



STUDIJŲ KOKYBĖS VERTINIMO CENTRAS

KAUNO KOLEGIJOS
VERSLO VADYBOS PROGRAMOS (653N20008)
VERTINIMO IŠVADOS

EVALUATION REPORT
OF *BUSINESS MANAGEMENT (653N20008)*
STUDY PROGRAMME
at KAUNAS COLLEGE

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DUOMENYS APIE ĮVERTINTĄ PROGRAMĄ

Studijų programos pavadinimas	<i>Verslo vadyba</i>
Valstybinis kodas	653N20008
Studijų sritis	Socialiniai mokslai
Studijų kryptis	Vadyba
Studijų programos rūšis	Koleginės studijos
Studijų pakopa	Pirmoji (profesinis bakalauras)
Studijų forma (trukmė metais)	Nuolatinė (3), iššęstinė (4)
Studijų programos apimtis kreditais	180
Suteikiamas laipsnis ir (ar) profesinė kvalifikacija	Vadybos profesinis bakalauras
Studijų programos įregistravimo data	2000-09-21

INFORMATION ON ASSESSED STUDY PROGRAMME

Name of the study programme	<i>Business Management</i>
State code	653N20008
Study area	Social sciences
Study field	Management
Kind of the study programme	Collegial Studies
Level of studies	First (professional bachelor)
Study mode (length in years)	Full-time (3), part-time (4)
Scope of the study programme in credits	180
Degree and (or) professional qualifications awarded	Professional Bachelor in Management
Date of registration of the study programme	2000-09-21

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. General Background

Kauno kolegija/Kaunas College (hereafter - KK) was established on 1 September 2000 after the binary higher education system consisting of two types of higher education provided by colleges and universities was introduced in Lithuania and even in the Baltic area. Today Kauno kolegija/Kaunas College is one of the largest colleges in Lithuania, with a community of over 7 600 students and about 1000 employees, 558 lecturers among them (data of September, 2012). Over 1,800 students graduate from the university every year. The university has 7 faculties and 2 regional departments which are established in 14 buildings.

Currently, there are the following faculties in Kaunas College– Faculty of Economics and Law, J. Vienozinskis Faculty of Arts, Faculty of Landscape, Faculty of Technologies, Faculty of Health Care, Faculty of Business Management, Kedainiai J. Radvila Faculty – and departments in Taurage and Druskininkai. They are the main divisions of the applied research and study process organization.

The mission of KK is to implement high-quality studies of higher education, focused on practical activity and students' and public needs, to develop applied research and professional art, and to take an active part in international area of higher education.

The group of experts appointed by the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education (SKVC) visited KK with the aim to facilitate the improvement of the study programme *Business Management*, its quality assurance procedures and to help for KK to create an awareness of *Business Management* study programme quality assurance, as well as to evaluate how the quality of the study programme provision meets the relevant legal requirements and the provisions of the European Higher Education Area. The programme is located within the Faculty of Business Management, one of seven faculties in the College (spread over three locations)

The programme was established on September 1st, 2000 and therefore has already produced quite a lot of graduates, and previously been subject to external evaluation. Two schools joined forces to work together, three years later a number of education institutions joined as well. The current evaluation was conducted in February 2013 by a panel of experts from Germany, Austria

and Lithuania, including a student representative. In conducting the evaluation the expert panel met senior administrative staff, teaching staff, current students and stakeholders such as social partners and alumni, all of whom engaged with the evaluation process constructively and were most helpful in facilitating the work of the panel. The panel also reviewed teaching accommodation and learning resources, and scrutinised student work.

During the meeting experts met the stakeholders of *Tourism and Hotel Management* as well as *Business Management* study programmes at the same time. The Department of Business Management (DBM) is responsible for the implementation of the study programme of *Business Management* (BM); the Department of Tourism and Hotel Management is responsible for the study programme of *Tourism and Hotel Management* management.

Self-analysis report (SAR) is prepared according to the requirements of the SKVC. It provides all the needed information for the evaluation. Self-analysis report contains information of previous evaluation which is provided in the Annex; however self-analysis report text do not shows connectivity with the implementation of recommendations of previous evaluation.

