



STUDIJŲ KOKYBĖS VERTINIMO CENTRAS

Kauno technologijos universiteto
STUDIJŲ PROGRAMOS
STRATEGINĖ LYDERYSTĖ (621N20034)
VERTINIMO IŠVADOS

EVALUATION REPORT
OF *STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP (621N20034)*
STUDY PROGRAMME
at Kaunas university of technology

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DUOMENYS APIE ĮVERTINTĄ PROGRAMĄ

Studijų programos pavadinimas	Strateginė lyderystė
Valstybinis kodas	621N20034
Studijų sritis	Socialiniai mokslai
Studijų kryptis	Vadyba
Studijų programos rūšis	universitetinės studijos
Studijų pakopa	Antra
Studijų forma (trukmė metais)	Nuolatinė (1.5), Iššęstinė (2)
Studijų programos apimtis kreditais	90
Suteikiamas laipsnis ir (ar) profesinė kvalifikacija	Vadybos magistras
Studijų programos įregistravimo data	2010-02-17 Nr. 19

INFORMATION ON EVALUATED STUDY PROGRAMME

Title of the study programme	Strategic Leadership
State code	621N20034
Study area	Social sciences
Study field	Management
Type of the study programme	University studies
Study cycle	Second
Study mode (length in years)	Full time (1.5) Part time (2)
Volume of the study programme in credits	90
Degree and (or) professional qualifications awarded	Master of Management
Date of registration of the study programme	February 17, 2010 No. 19

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I. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the evaluation process

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

The evaluation is intended to help higher education institutions to constantly improve their study programmes and to inform the public about the quality of studies.

The evaluation process consists of the main following stages: *1) self-evaluation and self-evaluation report prepared by Higher Education Institution (hereafter – HEI); 2) visit of the review team at the higher education institution; 3) production of the evaluation report by the review team and its publication; 4) follow-up activities.*

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

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

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

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

1.2. General

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

No.	Name of the document
1.	Detailed marketing guidelines and plans
2.	KTU strategy 2020
3.	Faculty and department annual activity plans

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

The graduate study programme Strategic Leadership is carried out within the School of Economics and Business by Kaunas University of Technology (KTU) which is a public institution and is one of the largest technological universities in the Baltic States.

The Mission of Kaunas University of Technology is to provide international-level research-based studies, to create and transfer knowledge and innovative technologies for sustainable development and innovative growth of the country, provide an open creative environment that inspires leaders and talented individuals. Academic staff of the University consists of 2413 employees (1608 full time employees). The University has 10,895 students, of which 7,895 are Bachelor's, 2,648 are Master's, 566 are foreign, and 352 are Doctoral students. Kaunas University of Technology has 151 study programmes, of which 64 are Bachelor's, 69 are Master's, 17 are Doctoral and 1 is a non-degree student programmes. Of these 39 are taught in English.

The Strategic Leadership Programme originated in the Department of Strategic Management which was situated in the Faculty of Social Sciences until it was moved to the School of Economics and Business in a KTU reorganization of Faculties. The programme was first mainly based in the field of Human Resources management but shifted between 2013-2015 to acquire a strong management emphasis. In 2014 the University structure changed further and the Faculty of Economics and Management was named the School of Economics and Business including the Executive School. The School of Economics and Business offers 8 undergraduate, 14 graduate, and 2 PhD study programmes. It is responsible for the implementation of the second cycle Strategic Leadership study programme which is supervised by the Studies Programme Committee. The Strategic Leadership programme was registered in 2010 and last accredited as meeting the requirements of a master degree programme in 2013 for three years.

1.4. The Review Team

The review team was completed according *Description of experts' recruitment*, approved by order No. 1-01-151 of Acting Director of the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education. The Review Visit to HEI was conducted by the team on *2016-03-15*.

1. **Dr. Mary Lyn Glanz (team leader)** Dean of Graduate Studies for Glion Institution of Higher Education and Les Roches-Gruyère University of Applied Sciences (Switzerland),
2. **Dr. Kristiina Tõnnisson** Director of EuroCollege, University of Tartu (Estonia)
3. **Prof. Dr. Vulf Kozlinskis** Professor at Faculty of Economics, Latvia University of Agriculture (Latvia), (Latvia),
4. **Ms. Vijolė Satkauskienė**, Director and owner of JSC “Verslo barometras”, Vilnius and Utena departments (Lithuania),
5. **Mr. Rimvydas Labanauskis**, PHD student in Economics at Business Management Faculty, Vilnius Gediminas Technical University (Lithuania)

II. PROGRAMME ANALYSIS

2.1. Programme aims and learning outcomes

Attempting to meet its mission to ‘contribute significantly to national development by educating the management professionals with the highest international competence, capable to act as socially responsible smart development agents in the society’, this programme aspires to address the needs of Lithuanian society to develop contemporary, insightful, internationally aware and innovative leaders, able to combine cutting edge knowledge with practical expertise.

