the College to ‘balance’ the requirements. However, as noted earlier, good performance is rewarded, for example, by funding for participation in conferences, and staff earn more when involved in research projects. The College also supports its staff in conducting research, producing publications and disseminating applied research findings. Staff appear to be fully satisfied with the arrangements in place. (Meetings with Heads of Units, and Teaching and Research Staff, and final meeting with the Management Team)
121. In the context of the 2013 recommendation for the College to strengthen its engagement with modern technology in research, the Team notes the recent development of ICT facilities which are also used to conduct applied research.

#### ***Alignment of research with national and/regional development priorities***

122. The SER argues persuasively that the applied research and art activities that the College conducts are aligned with national and regional priorities as expressed in a number of strategic documents (all listed in the SER). This alignment is helped by the College’s policy of conducting research and art in areas tied to the degree programs it offers, which are practical in orientation and informed by dialogue with employers. Also, as the Team learned during the visit, the Academic Council, which takes overall responsibility for the relevance and quality of research, meets regularly to discuss research innovations and developments at national and regional levels with a view to incorporating emerging issues into the College’s applied research activities.

#### ***Impact of partners on research***

123. The College has a range of academic, social and business partners with which it collaborates in areas including applied research and art and, as noted earlier, this features prominently in its strategic documents. Despite the College’s definition of applied research which might look somewhat ‘inward-oriented’ (see above), partners are engaged in various

levels of its activity and so help to influence both policy and practice. More specifically, as members of the College Board and the Academic Council, they contribute to decisions on priority research areas. Below the institutional level, collaboration involves, in particular, conducting joint applied research; developing joint research proposals; organising conferences; producing joint research publications; and knowledge sharing in formal and informal ways on an almost continuous basis, as stated by the partners interviewed (and training and consultancy services again mentioned in this context in the SER). Partners also have some influence on final theses insofar as students can develop ideas for their research-based final theses during practical placements. Finally, partners may provide access to specialist equipment for research, and the College takes advantage of this, in particular, as part of its collaboration with the biggest universities in Kaunas. (SER; meetings with the College Board, Academic Council, and Social Partners) As a result, the partners have clear impact on what activities are undertaken and how they are undertaken. The Team notes, though, that given the blurred boundaries between applied research, consultancy, training and teaching, it is not always easy to ‘single out’ the involvement of partners and their contributions or impact in the area of research.

#### **INTERNATIONAL LINKS AND COMPLIANCE WITH THE PRINCIPLES OF THE EUROPEAN RESEARCH AREA**

The following SKVC review criteria relate mainly to universities, for which the expectations in the area of research are more stringent. Thus, the Team did not judge the College’s input here against the same standards as for a university expected to conduct internationally competitive fundamental research.

##### ***Alignment of strategic documents with ERA priorities***

124. The 2012–2020 and 2016–2020 SAPs of the College refer to applied rather than fundamental research, as appropriate for a college rather than a university, and to improving the quality of degree programmes, which, as already noted, needs to be published to lie firmly within fundamental research rather than teaching programme development. There is no explicit reference to the European Research Area (ERA) in either of the documents. However, there is some broad correspondence between the SAPs and ERA priorities. This is to the extent that the SAPs highlight the integration of education and research, the involvement of social and business partners, and internationalisation, including enabling collaboration by enhancing language competences, although the SER again refers to topics beyond research such as improvement of mobility for teaching.

##### ***Participation in international research projects, international research mobility and its impact***

125. Similarly, international cooperation, as discussed in the SER, relates to projects in the College’s main strategic priority areas, extending beyond applied research into teaching enhancement. The number of international projects has been declining, though the number of staff involved has remained constant. However, as the Team found in its meeting with the SER Group, the College is now preparing a Horizon 2020 project proposal together with a Scandinavian partner. This is, obviously, a good move as if successful, the project may pave the way for the College to establish links with mainstream research institutions and, as the Team learned from the Director, joining international networks is currently the main challenge for research staff. This is also partly being addressed by arrangements made to join the international Jesuit network. In this context, the Team is also notes that the College has clear criteria for choosing suitable international partners: interdisciplinary nature of activities; experience in project implementation; applicability of project results; and compliance with strategic goals of the College (SER).