2. Introductory Remark

When preparing the site visit the experts were wondering whether there was no overriding institutional framework reflecting the strategy on the basis of a mission and vision for the whole institution. In the first meeting the Rector pointed out that there was a Strategy 2020 which was handed out to the experts in one of the following sessions. The strategy 2020 does not mention the various campuses at all. They speak of an integrated strategy 2020 but it is left open to whom the mission, vision and values relate. Even the chapter „Our Institution Today“ (page 17) does not relate directly to the campuses in Tauragė and Druskininkai. It is only mentioned that the institution has 7 faculties and two regional departments. Looking at the information booklet delivered by the Department of International Relations, seven Faculties are listed but only one Department (Tauragė, supposedly a regional one).

Another contradiction between the strategy paper and the information brochure relates to the study-programmes taught in English. Whereas the brochure lists 8 programmes, the strategy outline mentions two only.

Adding to this confusion were remarks in other faculties / departments which highlighted their separate role hinting at independence, not necessarily in line with the aspiration of an integrated university of applied sciences.

Also, it was pointed out that the professional bachelor programmes offered were at level 6b of the European Qualifications Framework for Higher Education. It is correct that there was a discussion when the European framework was designed to introduce sublevels, for example 6a and 6b, but finally this idea was dropped. However, the national authorities could introduce sub-levels within their national framework but – to the knowledge of the experts – this is not the case in Lithuania. Although one could argue it has to be stated clearly – and this has been the reference point for the experts – a professional bachelor meets the same level in terms of learning outcomes as any other bachelor at higher level does. Therefore, this issue is addressed to the national authorities of Lithuania and is not evaluated as part of the College's performance. (as pointed out in the discussions e.g.).

In the light of this experience the experts suggest that the respective bodies of Kaunas College might consider these issues to achieve an integrated higher education institution with a corporate identity.

II. PROGRAMME ANALYSIS

1. Programme *aims and learning outcomes*

Aims and learning outcomes of the study programme are distinguished by level of detail. Whereas three aims describe three areas of direction – “to apply fundamental theories..., to analyse and evaluate the evolving business environment...to organise activities efficiently...” – the learning outcomes specify three learning outcomes for the first, four for the second and again three for the third one. It might have been useful to indicate that the aims were written from a teacher’s perspective whereas the learning outcomes are those from a student’s viewpoint – as the experts believe -, following the principle of student-centred learning. The descriptions appear a bit “mechanically”, quite well expressed but not lived, as the discussions with the teachers in particular demonstrated. However, a good written basis is made – as outlined in annex 31 – where the relationship between learning outcomes of the study programme, the ones respectively for the subjects, study methods and methods of assessing are identified. Overall a very good attempt – and hopefully will be “lived“ in future and to be complemented by other learning outcomes indicated by the descriptors of the European Qualifications Framework (Dublin Descriptors): “Making Judgements” and “Learn to Learn” which seem to be missing for the time being. It is hoped that the management offers regular courses to allow the staff to update and widen their knowledge and understanding of key Bologna features. The experts learned that staff had been encouraged and supported to attend in-house and outhouse training sessions.

It has to be positively stressed that Kaunas College makes the programmes with their aims and learning outcomes publicly available through a number of measures. There is a number of internet addresses listed. However, some of them were protected by a password and none seemed to have a translation into English when having visited the respective sites. Having the objective to attract foreign students it might be necessary to have key elements translated into English. It might also be useful to follow the structure of the “Information Package” published by the EU within the “ECTS User’s Guide” from 2009.

Quite rightly Kaunas College initiated several activities to identify the needs of the region. Teachers and Management staff, for example, actively discuss with social partners, graduates and students what the needs are and what the students should know and be able to do. The programmes take into account the outcomes of these intensive discussions, either in amending existing or creating new ones. According to data of the Lithuanian Labour Exchange the College

stresses that “the market mostly lacks sales managers..., representatives of selling technical equipment..., and managers of business services...” Whereas this seems to underline the focus on Marketing it nevertheless implies as well that the programme should have an international orientation as it is not assumed that respective products can only be sold (or purchased) in countries knowing the Lithuanian language. Attention should be drawn to future developments, in particular as regards the sustainability of this specific orientation. Also, it may be argued whether this is enough for a country in which small-and-medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are dominant. To this extent it is questionable whether two more electives –*International Business and Innovation* and *National Brand Marketing*- are adequate. *International Business* should not be covered in one elective only – which not every graduate will have dealt with – and as regards national brand marketing it really is the question whether this is an issue. It would have been nice to have these decisions substantiated much more. On the other hand it might be useful to consider whether “*Entrepreneurship*” should be much more highlighted.