Key and specific aims and objectives of the Strategic Leadership study programme are clearly defined and comprehensively explained. The aims, objectives and expected outcomes of the Strategic Leadership study programme are publicly available on the Website of Kaunas University of Technology (<http://www.ktu.lt>). The aim and learning outcomes of the programme conform to the requirements of national and other University regulations and requirements. The final qualifications are consistent with Masters level through the link with Dublin descriptors. National and international benchmarking shows that the study programme has adopted a distinct profile as compared to other study programmes, with the difference from e.g. an MBA being clearly highlighted. The programme attempts to address the perceived and researched lack of strategy professionals in all types of organisations and institutions in Lithuania and the requirement for improved education in strategy, leadership and education laid out in cited EU documents and initiatives. The programme is recognised by national professional business organisations and government agencies operating in the business field.

Intended outcomes are particularly well explored and categorized into: Knowledge and its application; Research skills; Subject Specific skills; Social skills and Personal skills. These outcomes are clear and well rounded for the target group of students who are mainly employed

in different managerial or executive positions. On the panel visit it was clear from student, social partner and teacher input that students who join the course are clear and focussed as to what they expect to gain from study, to the point of having specific gaps in expertise or express work issues that they hope to resolve through their studies. Reasons cited from students for joining the programme were for example, wanting to gain the skills to help their workforce become more productive, or needing more communication expertise to resolve known issues in their workplace. Graduates and students told us of examples where they had been able to utilise knowledge, skills and insight at work within weeks of joining the programme. One student spoke for instance of realising part way through her studies that she was more skilled in tools for addressing social responsibility at work than the person appointed to that task, and then being able to share her knowledge with company as a whole. In this way, students are definitely being equipped with business research skills to inform evidence based strategic management. The emphasis is clearly on useful tools to investigate practical problems and these are effective, efficient and appreciated both by students and their employers.

The previous report recommended that strong emphasis on the needs of internationalisation had to be reflected in the learning outcomes and this remains a complex issue given the changes in the marketing of the programme to an international student body. This still needs some attention as the relationship between the need to satisfy local needs for strategic leadership and to internationalise, particularly by the means of international student recruitment has been found to be problematic in practice. No international students were admitted in 2015, although the programme leaders expect to admit international students in the future. During the panel visit and in the self evaluation report, the programme managers explained how changes in the positioning of this programme within the institution had brought about organisational issues which are expected to be addressed when the programme is established departmentally. There is evidence of international aspects within the programme, notably by the numbers of international teachers and certain projects on the programme, for instance the virtual multicultural project running for the last 7 years in the Management of Organisational Networks course. This project exposes students to other students as colleagues and evaluators and contributes significantly to the overall aim of the course. While suggesting the aims and objectives are comprehensively defined the previous report noted that the previous aims and objectives did not 'sufficiently comply with the ambitious mission and vision of the University in sense of being a provider of research-based studies on high international level.

It is ambitious for the programme at this stage to do this, while it first needs to firmly establish its departmental identity. However as a long term aim the programme should look to build on the international elements that exist within the teaching to add to its research profile.

The society based specific aim appears to cover a requirement to contribute to processes of national development and elsewhere the panel notes the involvement with the Santaka valley. Such developments are to be encouraged and it is a moot point as to whether the current society based specific aim needs to be drawn in a concerted relation to specific initiatives. It is likely that keeping this aim fluid allows the programme moving forward to exploit new initiatives that come into being.

2.2. Curriculum design

This programme is in the frontline of strategic leadership programmes in Lithuania. As such, it must benchmark curriculum content with international offerings as well as including content specific to the Lithuanian context. National and international benchmarking shows that the study programme has adopted a distinct profile as compared to other study programmes and that the programme is recognised by the national professional business field.

The study programme is based on nationally prescribed competencies that comply with the Dublin descriptors. The structure and volume of the Strategic Leadership study programme corresponds to the Descriptor of General Requirements for Master's Study Programmes (Order of Minister of Education and Science of 3 June, 2010, Nr. V-826). The study programme follows a broad profile which the panel recognises. The student workload corresponds to the general requirements of master studies.