126. Mobility is seen mainly in the light of Erasmus+, which therefore again mixes teaching and learning with research goals. Nonetheless, it obviously facilitates contact with higher

education institutions in other countries that is of potential value for research collaboration. International outward mobility for meetings and for collaborations is regarded as one measure of the quality of research, and there is also some inward mobility for teaching and research. In this context, the Team **encourages the College to explore opportunities** offered by Marie Curie Fellowships, as part of Horizon 2020, which support career development of researchers and facilitate knowledge transfer between collaborating institutions.

*In summary*, applied research and art activities of the College carry forward its mission and the main priorities of its Strategic Activity Plan. However, a refined definition of applied research would help to make a clearer distinction between research, consultancy, training and teaching activities, and there needs to be a clearer link between institutional and departmental or programme-level priorities. The former is a common problem for Lithuanian colleges, and the latter is now being addressed by the College on its own initiative. Its applied research, comprising a set of activities which are typical of Lithuanian colleges, has expanded slightly in recent years. It is still modest but reasonable in scale, in particular for quite a young non-state college with a small number of full-time researchers, and some arrangements, which staff find satisfactory, are in place to encourage engagement in research. Applied research and art activities are aligned with national and regional development priorities, and social partners both have influence on the College's research policy and are directly involved in various joint activities.

The involvement of the College in international research collaboration and mobility, whether within or outside the framework of the European Research Area, is rather limited, but this is not considered central to its core business (and not regarded as such in the SKVC review criteria for colleges). While the number of projects has recently declined, it is promising that the College is now seeking to address this problem and has a clear idea of what partners it needs to advance its research-related objectives.

***Judgement on the area:*** *Research and Art is given positive evaluation.*

## **VI. IMPACT ON REGIONAL AND NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

### ***Measures to achieve impact as defined in the mission and strategic documents of the institution***

127. The College seeks to achieve impact through degree programmes, continuing or adult education/retraining, and research and consultancy activities. While its mission focuses on degree programmes as a means of exerting impact, its Statutes and 2012–2020 and 2016–2020 SAPs feature all of these measures (as separate strategic objectives or as part of other priority actions lines in the SAPs). Key documents of the College also put a strong emphasis on the relevance of the knowledge and skills of graduates to labour market needs. The three types of measures are linked through cooperation with social partners as a cross-cutting priority action line in the 2016–2020 SAP. In meetings with the Team, the Director, the SER Group and graduates also mentioned voluntary activities as a way of achieving impact.
128. The vision of the College vaguely refers to ‘St. Ignatius of Loyola College as the most reputable and innovative College’, without indicating whether it aims to position itself as such at local, regional, national or perhaps European or international level, and this cannot be indirectly inferred from its mission. The Statutes refer to the College's activities as aiming to cater to both national needs and those of the Kaunas region. Though this is not stated explicitly, both of the SAPs seem to suggest that the College seeks to achieve impact primarily at regional level and to a much lesser extent or indirectly at national level. In discussing the issue of national versus regional role of the College, the Director mentioned voluntary activities as having impact at local community and national levels, and the College's plans to establish, jointly with business partners, private companies that would

contribute to the development of the national economy. Overall, it seems that the College is yet to define more precisely how ‘high’ it aims and through which of the measures mentioned above. A clearer vision in this respect **would help the College keep a strategic focus** in its further development. The Team believes that aside from activities targeted mainly at the Kaunas region, the College could aim more explicitly to have impact at national level, for example, through its three unique degree programmes (Orthopaedic Technology, Emergency Medical Aid and Pastoral Care). Pastoral Care was also mentioned in this context by some of the social partners that the Team met.