Questionable is the overall aim of the programme “...to train specialist of business management...” The description of bachelor programmes at European level clearly indicates that a bachelor is not a specialist but a generalist. To this extent the College should discuss how this requirement could be fulfilled. The term “intended learning outcomes” may suggest that these learning outcomes are intended but not necessarily achieved. It is not revealed in which areas the graduate will be a “specialist”. The experts assume that the College has been advised by outsiders and are not totally sure how to “translate” these terms into their teaching and learning activities.

The name “*Business Management*” indicates a general management programme as it is also outlined in some sectoral qualifications frameworks (e.g. subject benchmark papers, UK; Orientierungsrahmen Betriebswirtschaft, D). The programme was accredited first on February 23 2005 by an international expert group without any further requirements. However, some areas of potential improvement were indicated. The experts in 2013 tested to which extent these recommendations had been taken up. It appears that “disadvantages” (the term used in the report) were i.a. “further profiling on the programme seems possible, for instance by merging subjects into broader ones”. By having highlighted the different intentions of a bachelor degree detailed in the European Qualifications Framework the expert group believes that Kaunas College has not achieved this profile yet. To this extent it might be argued whether the programme is sufficiently geared to the formal requirements of bachelor degrees within the European Higher Education Area as well as – as it is stated – to the demands of the Lithuanian labour market; the specialist

orientation does not match with the generalist approach of a bachelor level within the Bologna Framework. Whereas otherwise the learning outcomes match those of the programmes, some competences should be fostered much more as outlined above, i.e. the abilities “to make judgements” and “learn to learn”.

The experts also analysed the “Strengths, Weaknesses and Actions of Improvement” the College had summarised for each criterion in their Self-Assessment Report. Taking into consideration the programme objectives and the European Standard and Guidelines the learning outcomes surely have to be updated regularly involving not only social partners, as stated, but also students and other stakeholders. This is a fundamental requirement. The weakness outlined does not seem to be very clear. In any case, programme and module descriptions in terms of learning outcomes again are a basic requirement; their lack leads to a non-acceptance of the programme.

Quite nicely the College itself identifies “Actions of Improvement”. What they outline is directly related to their “weakness” but does not indicate by when and through which methods/approaches an improvement may be achieved. Whereas the idea is very useful the description in the text is meaningless.

2. Curriculum design

The programme is designed according to the Lithuanian law. It respects characteristics of qualifications as initiated within the Bologna Process and the creation of the European Higher Education Area. A questionable issue refers to the distinction between full-time and part-time students. The College differentiates between programmes for these specific groups. Although part-time students obviously cannot focus their full efforts on their studies – for many different reasons – it seems to be possible to finish studies in just one more year. This means that on top of a full-time job (some may work less) students have to achieve 45 credits per year on average. As credit systems, ECTS in particular, were created inter alia to protect students, the college should allow more time to finalise the studies. This does not mean that individual students can finish earlier on the basis of their personal situation (different background, more free-time...). A full-time job normally entails about 1,600 hrs a year across Europe. Adding 40 credits, even if one credit were considered as requiring a workload of 25 hours, would mean another 1,000 hrs, a total of 2,600 hrs. From the perspective of social responsibility the College should consider to redesign their part-time programmes, even if some other colleges might stick to four years.

Also, the distribution of credits and learning forms in percentage of the whole programme may be discussed. It is necessary that full-time and part-time programmes reach the same learning outcomes as these characterise the level. The main query refers to the consultation hours. Normally, part-time students are not as often at the college as full-timers are. Therefore the number of consultation hours should be much higher, including telephone and on-line contacts. In the discussion it was mentioned that consultation hours were mainly understood as office hours. Also, the number of self-study hours should be considerably higher than those for full-time students. More than 50% of the contact hours in form of lectures are foreseen for part-time students. The experts had the impression that the make-up of the total workload was not clear to every member of staff, even not to those who had written the Self-Assessment Report, and that the number of consultation hours was rather a definition of a teacher's workload than that of a student.