The programme covers 90 credits, with the programme consists of two main elements: subjects of study field (60 credits of which half of them are credits of compulsory study modules and courses) and master thesis (30 credits). Subjects offered are appropriate and do not appear repetitive. Course content appears to be informed, research based and apposite for the intended student body with a very reasonable scope of required input.

One exception was picked up by the previous panel report. The previous report recommended that the programme should redesign the list of elective courses with more focus on international aspects of economics and business and that the international scope of the leadership programmes the curriculum has to be more targeted. There was a response to this previous report arguing that students looking for an economics and business based course should look to other KTU courses that offer this. This point was again tested by the present panel with the program managers, students and graduates. Cogent arguments advocating the emphasis on

organisational behaviour and change management type courses were fielded by by the Head of the self assessment group. These centred around the time available on a relatively short programme to meet the requirements of students who specifically choose this programme for its strong emphasis on working with people, productivity and change. The programme is particularly strong in these areas. Many students come on the advice of alumni or social partners, well briefed on course content. Public description of the programme is geared to its current content. Students we spoke to were well aware of their options and had chosen this course very explicitly for its publicised content in organisational change. It may be worth considering a name change from Strategic Leadership to Organisational Leadership, Leadership and Change, or similar to emphasize the areas of expertise in the programme, but this is left to the experienced programme management and teachers to deliberate going forward.

The current programme name does imply some familiarity with the harder aspects of strategy will be included in the curriculum. Although not all students have a first degree in business or management (e.g. those students coming from a military background) it was considered by teaching staff and administrators that the workplace experience of students and the input of existing courses gave students sufficient knowledge of economics concepts to work with the main strategic concepts covered by the programme. The advice of the panel is that the programme audits existing courses for basic economics concepts to ensure students have sufficient grounding in these through existing courses if they have no pre-existing knowledge.

Curriculum design is continuously revised following national requirements as well as feedback from stakeholders including the student and alumni body. In the main, students are able to have some autonomy in the choices they make so that they are able to contract an individual programme that meets their own specific needs. This is entirely appropriate for the mature and experienced students recruited onto the programme. There is ample space in the programme for students to bring their own work experience into the classroom and this is actively encouraged. This brings a practice reality to the classroom...for instance by the opportunity to work with live or real data provided by students that gives an edge over other similar programmes. At points the programme is so bespoke and rooted in students workplace experience it takes on the feel of consultancy for the student body.

In documentation received by the panel an excellent overview is given on how the learning outcomes of the programme are reached. The curriculum is enhanced and continuously approved by the contributions of alumni and other business professionals. Social partners regularly feed insights into the programme. Although frequent these inputs and insight are

provided unofficially, and it could be that a formal advisory board or similar could add value to the programme.

From the point of view of professional labour markets, there is clearly a need for input that professional managers can use to take a look at the future beyond operational issues of everyday working life, and to do so using courses based on research into state of the art trends and cutting edge business knowledge. Such an offering from the point of view of the faculty is a major strength in the programme. However the self evaluation report recognises a general unfamiliarity with courses offered in the programme and their novelty as offerings to the Lithuanian educational market. This affects take up by potential applicants who may divert to more established curriculum elements. It does appear that many students are attracted to the course on the recommendation of business partners or past students so come with mitigated expectations of the course. This appears to be an issue of the packaging of the course to potential students which in turn has been affected by the departmental changes the program has experienced. The clear identity of the programme is compromised by where and how it sits within the university structure and future change is still expected.

The programme accepts students who already demonstrate an employment record in managerial positions and graduates have few problems with employability because of their existing experience coupled with the programme input. At present the programme is offered in three different study organisation formats: full time, cyclical and weekend, of which the weekend form is perceived as most beneficial to working participants. The recognition of student effort when students have outside work responsibilities and existing competencies requires special expertise and curriculum planning.

The structure of the programme provides opportunities to design tailor made programmes except on occasions where there is a limited number of students. This confines students to the groups agreed choice although some supplementary courses may be offered by related programmes.

A variety of teaching and learning methods is applied in the study process and this is illustrated in the course descriptions. While there is evidence of differing forms of intervention, case study and analysis is strongly represented. This is an appropriate method for teaching to be set up to help synthesize input from the programme with the working experience of the professionals attending the programme. This is especially pertinent because it is noted that there is difficulty for professionals to fulfil the self-study hourly requirement of the programme. Attention should be given to how this aspect of the programme can be structurally managed within the offered curriculum.

The previous report noted that the programme previously did not include project-oriented subjects, even not in the elective part the curriculum. The recommendation of that report was that projects – based on real word problems – can be incorporated into one or two subjects. There was evidence in documentation received before the visit, together with input from students and teachers that ample project based work is now incorporated into the core subjects.