129. Higher education institutions are not explicitly required by the SKVC review criteria to define ways of measuring the impact achieved. During the site visit, the Team did not find any evidence that the College had mechanisms in place to systematically evaluate the impact of its core activities. However, the 2016–2020 SAP defines some quantified outcomes and key indicators which could be used for this purpose either as they stand or if slightly redefined. One of these is graduate employability. Additionally, the Team **encourages the College to collect data on graduates** in a geographical breakdown to see whether they stay/ go back to, and work in, their home towns/regions or choose other destinations for their professional activity. To demonstrate impact of the College’s degree programmes, it **would also be useful to have data** on the sectors of the economy where graduates are (self-) employed. Other outcomes or indicators in the SAP include, for example, the number of adult/continuing education/retraining courses or course hours, of research publications, commissioned research projects or consultancy hours. Aside from measuring performance, they can provide some indication of potential impact (though, for instance, numbers and economy sectors of retraining course participants or recipients of consultancy services would better illustrate impact than the number of course or consultancy hours). The number of new jobs created **may also be considered to measure impact**, in particular in the context of spin-offs, start-ups and other business entities (to be established by the College).

### *Implementation of measures*

130. The impact of degree programmes is most vividly demonstrated by employment rates of the College’s graduates which are higher than the average for Lithuanian colleges (see Academic Studies and Lifelong Learning). The SER states that the College has impact at national level as students come from all ten regions of Lithuania. The data provided shows, however, that the majority (66%) of students come from the Kaunas region, 9% from Klaipėda, 7% from Marijampole, ca 5% each from Vilnius and Alytus, and much smaller numbers from other regions. Both the graduates and social partners interviewed emphasised that College graduates were highly valued by their employers for their theoretical knowledge and practical skills, and high motivation. The social partners also pointed to an important role that the College plays by offering programmes similar to those in vocational education and, thus, opportunities for transfer to higher education.
131. According to the SER (though the data in Tables 9 and 10 are not comparable to those in Annex 12), between 2013 and 2015, the College conducted a total number of 11 commissioned research projects/studies for organisations in the Kaunas region (with the number growing from 2 in 2013 and 2014 each to 5 in 2015) and in other regions of Lithuania (1 each year). These were commissioned by NGOs (4), companies (4) and state authorities (3). Here again, the College is mainly a regional rather than national player. It would be difficult to assess impact of its projects on development as the data illustrates only the extent or scale of activity rather than what is achieved through them.
132. As noted earlier, continuing/adult education or lifelong learning is evidently an underdeveloped area of the College’s activity. The Team believes that the College could meaningfully contribute to regional and national development through continuing

education, in particular in the areas where it provides its three unique degree programmes. For details and a related **recommendation**, see Variety of lifelong learning forms and conditions in the section on Academic Studies and Lifelong Learning.