The distribution of credits is uneven in case of part-time studies. Whereas in the first year 39 credits can be achieved, in the following two years 48 credits and in the final year 45 credits are necessary to finalise the studies within the timeframe given. The distribution seems to be a bit arbitrary. Not understandable is that the number of credits for part-time students in terms of "*Professional internships*" is the same as for full-time students as they are normally employed. It is not clear whether the internships are covered by the employment in case of part-time students. Also, it did not become clear whether there is an intention to make use of the business experience of these students. This should be explained and the links identified. It might be that the term internship is not suitable to characterise exactly this situation.

Otherwise the themes of the various subjects or modules are overall not repetitive. Within the free electives there might be a certain overlap as regards "*Business Communication*" as part of a combination with "*Career Management*". Also, "*Direct Marketing*", might be dealt with in the Marketing module. This list, however, appears to be like a shopping-list of interesting subjects.

In terms of the content *Business Management* areas seem to be a bit underrepresented. In the Tuning Project, in which more than 150 universities participated, a share of about 40-50% of business subjects was seen as adequate and quite normal. At first glance this seems to be fulfilled at Kaunas College as well. However, within the 91 credits identified for "subjects of the study field" 32 refer to internships. In the discussions it was stressed that internships refer to practical activities. This should be made clearer within the whole documentation, in particular how these

experiences are exploited within the programme. This may be a problem of translation (internships don't seem to be work-placements), though.

It is interesting to see that *Philosophy* and *Psychology* are obligatory within the block "General Studies" and "Subjects of the study field". It may be questioned why the subjects belong to different groups. Looking at the learning outcomes it seems that it is impossible for students to reach what is required with the workload of 3 credits allocated to each of them. This is, for example, also documented by the impressive literature list, students are required to cover. In addition it may be questioned whether the module *Lithuanian Correspondence* really is at a bachelor level.

The experts were surprised to learn from the group of teachers that they ask the students what their expectations were at the beginning of each semester – as a common rule. To this extent the impression of the experts was stressed that on paper learning outcomes etc. were defined quite well but to which extent they were translated into actual teaching was at least questionable. This was underlined in the various discussions in which teachers were not always aware neither of the learning outcomes nor who had written them and what they meant. On the other hand, it is stated on page 10 of the SAR that "the form of classes is preconditioned by intended learning outcomes of the subject and its specifics". This appears to be contradicting to what was said above.

It is not necessarily obvious that the forms of learning are the same for each module: lecture – practice – consultation – self-study. The distribution appears to be rather artificial. Again, as the learning outcomes precondition the way of teaching it is not possible that there is always the "same procedure".

An increase in training and further communication might help. Additionally, it might have been beneficial to comment on whether teaching part-time students might require different methods of teaching, considering that – most likely – they are older, have business experience, learn differently, are often much more eager and have – on the other hand – maybe a sketchy knowledge of mathematics or various forms of communication, depending on the vocational socialisation. Some students may also live abroad or have worked abroad so that different national cultures might have to be respected. This also might be a good starting point of increasing the international orientation of the programme.

The College outlines a modular structure. However, the way the modules were created is rather questionable. Modules seem to have been “constructed” by bundling several lectures under one heading. This is not the intention of modularisation as it is understood in the European Higher Education Area. A module has one set of learning outcomes and carries an identified number of credits (normally the same or an identical basic unit of 5 or 6 and a multiple of it). There is one set of assessment which covers the whole module and credits are awarded only as a whole and not for having passed individual parts. The teachers explained that the modular structure is still very new to them. It was introduced a year ago.

It surely is very adequate to offer language courses within the programme. Two foreign languages are foreseen. It is not indicated, however, which level of competence the students have when starting their programme and what it is when finishing. The College might consider indicating the level according to the European Language Competences Framework. At least the level B2 should be achievable for the students at graduate level.

The module “*Foreign Language*” may also be used as an example to question the relationship between the various elements of learning. The aim of this language module is “to develop competence in professional language as well as obtaining foreign language skills...etc.”; aims as could be expected (one could argue about the term “aim” here). Then the learning outcomes of the programme are referred to (“To provide reasoned proposal for rational use of organisation resources / to use modern information technologies in professional activities; demonstrate independence and creativity while implementing business decisions / and (finally) to communicate and cooperate in teams combining personal and organisational aims; communicating in native and foreign business language”. As subject learning outcomes it is expressed that the students should be able “to understand the main concepts of economics / to integrate theoretical knowledge while analysing the activities of an enterprise / to define the applicable systems of human resource management / to be knowledgeable to compare requirements set for different rank positions / to appraise business environment and various business situations / Ability to find potential business partners and strike up necessary contacts / to conduct /active correspondence / To consider the influence of cultural differences on successful international business communication). On the basis of this the study methods are listed. They are rather general and could fit into many modules, e.g. text analysis, discussion, dialogue, maps of ideas/concepts, case study. Quite nicely several “Methods of assessing learning achievements” are listed, e.g. individual oral quiz, presentation, written case study, participation in discussions.