One element of the curriculum to be commended is the 30% of the study volume given over to the master thesis. This master thesis (the Final Degree Project) is devoted to the solution of practical business or managerial problems by applying theoretical knowledge and quantitative or/and qualitative research methods. Such projects are not easy to set up or supervise in authentic work environments and it is to be emphasized such real life subjects are especially worthwhile with this student body. This very positive aspect of the advocacy of evidence based leadership entering the local business community through the working of the programme was referred to many times in our visit by all stakeholders. The final project is commented on in depth in section 2.5 of this report.

2.3. Teaching staff

The study programme is provided by the staff meeting legal requirements, with over 80 per cent (83.3 %) of all academic staff having a PhD. degree. With over 50% of staff drawn from the Dept of Strategic Management teaching core subjects, the number of the teaching staff is fitting in order to ensure learning outcomes by referring to Para 1 of the Lithuanian Ministry of Education and Science Minister Order “On the approval of the Descriptor of General Requirements for Postgraduate Study programme”, June 3rd 2010. Other Faculty are sourced from the Departments of Philosophy and Psychology and Educational Studies. Staff turnover has been limited and there is now a strong core group of staff well engaged with the development of the programme. Where changes have occurred they have mainly been related to and required by the shift of Programme’s field from Human Resource Management to Management.

There is a good climate for both research and pedagogical development. All teachers in the Programme are experienced researchers with extensive publication records (more than 160 scientific works between 2010 and 2015 mostly related to programme content) and some nine Research Projects funded by the Lithuanian Science Council have been started by the teaching staff since 2009. Given this good staff experience, it is recommended that for research leadership succession, that leadership of research projects be more widely distributed among programme teaching staff. All the teachers of the Programme have had the opportunity to develop their professional qualification in a variety of ways since the last accreditation with for example

permanent teachers of the Programme also taking on internships abroad in various institutions in Croatia; Czech Republic; Finland; France; Germany; Israel; Italy ;Montenegro; Norway; Poland; Portugal; Spain; Turkey; United Kingdom; USA and Denmark.

All Faculty receive input from industry experts and other international academics by way of guest lectures etc. It was noted in the last report that in some cases teaching staff has a workload around 1000 or even more hours per year, exceeding the KTU previous annual work load of a full-time teacher. Regulations currently in force divides 1440 hours per year for a full time teacher into three parts. As these systems represent different form of reporting it was not easy to compare the systems but on paper workloads appear more manageable. Anecdotally staff said there was little change in their workloads since the change of calculating capacity but there was no evidence presented of very high workloads on this occasion.

The achievements of Faculty members have been recognised by Lithuanian business organisations and this is good evidence of attempts to offer a programme that is rooted in authentic business experience. Faculty members are involved in international mobility programmes and have developed additional joint research activities in cooperation with international partners and networks. The panel has seen from the lists of published research that research projects and leadership tend to be concentrated in the hands of a few senior staff and it is recommended that for staff development and research leadership succession that research leadership is disseminated further through the teaching staff.

2.4. Facilities and learning resources

The programme in Strategic Leadership has an extensive study infrastructure. The Facilities, including library, auditoriums, and computer classrooms are satisfactory to support the objectives of the programme. The capacity of the auditoriums is sufficient to allow effective teaching and group work. Meeting hygienic and safety requirements all the auditoriums and are equipped with computers, audio and video equipment, screens, projectors, white boards, microphones, and speakers which are updated as funds become available.

Appropriate software e.g. Windows 8 Professional, Microsoft Office Professional 2013, IBM SPSS Statistics 23, QSR NVivo 11 is available and computers at the Central University Library are linked into a local network (LITNET network) with the modern computer laboratory of the School of Economics and Business also available to the students. Books and research literature is available at the Central Library of the University and its branches in other Faculties with the Coordinator of the Programme placing orders to update books or access databases on a regular basis with the Central library renewing resources annually. Books are also

available to students in an e-book format. Despite the fact that KTU Library are open service six day's week library staff report that students still ask to able to use this premises on Sundays.

Students and lecturers have access to a good set of international databases and this access is also available remotely by a VPN connection. Students are encouraged within the existing curriculum to build their skills to use the library resources. Most of the state of the art material is in English rather than Lithuanian. Lecturers provide their methodical material mainly through the Moodle system (e.g. mano.ktu.lt; Moodle System) with email also used. New resources such as the 'Bloomberg Financial Markets Lab' have recently. This is a particularly useful resource for the Strategic Management programme but does not as yet seem to be exploited in the programme, partly we understand because of the training time for the lab required by Faculty to bring its use into their courses.