133. The 2013 review team recommended that the College formalise its collaboration with social partners, graduates and other potential partners. The College has concluded cooperation agreements with a total number of 61 institutions and organisations, including 50 between 2013 and 2015 (SER, Annex 18). The network brings together an impressive range of partners: Lithuanian and international higher education institutions, companies, associations, training and cultural institutions, a district municipality and other organisations. The list of agreements indicates, again, a primarily regional focus of the College (partners in 35 of 50 agreements signed between 2013 and 2015 are based in the Kaunas region). This is fully understandable considering the current size and outreach of the College.
134. It was evident to the Team from the SER and a number of meetings that the College had a really close and intense relationship with its partners that brought mutual benefits. As described earlier, they provide an external perspective in strategic management through the College governing bodies. They are involved in the development and review of degree programmes (see Strategic Management, and Academic Studies and Lifelong Learning), in the student practical placement scheme, and in defining topics for student practical placements and final theses (see below). Staff from some partner organisations follow degree programmes (e.g. Pastoral Care) initiated by social partners, and/or developed jointly with them, and others work as lecturers in the College. As also mentioned earlier, some training seminars for College staff are run jointly with other higher education and training institutions. Collaboration in the area of research and consultancy (see also Research and/or Art) includes joint grant proposals and projects, scientific events and joint publications. Other (e.g. youth and training) projects are also carried out with social partners. Finally, agreements cover joint use of teaching and learning and research facilities. (SER, Annex 19; meetings with the College Shareholders and Board, the Academic Council and Social Partners)
135. The College has a clear idea of what partnerships it needs to support its strategic development and increase the impact of its activities. As noted earlier, two or three strategic partners have been chosen for each degree programme (SER, Annex 28) and are most extensively involved in the development and review of programmes. As the Team found in its final meeting with the Management Team, strategic and other partners are chosen according to a number of clear criteria. These include, in particular, not only 'formal' but genuinely shared education and research interests; areas of degree programmes provided by potential partners; and the size, capacity and location of potential partners (hence, for example, agreements with the leading higher education institutions in Vilnius and Kaunas, and arrangements being made to join the international Jesuit network mentioned earlier). Cooperation agreements vary in scope and duration, depending on the specificity of each partner. According to the 2016–2020 SAP, agreements will now be reviewed on an annual basis.
136. **Commendation:** The Team commends the College for employing a clear strategy for establishing and reviewing partnerships and creating a robust network of partners who are extensively engaged in the activities of the College.
137. The College created an Alumni Club in 2015. The Club has just a few members but this is understandable as it is a new structure and first students have only recently graduated from the College. Despite that, as the Team learned in its meeting with graduates, the Club is already working closely with the College's Centre of Future Professions, and has a major

role to play in attracting prospective students, supporting Programme Curators and providing career guidance.

138. In its meetings with social partners and graduates, the Team sought to find out whether they were consulted about research and consultancy services and continuing education/retraining courses that the College could offer to them. Formal and informal discussions are regularly held about possible research and consultancy projects. However, the College does not seem to collect information on possible training/skills upgrading needs of its social partners and graduates. The latter emphasised that regardless of how relevant their knowledge and skills might be at the end of studies, they, obviously, needed to be continuously updated. This indicates again that the College **could do much more to offer lifelong learning opportunities**.
139. **Recommendation**: The Team recommends that the College should put in place a mechanism for collecting feedback from its graduates and social partners on continuing education/retraining courses it may offer to them in line with their needs. (For a related recommendation on lifelong learning/continuing education, see Academic Studies and Lifelong Learning)
140. Given their nature, the impact of voluntary activities would be difficult to assess, but it is evident to the Team that the College is extensively involved in such activities through various associations and civic organisations (all listed in the SER). See also comments on participation of College staff below. As explained by graduates, voluntary activities involving students are undertaken mainly in the Kaunas region, but Social Work students participate in various initiatives across the country.

#### ***Alignment of impact with national and/or regional development priorities***

141. The SER and its Annex 27 show how the College addresses priorities defined in a number of national and regional strategic documents. Though all this refers to activities rather than impacts, it is clear to the Team that the impact actually achieved through the degree programmes offered by the College does indeed match development priorities at both national and regional levels. This is evidenced by hard data such as state funding awarded for the three unique programmes and the high graduate employment rates mentioned above, and reflected in the College's approach to education which puts a strong emphasis on the development of creativity, critical thinking and a sense of entrepreneurship of future graduates. Wide and strong links with social partners, and extensive voluntary activities supporting local community development are also obviously very much in line with national and regional priorities, as are studies undertaken by the College as part of its commissioned research and consultancy activities (SER, Annex 12). The link with national or regional priorities is less evident in the case of other projects carried out so far (Annex 12) which appear to address primarily the College's own development needs as a higher education institution.