The experts wonder whether these learning outcomes can really be achieved in this module carrying 6 credits. They are in particular wondering to which extent the module really makes the students understand “the main concepts of economics” etc. In reality it appears to be much an Economics class which is taught in English. Similar questions can be raised in many modules and this is one of the reasons why the experts came to the conclusion – as stated above - that the learning outcome concept is applied in a more mechanical way.

The experts understood that the College assumes that the qualification of a manager is identical with a Professional Bachelor. However, it should not be forgotten that a Professional Bachelor is first of all an academic degree which is characterised by an “applied orientation”. A manager may also be qualified through other ways and means and by other forms of learning and may have gained different though related knowledge, skills and competences.

A stronger international orientation of the curriculum may be needed. On top of learning foreign languages there are not many elements identifiable as being geared to the modern world market. There are no mobility windows foreseen to signal to the student that it is recommended to go abroad for studies or a placement, neither are modules being taught in English. Also, literature and subject topics do not strengthen this aspect. Even the “freely elective subjects” contain one module only which could support student’s orientation – but only as an add-on in the title: *Direct Marketing / International Business and Innovations*. As a “deeper specialisation” both *International Marketing* and *Business Projects/Entrepreneurship / Basics of European Union* has to be covered by all students within the subjects of the study-field. Already the name of such module indicates that is of a “bundled” module type: *Business projects / Entrepreneurship / Basics of the European Union*. This is underlined by the fact that 21 learning outcomes are stated the students have to achieve. According to literature and the recommendations within the European Higher Education Area 6-8 learning outcomes per module are adequate. The experts believe that the College itself has realised this issue as they state as one of the curricular weakness: “the newly introduced modular framework does not ensure balanced subject integration to the full”. The experts recommend not putting the emphasis on the integration of subjects but on learning outcomes.

The literature lists included in the module descriptions quite often indicate that they have become of age and should be replaced by new ones.

It would be nice to describe the updating procedure of modules: how often this is done, who initiates and who is responsible. Literature in another language is hardly mentioned.

Looking at the last accreditation report the following “disadvantages” mentioned still seem to exist as outlined above:

- “The student workload is high, limiting the opportunity for student self-study;
- Student choice of electives is very limited
- The link between general (academic) subjects and professional ones could in some cases be made more visible...
- Recommended literature is not always properly selected and exposed to students (long formal lists)”...

In their SAR the College puts forward their problem-based as well as their multidisciplinary learning approach. However, the experts are not of the same opinion. There are some steps taken but the approaches have not been put into practice to the full yet. It is not a multidisciplinary approach to bundle different subjects and teach them under one common (or not) headline. Also, it might not be wise to run a study-programme which contents “responds to the current issues of business world and students’ needs”. The graduates will be on the market in the future but the market needs might be very different by then. The College has to find an adequate way to assure the employability of their future graduates. As the College states as “Actions for improvement”:
“...Developing the content of the modules designed...”

3. Staff

Information and data provided in the self-evaluation report shows that academic staff meets legal requirements of Lithuanian higher education provisions.

There is a three steps teachers’ qualification evaluation in KK. Full time teachers are evaluated every 5 years, but they have to provide a self - analysis every year and then discuss their performance during the meeting of department. Teachers also participate in meetings – roundtable discussions – where students have a possibility to express their opinion about the quality of the lectures.

The academic skills of teachers are discussed during annual evaluations. It was indicated that staff is encouraged to go for doctoral degrees if they have not yet achieved this level. Applicants

for doctoral degree are required to have a Master Degree, practical experience as well as motivation to do an academic research.

Business professionals are invited to deliver some lectures or workshops in order to ensure students' preparation for practical work.

The ratio between teaching staff and student's numbers is adequate. This was approved during the meetings with the lecturers and students.

Teaching staff turnover is related with the objective reasons such as maternity leave, retirement or changes of the study program. As a good factor of teaching staff turnover is the fact that due to higher institutional internationalization the requirements appeared for the teaching staff to be able to work in multicultural environment pushed some staff to be changed to more internationally qualified staff.