2.5. Study process and students' performance assessment

Application Requirements for the Programme comply with the pertinent conventions of Master's studies at Kaunas University of Technology and since 2015, LAMA- the Association of Lithuanian Higher Education Institutions for General Admissions. The admission requirements and procedure of admission to the Programme for students, is published on the KTU website in the section "For the Applicants". Additional material for local applicants is available through various conferences and flyers etc. For local students there is a three stage process and Students who pass any of these stages are invited to sign contracts with the University.

Students are admitted to programme according their competitive score which is equal to 1 and composed of weighted average of the first-cycle study grades (0,8 point) and applicants research activity (0,2 point). The Admission procedure does not have any motivation interview for entrants. Competition scores of entered students are very homogeneous during the period of analysis. International students can apply for the programme through Online Application Platform. Study subjects for international students are provided in English. Recruitment has not been strong with a low point in 2013-14 of 5 students, though this improved to more general levels (14) in 2015-16. It is reported that in general, the competition to enter the Programme is relatively high, compared with other programmes in the School of Economics and Business. Admitted Students generally have practical managerial experience.

The past assessment report strongly advocated an increase in internationalism of the programme and at the time, the programme actively approached the international market to recruit students from abroad. This meant that for two years' admission procedures covered both local and international recruitment markets. International students have entered the Programme

from Azerbaijan, Georgia, India, Turkey, and Nigeria. International students have been able to find admission and programme information on-line and supplemented by the International Relations Coordinator and an Academic Advisor at the School of Economics and Business, KTU, a support facility that continues throughout all their stay at the University. To ensure all admissions were met, submitted documents including certified qualifications and identity documents and examined levels of English language proficiency. Less than 10 international students were admitted each year between 2013-2015, and there were no international students admitted in the 2015-2016 intake. A decision was taken to suspend the recruitment of international students to this programme in the study year of 2015-2016 on the basis that numbers of international students were too small to make economic sense and that study outcomes of international students were not high making it difficult to achieve learning goals. It is clear that there has been a problem in the recruitment of international students within the programme. Given the stress on increasing internationalism in the previous SKVC report there are issues to be addressed as to the extent the programme's strategic leadership substance is compromised by the possible lack of diversity presented by an essentially local student population.

There has been a decreasing number of students with departmental changes being given as the reason as to why no students were admitted in 2015, though it is expected to recruit students internationally in the future. This point will be explored further in the programme management section (2.6) of this report. All students are self-funded with most working while completing the programme with the first semester acting as a "test environment" to see whether it will be feasible to combine study with the student's work. Dropping out tends to occur within this first semester due to work commitments or funding issues. The main given reason for students drop-out is inability to combine the studies and work, or some students face difficulty in paying tuition for studies. The study programme does not offer state funded places for students.

It appears that students are encouraged to take part in different research activities through conferences, including those with an opportunity to present their own research results as well as having the opportunity to publish scientific articles. The participation rates in the mobility schemes are very low. While students are well informed about the possibilities to study abroad, these students who it must be remembered are often working professionals juggling work and study have tended not to take part in international student exchanges. For these working students the ability to take part in an exchange for just one month has been important.

The study process appears to be well organized with students are able to create and access individual study plans with a manageable work load. Most classes are offered in cycles,

after working hours, or on weekends. The 4 week cycles used to organize programme studies do not yet have formal regulations in part because there is some conflict with other systems within the university. Programme instructors have made localized adaptations to enable learning tasks to correspond to the 4-week study cycles which seems to be working successfully. Most study assignments are organized through the Moodle platform. The comprehensive computerized system for organizing the program allows ease of access and monitoring for both international and local students. Continuous improvement is helped by online roundtable feedback discussions.

Examination arrangements are well organized and allow for retake and recovery of study credits. Timely intervention on struggling students is possible through the use of intermediary grades. While the high success rates for local students is influenced by those returning to study from earlier classes, it is clear the progression and success rate of international students is poor, with less than half of international students defending their thesis, and this is acknowledged in the SER. This is seen as a selection issue and that there is a need for a revised recruitment strategy. The system of student assessment is transparent and appears fair and appropriate for the assessment of learning outcomes with the opportunity for credit recovery and appeal well established.