#### ***Inclusion of topics relevant to national and/or regional development in student practical placements and final theses***

142. Most students undertake practical placements in companies, national and local government bodies, social services/welfare units, hospitals and leisure centres for children in the Kaunas region (67% of host organisations), and others in the Klaipėda, Marijampole and Vilnius regions (SER). Practical placements and final theses are planned so as to address development needs or priorities at national and regional or local levels, while reflecting students' individual interests. As noted earlier in various contexts, in designing its degree programmes, the College takes into consideration, among other things, national and/or regional policies and labour market trends. This is indirectly translated into topics of placements, as an integral part of all programmes, and theses. Students are asked about

their professional interests as early as during the Introductory Week at the College. Then they receive a list of topics and are encouraged to choose those which are relevant to their career plans. Lists of topics of both practical placements and final theses are compiled in collaboration with social partners and other institutions and organisations which operate in the areas corresponding to those of the degree programmes and research of the College, and which have their representatives in its Study Programme Committees. Thus, obviously, placements and theses directly respond to the needs of local or regional employers. The social partners interviewed also assured the Team that final theses were of high quality and offered specific solutions to the problems identified in their organisations. (SER; meetings with the SER Group, Study Programme Committees, Graduates, and Social Partners)

### ***Recognition for participation of staff in voluntary activities***

143. Detailed data provided in the SER and its Annex 32 show that societal engagement is a vital part of the College's activity. Most academic and administrative staff participate in voluntary activities related to their professional profiles as members of various associations, civic organisations and editorial boards, and experts supporting national authorities, committees and other bodies. These focus on the fields of degree programmes provided by the College. Some staff have received certificates of appreciation for their contributions from national or local authorities and national associations. A large proportion of staff are also involved, as members of organisations, expert groups, etc., in various activities which are not directly related to their work. Moreover, both staff and students participate jointly in a large number and wide variety of voluntary activities such as public campaigns (35 between 2013 and 2016), charity campaigns (34) and volunteering campaigns (57) at both national and regional or local levels (examples given in the SER). Many of these also involve social partners (56 between 2013 and 2016). As the Team found in its meeting with teaching and research staff, staff do not expect to be rewarded for their voluntary activities. Engagement in such activities is perceived as 'a duty', a moral obligation firmly embedded in the College's ethos.
144. **Commendation:** The Team commends the College for creating an ethos which encourages genuine commitment to, and involvement in, voluntary activities across its community.

***In summary,*** the strategic documents of the College clearly show that it seeks to exert impact through all of its core activities (as they are defined in its Statutes), including the provision of degree programmes, continuing/adult education, applied research and consultancy activities, as well as through voluntary activities. The documents could still be crisper in defining the level(s) at which impact is to be achieved through each type of activity. While the College does not have any specific formal mechanism to evaluate its impact, some of the indicators for monitoring the implementation of the SAP could be used or refined for this purpose, and ideally supplemented by ones on graduate (self-)employment in a breakdown by region/town and sector of the economy. The impact of degree programmes is well demonstrated by graduate employment rates which are very high, and higher than the average for Lithuanian colleges, as well as by feedback provided by social partners. The research and consultancy activities undertaken so far are likely to have had some impact, but it is difficult to judge this on the basis of data showing only the extent of activity rather than its outcomes. The same applies to voluntary activities, however extensive they are. While the College is well-placed to contribute to national and/or regional development through continuing/adult education, this is still a missed opportunity, as noted in the section on Academic Studies and Lifelong Learning. Overall, though activities are addressing both national and regional priorities, impact can be seen mainly at regional level; the College could perhaps aim higher with its unique degree programmes. A network of partners that the College has created in recent years also reflects a primarily regional focus of the College. It is, however, impressive in terms of the number and variety of partners, as are close links of the College with its partners and their involvement in its activities.

Topics of relevance to national and regional development are incorporated into student practical placements and final theses, while the College also makes sure that they address students' professional interests. Staff are extensively involved in voluntary activities, without expecting a reward as societal engagement is central to the ethos of the College.