To ensure professional development of the teaching staff every lecturer at the beginning of an academic year makes an individual professional development plan which is discussed with the department. Lecturers are invited to participate in the skill development workshops which are organized by the Kaunas College. During the analysed period big attention was given to the development of foreign language and computer literacy skills. This is very much in compliance with the higher internationalization and computerization level? (started to use Moodle and other similar systems) of the institutional activities.

Professional competence of teachers was improved whenever they had the opportunity, e.g. during short-term and long-term internships in business enterprises. There was a huge attention to development of academic staff skills related with development of student-oriented and learning-outcomes-based studies. Training was organized in the context of bigger project funded by European Union Structural funds. The risk appears for the future development of the same skills of new academic staff. So, it is recommended to organize similar seminars every year and especially for the new teachers.

Some lecturers are involved in the research directly related with the study programme. Some applied research activities are organized by the Kaunas College when institutions make an order for such activities, however more often it is done personally by the lecturers themselves.

Taking in to account the new Strategy of Kaunas College with the aim to start to provide professional master degree programs – whenever this is legally possible -, the applied research activities as well as the quantity of teachers with doctoral degree should be increased.

4. Facilities and learning resources

The premises provide an effective underpinning to support the programme. The College has 28 classrooms of various sizes and 4 lecture theatres (more than 50 seats). For organizing Business Days, conferences and the Fair of the Practical Business Training (FPBT) a 200-seat Hall is used with adequate audio and video equipment. The swimming pool and two gyms are available for the students. A new building is just in construction adjacent to the main buildings, this building will allow access for the disabled to all floors. The Self-Study Centre is well placed and has 36 work places with computers.

During their studies students have 4 professional internships, three of them are performed in various firms (26 ECTS) and one internship takes place if the firm of Practical Business Training, that is an in-house business simulation (6 ECTS). 80% of the students find internship places on their own. For the part-time students, as well as the working ones in full-time studies, the internships can be with their employer. Internships could be offered to 'incoming' ERASMUS students, that would enable the College to raise its international visibility. Coordination efforts are needed with the social partners, and their willingness to employ foreign students for a three-six months period. Enhanced International networking is self-evident after such exchanges.

The Faculty has practical business training simulation firms connected to an international firm network. This is used effectively to allow students to develop practical skills before placement in real businesses. The Faculty has many cooperation agreements with private companies, municipal and public organisations. These provide a sufficient number of practical placements for students but there is scope for better communication with social partners to inform them of the requirements and expectations of them when they accept students on placements. When on placements students are visited by college staff to ensure the appropriateness of their experiences. A few students had the opportunity to undertake their placement abroad as part of the ERASMUS framework.

Textbooks, powerpoint presentations and course notes are the main teaching resources employed in the majority of courses. Textbooks are used in general study subjects, such as Marketing, Human Resources Management and Accounting. In some courses, field trips are organised. The

library has a sufficient number of copies of textbooks which are accessible to all students. Teaching materials, including periodicals and databases, are adequate and easily accessible to students. However, there is little evidence from their work that students use them. This may be a function of the limited knowledge of English of some staff and students. Students need to be encouraged to draw upon these valuable sources to broaden and deepen their understanding.

4. Study process and student assessment

Since 2009, students' admission is centralized and run by the Association of Lithuanian Higher Schools (LAMA BPO), which determines enrolment conditions and order. The admission of students is based on the candidates past performance, the students are selected through competition. The applicants are required to at least have a secondary education. Past two years the competitive score was estimated in two ways: the school-leaving examination score in Mathematics and Lithuanian plus the school-leaving examination score in a foreign language and the annual score in History or the annual score in a foreign language and the school-leaving examination score in History (the variant more favorable for the applicant is chosen). Students with the best performance are granted scholarships financed by the government. The number of the scholarships is limited, while there is no set limit for fee-paying students. According to the table Nr. 5.1. provided in the self-analysis report, the number of the students enrolled every year is increasing, while the general competitive score has decreased from 13.63 to 9.84 points in enrollment of full-time studies and from 12.83 to 7.88 points in enrollment of part-time students. This correlates with the number of student "drop – outs" as shown in table Nr. 5.3. The faculty takes action to support and help the first-year students adapt – introduction to studies, tutors for groups. But a conclusion can be made, that these actions are not sufficient and the faculty should consider new methods to support the first- year students.