The Final Degree Project, leading to the Master's degree, is an analytical project based on independent research and is prepared for throughout all semesters. The previous SKVR report recommended to consider possibilities to create an Advisory Committee for selecting master thesis' topics and supervising students' research work also involving social partners with more emphasis given to consideration of specific strategic leadership problems in the master theses. This process has been strengthened over the last two years. There is a final defence of degree projects. Projects seen suggest there is an understandable pull toward insight and application of theory to practice but at times, the handling of academic literature takes second place. The strong evidence of relevant practical business analysis needs to be balanced however with an issue with other research skills concerning academic rigor. Mature students, often with a first degree from some time previously, with time constrictions and specific issues to resolve in the workplace need to acquire sufficient academic research skills to meet Masters study standards in a relatively short time frame. In most cases, with some notable exceptions, this standard is only just adequately achieved.

The fall out rate before completing the final project shows that this is not attainable for some students, at least initially, though some may return to study at a later date. There is also a failure to capitalise by publication of practical research carried out by these mature students for

whom publication is not necessarily a high priority. There appears to be a concentration on quantitative methods and an increase in teaching qualitative methods could perhaps give students a wider choice of final topic methods of research. The panel found the programme managers are taking steps to aid students reach the required standards, for instance by making library sessions to improve research skills compulsory, in addition to existing curricular activities. However, we find that students should be challenged to raise the level of academic rigor in their final pieces of work and see this as an important element in the lifelong learning offered by the programme. The term Master implies being held to a higher standard on both practice content and academic rigor. In part, this is also about the ability to write to a brief that is not a workplace norm, though it is accepted that students on this programme need extra help in understanding and achieving the required standard. The teaching team are aware of these issues and this advice stands as a reminder that the balance between practice and theory must be maintained at least at its present level on the programme. This is also important to help the research profile of the programme.

There is a concern about the way topic titles are drawn. Perhaps because students are drawing directly on issues that are concerning them at work (which is considered positively by the panel) sometimes topics chosen do not have a direct strategic leadership slant to them. A good proportion of the dissertations were rooted in day to day HR or a tactical level of management with no apparent imperative to carry the topic to a strategic leadership level. This is a moot point (even minor changes may have significant strategic leadership implications) but could be addressed by early advice on how the topic can be more directly related to the study field.

The twofold advice is firstly to ensure some interim pieces of work in subjects outside of research courses are very specifically designed to raise the level of familiarity with the academic rigor (use of peer reviewed journals, argumentation, academic convention generally). The Masters thesis organisation has been developed and a committee now scrutinises and approves topics. So secondly it is advised committee to consider student topics looks at if the way a students topic is drawn specifically allows for the use of strategic leadership literature and concepts gathered throughout the course to underpin the final project.

Student support appears to be well organized including induction, Faculty consultation financial support information, mentorship and support materials provision. The Faculty provides all necessary material and academic support, psychological and Pastoral counselling, sports or arts activities to the students. Student life issues are represented by the student union in the Board of the School of Economics and Business. There is a University's Careers Advisory Centre but there was no specific information as to how this centre responds to the specific needs

of working students who are seen to have no employment issue and it appears that students of the programme usually did not change their work position during the studies. Given the self-funding of students represents a fair investment of time and financial resources, the long term effect of the qualification needs to be measured. Evaluation of the international students is not reported on and these students were not available at the visit. This is unfortunate as this group represents the least successful of all the students. Surveys are organized to get graduates opinion on the study programme to aid in programme revision. Graduates met by the panel pointed out the high skills and competencies gained during the studies which are much valued in the labour market.

2.6. Programme management

A well-established system of program management is in place based on and regulated by existing KTU program management requirements established by the Rector and Senate of the institution.

These centralized organizational structures within the university that guarantee proper programme management, administration, quality control, and quality maintenance. An appointed Programme Coordinator administers the programme with social partners from industry, representatives of the student association, and Faculty involved in the development and implementation of the programme. Responsibilities are clearly allocated with oversight of the programmes internal quality assurance resting with the Vice-Rector for studies, the Department of Academic Affairs and its units. Changes to the Programme are introduced through a clear and well set process involving feedback from all stakeholders. This is especially important in regard to the involvement of social partners who are important to the balance of theory and practice within the programme.

Collection of data through periodical surveys and other means in the main is carried out to an existing plan to provide information that is useful and pertinent to the functioning of the program. Student feedback is solicited regularly and in a number of ways. There is an apparent difference in consultation between local and international students to evaluate the programme outcomes and this should be addressed. Consultation at all levels appears thorough, transparent and well informed. It was suggested by administrators that demand for entrepreneurial approach sometimes is in conflict with administrative procedures and that study quality assessment tools should be more tailor-made instead of being unified. Both of these points are noted as being typical in a programme that attempts to reconcile work based students with a theoretical institution.