*Judgement on the area: Impact on Regional and National Development is given positive evaluation.*



## VII. GOOD PRACTICE AND ENHANCEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

The Team **commends** the College for:

### *Strategic Management*

- engaging all stakeholder groups in its efforts to push forward and monitor the implementation of its Strategic Activity Plan as a way of enhancing strategic planning capacity of the institution, strengthening its corporate governance and, in more general terms, fostering a sense of community, collective responsibility and community spirit, in line with the general aims of the College (par. 29);
- appointing Strategic Planning and Monitoring Teams as a step towards ensuring a strategic focus below the institutional level (par. 29);
- establishing the Quality Laboratory and the position of Quality Coach as mechanisms to involve all members of the College community in mutually respectful discussion of quality issues and how best to resolve them, and to foster a quality culture (par. 44);
- ensuring involvement of all stakeholders in the College’s governance in line with the principles of inclusiveness and collegiality, and strong presence of social partners who provide an element of externality at both institutional and departmental / programme levels (par. 52);
- putting human resources management high on its agenda, and providing funding to advance the related strategic objectives (par. 59);
- efficient management of major changes introduced in a number of key areas over a short period of time (par. 64);
- making consistent efforts to upgrade facilities despite the limited funding available (par. 70);

### *Academic Studies and Lifelong Learning*

- pursuing consistently a student-centred approach and ensuring that it is firmly embedded in the College’s degree programmes (par. 79);
- expanding its degree programme portfolio within a short time, and designing its programmes so that they attract growing numbers of students and respond to both national development priorities and labour market needs (par. 85);

### *Impact on National and Regional Development*

- employing a clear strategy for establishing and reviewing partnerships, and creating a robust network of partners who are extensively engaged in the activities of the College (par. 136);
- creating an ethos which encourages genuine commitment to, and involvement in, voluntary activities across its community (par. 144).

The Team **recommends** that the College should:

### *Strategic Management*

- amend its strategic planning documentation to show explicitly how the expected outcomes for the Strategic Activity Plan advance all aspects of the College mission and support its chosen performance indicators (par. 24);
- revise its strategic planning documentation so that the separate action plan for 2016 and the Quality Policy for 2016 (and their successors for subsequent years) are clearly related to the Strategic Activity Plan without significant overlap (par. 38);
- continue to exercise vigilance in order to ensure that its website and other public information in English avoids using the misleading word ‘university’ (par. 50);

- consider whether ISO certification adds sufficient value to its quality and environmental management to justify the effort required to maintain the certification (par. 54);

#### *Academic Studies and Lifelong Learning*

- explore the possibility of expanding lifelong learning opportunities, and in particular providing stand-alone continuing education/retraining courses to professionals working in the sectors targeted by its unique degree programmes (par. 90);
- ensure that mobility and other activities undertaken in the framework of Erasmus+ pursue the objectives stated in the Erasmus Charter for Higher Education, and devise more elaborate plans for achieving them and monitor progress towards them (par. 110);

#### *Research and/or Art*

- in line with its officially adopted definition of applied research, seek to accommodate its own development needs and those of its external stakeholders in its research planning and management, and ensure that its official definition and understanding of applied research, as opposed to teaching, training and consultancy activities, is reflected in its strategic and other documents (par. 113);

#### *Impact on National and Regional Development*

- put in place a mechanism for collecting feedback from its graduates and social partners on continuing education / retraining courses the College may offer to them in line with their needs. (*For a related recommendation on lifelong learning/continuing education, see Academic Studies and Lifelong Learning above*) (par. 139).

## VIII. JUDGEMENT

St. Ignatius of Loyola College is given positive evaluation.

Grupės vadovas: Team leader:	Prof. Robert Munn
Grupės nariai: Team members:	Lex Stomp Lars Lynge Nielsen Jonas Bartlingas Kornelija Bukantaitė
Vertinimo sekretorius: Review secretary:	Ewa Kolanowska

**ANNEX. ST. IGNATIUS OF LOYOLA COLLEGE RESPONSE TO THE  
REVIEW REPORT**