The last expert report asked that more attention has to be devoted to the elaboration and regular revision of a long-run sustainability plan as well as for a continuous development of the programme taking into account the feedback of graduates and social partners and asked that the programme management system has to include regular assessment of risks and challenges of the programme. While all operational management aspects of the programme are described in clear detail and in some depth in the report, ironically the strategic issue of handling the sustainability of the programme, particularly in relation to the decisions regarding international student recruitment, was not covered in the documents prior to the visit. The reported reason for decreasing numbers of students was that the Strategic Leadership programme lost its identity and consequent appropriate marketing support with the merging two Faculties into one School of Economics and Business. The previous report had highlighted some concern about the centralized promotion of all university programmes and had suggested that to ensure sustainability of the programme more attention would need to be devoted to the visibility and promotion of the programme taking into account that Lithuanian demographic situation was 'rather unfavourable'. While the SER suggests that the marketing support required is improving, the sustainability and character of the programme without international students and with the need to explain components to the local market is of continuing concern. Departmental changes are apparently not at an end, and it seems that the programme administrators have been unable to shield the programme from changes from above and so this panel continues the recommendation that to ensure sustainability of the programme more attention will need to be devoted to the visibility and promotion of the programme.

2.7. Examples of excellence *

The established and growing link with local industry and social partners, as exemplified particularly by the recognition of Robertas Jucevicius by national business organisations. This is not easily obtained and shows initiative within the context that the programme operates.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

1.

The history of the programme is such that it has been moved within and between departments and this acts to compromise the building of and dissemination of action plans that can inform the future direction of the programme. The panel believes change is constant in this regard and that a full strategic action plan should be put into place for the programme with measurable goals for programme evaluation. The direction and scope of the field of study needs a proper

departmental basis and given that change appears to be constant, something has to be put in place to ensure the programme is not subject to issues beyond its control such as its student recruitment and admissions strategy.

2.

The determination as to how far the program intends embracing an international dimension remains problematic. An analysis of how such an international dimension contributes to the programme identity is required and a plan of action as to move forward is necessary.

3.

A proactive approach to safeguarding academic standards in final Masters level projects with work based problems is recommended as an administrative focus for the programme.

4.

The topics of students final projects tend to represent the widest definition of Strategic Leadership and we would recommended that students are encouraged to move their topics into specific areas where their strategic management readings and research will underpin their topics.

5.

It is recommended for staff development and research leadership succession that research leadership tasks are developed and disseminated among the teaching team.

IV. SUMMARY

The aims and learning outcomes of the programme in the main are well defined, are clear and are publicly accessible and the learning outcomes of the programme meet the demands of working life. The programme aims and learning outcomes are consistent with relevant international standards and the name of the programme, its learning outcomes, content and qualifications offered are compatible with each other.

Curriculum design is good with the programme showing a local responsiveness to the need for change management and organisational leadership and the programme is strong in these areas. The international aspect of the programme has not been strongly developed recently and this needs attention as the identity of the programme is reviewed in upcoming departmental change.

The programme has a very good study infrastructure in place with resources being regularly updated and renewed, which are easily accessible to students. The teaching team offer a good input of research based content and are very well linked to the local business community. Teachers take part in research although there could be a greater spread of research leadership within the team. Teaching staff are impressive in terms of their teaching ability, enthusiasm and

desire to meet individual student requirements to the point where some tutorials actually appear to take on the character of consultancy.

It is clear students value their input and apply knowledge gained in their everyday work from the early days of starting on the programme. At the same time there is a strong need to ensure that Masters standards in relation to reading and peer reviewed literature is maintained. The programme acts as a resource to the local business community and makes a significant contribution to lifelong learning locally.

V. GENERAL ASSESSMENT

The study programme *Strategic Leadership* (state code – 621N20034) at Kaunas University of technology is given **positive** evaluation.

Study programme assessment in points by evaluation areas.

No.	Evaluation Area	Evaluation of an area in points*
1.	Programme aims and learning outcomes	3
2.	Curriculum design	3
3.	Teaching staff	3
4.	Facilities and learning resources	4
5.	Study process and students' performance assessment	3
6.	Programme management	3
	Total:	19

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

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

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

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

Grupės vadovas:

Team leader:

Mary Lyn Glanz (team leader)

Grupės nariai:

Team members:

Dr. Kristiina Tõnnisson

Prof. Dr. Vulfs Kozlinskis

Ms. Vijolė Satkauskienė

Mr. Rimvydas Labanauskis

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V. APIBENDRINAMASIS ĮVERTINIMAS

Kauno technologijos universiteto studijų programa *Strateginė lyderystė* (valstybinis kodas – 621N20034) vertinama teigiamai.

Eil. Nr.	Vertinimo sritis	Srities įvertinimas, balais*
1.	Programos tikslai ir numatomi studijų rezultatai	3
2.	Programos sandara	3
3.	Personalas	3
4.	Materialieji ištekliai	4
5.	Studijų eiga ir jos vertinimas	3
6.	Programos vadyba	3
	Iš viso:	19

* 1 – Nepatenkinamai (yra esminių trūkumų, kuriuos būtina pašalinti)

2 – Patenkinamai (tenkina minimalius reikalavimus, reikia tobulinti)

3 – Gerai (sistemiškai plėtojama sritis, turi savitų bruožų)

4 – Labai gerai (sritis yra išskirtinė)

<...>

IV. SANTRAUKA

Studijų programos tikslai ir numatomi studijų rezultatai yra gerai suformuluoti, aiškūs ir viešai prieinami, o numatomi studijų rezultatai tenkina profesinio gyvenimo poreikius. Programos tikslai ir numatomi studijų rezultatai atitinka susijusius tarptautinius standartus, o programos pavadinimas, studijų rezultatai, turinys ir įgyjama kvalifikacija tarpusavyje suderinti.

Studijų programos sandara tinkama, nes programos vadovybė sureagavo į pokyčių valdymo ir organizacinės lyderystės poreikį, ir šiose srityse studijų programa yra stipri. Studijų programos tarptautiškumo aspektas pastaruoju metu nebuvo labai vystomas, tačiau jam reikia skirti dėmesį, nes artėjant pokyčiams katedroje bus svarstomas programos tapatumo klausimas.

Studijų programa pasižymi labai gera studijų infrastruktūra, o studentams lengvai prieinami ištekliai reguliariai peržiūrimi ir atnaujinami. Dėstytojų indėlis į studijų programos turinį pagrįstas moksliniais tyrimais ir jie palaiko labai glaudžius ryšius su vietos verslo

bendruomene. Dėstytojai dalyvauja tiriamojoje veikloje, nors vadovavimo moksliniams tyrimams patirtį reikėtų labiau skleisti tarp kolegų. Dėstytojų dėstyto gebėjimai, entuziazmas ir troškimas patenkinti individualius studentų poreikius per konsultacijas daro gerą įspūdį.

Akivaizdu, kad studentai vertina savo indėlį ir nuo pat studijų pradžios taiko savo kasdieniame darbe įgytas žinias. Tačiau būtina užtikrinti, kad būtų laikomasi magistrantūros studijų reikalavimų, susijusių su literatūros skaitymu ir recenzuojama literatūra. Studijų programa yra vietos verslo bendruomenės išteklius, o jos indėlis į vietos mokymąsi visą gyvenimą yra reikšmingas.

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III. REKOMENDACIJOS

1.

Per savo gyvavimo istoriją studijų programa buvo perduodama iš vienos katedros į kitą, todėl kyla pavojus veiksmų planų kūrimui ir sklaidai, o tai gali turėti poveikį programos kryptčiai ateityje. Ekspertų grupė mano, kad pokyčiai yra nuolatiniai ir kad reikėtų parengti gerą studijų programos strateginį veiksmų planą su pamatuojamais programos vertinimo uždaviniais. Studijų kryptties orientacija ir apimtis turi turėti tinkamą pagrindą katedroje, o atsižvelgiant į nuolatinius pokyčius, reikia parengti dokumentus, pavyzdžiui, studentų pritraukimo ir priėmimo strategiją, siekiant užtikrinti, kad studijų programa nepriklaustų nuo jai nepavaldžių aplinkybių.

2.

Vis dar sudėtinga nustatyti studijų programos tarptautiškumo siekį ateityje. Reikia paanalizuoti, kaip toks tarptautiškumo aspektas prisideda prie studijų programos tapatumo, ir parengti būsimų veiksmų planą.

3.

Programos administracija turėtų aktyviau užtikrinti baigiamųjų magistro darbų, kuriuose nagrinėjamos praktinės problemos, atitiktį akademiniam reikalavimams.

4.

Studentų baigiamųjų darbų temos atspindi plačiausią strateginės lyderystės sąvoką, todėl rekomenduojama skatinti studentus siaurinti temas ir nagrinėti konkrečias sritis, remiantis strateginės vadybos literatūra ir tyrimais.

5.

Personalo tobulinimosi tikslais ir siekiant vadovavimo moksliniams tyrimams tęstinumo, rekomenduojama plėtoti ir skleisti vadovavimo moksliniams tyrimams užduotis tarp dėstytojų.

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