In order to assist students through their years of study there is academic and social support. Each subject has ample material and methodological support with reading lists supplied etc. Internet and intranet are used. As mentioned, databases are available, and the KK library, as well as other city and university libraries, is available through agreements between the institutions. There is access to computers and wireless internet. Hostel facilities are provided at reasonable rates. There is financial support, as noted before, through fees discounts and social grants, the fees can be segmented and paid by the student month-by-month. Additionally, there are student state loans. Overall, the support appears comprehensive and positive. Also, there is a range of activities available to students including taking part in the KK choir, student union and sports.

Thus, the students are well catered for and cared for; the students confirmed to the expert team that there are excellent relations with the teaching staff and advice is always available. In addition to social and academic support, emotional and psychological support is also available – but carried out by the staff, not by a specialist.

KK has developed Students' achievement assessment system which is defined in the Order of Implementing Studies at KK. While assessing learning outcomes, lecturers follow the principles of clarity, objectivity, impartiality, openness of assessment procedures, mutual respect, and goodwill. The subject assessment criteria, publicly available in subject descriptors, correspond to the learning outcomes of each subject and these correlate to those for the programme. As the norm for Lithuania, assessment is based on a 10-point scale with the final grade for the subject consisting of accumulative grade (IKI) and final examination. Also, as a general rule, the grading system is presented by the lecturers to the students at the first lecture of the subject. It is important, as every subject's accumulative grade percentage and the tasks needed to be carried out to accumulate the points, differ. Dissatisfied with the evaluation the students can appeal their final marks, it is also important to note that the appeal committee includes a member of the student union. The study process is clearly outlined on KK intranet and the documents that define the academic process of the College. Student progress is monitored over the four years. There are meetings with administration, the faculty.

To increase the interrelation of studies, applied scientific performance and business world, students are encouraged to conduct real market research, and develop contracted projects. The Students Scientific Society has been established in 2009. One of its main activities is organizing students' scientific conferences and participating in scientific research. Every year since 2006, students' scientific conference 'Current Business Issues from the Point-of-view of Future Managers' is organized. In 2009 and 2010, 11 students of the study programme of Business Management prepared and made reports as well as published articles in the conference publication. In 2011, 8 students participated in the conference, and in 2012, the number increased to 16 students. While writing articles, making reports, and participating in conference discussions, students develop their critical analytical thinking as well as research and social abilities. Every year since 2007, the students of the study programme of BM participate in the national entrepreneurship competition *Profas*. While there are possibilities to participate in scientific research and competitions the students do not feel encouraged. None of the students in the meeting has carried out a research on their own, or have been offered to assist a lecturer. Further encouragement is recommended.

All full-time and part time students of KK who have finished the 1st year of studies have a right to apply for the grant of Erasmus programme for studies or an internship abroad. They can also apply for the status of a student of Erasmus programme. However, during their studies, students can but once go abroad to study and once for an internship under Erasmus programme. Mixed mobility is also possible, i.e. some time is meant for studies, and some time is meant for internship. The number of outgoing students has been inconsistent – in 2012, 8 students went abroad, while in 2009/2010 the number of students was only 3. The information about Erasmus is published on the website of KK and can also be found in the intranet of the college. Live meetings and discussions with students are encouraged, as by their statements they are held-back by fears and lack of knowledge of the procedures needed to be carried out in order to go abroad.

Every year the Department studies graduates' employment and conducts surveys. KK and the Faculty of Business Management also receive information about graduates' registration in the Lithuanian Labor Exchange from the Department of Services and Monitoring of Labor Market. The Head of the Department of BM regularly meets employers and social partners and collects information about vacancies in enterprises and negotiates internship places for students. The forms of cooperation of the Department of BM with social partners improve, as employers more often express willingness to participate in public presentations of Final Theses themselves, and offer graduates job positions in their workplaces. The students feel the support of college in finding places for their practice and are positive about their future possibilities.

Attention in the Faculty is paid to the students' honesty. During the course of *Introduction to Studies*, students are acquainted with the requirements of academic ethics, and sanctions for violating its norms. Academic staff teaches students how to compose papers honestly citing references and set tasks that prevent academic dishonesty. All the students of the study programme of *Business Management* who write final papers sign declarations prepared and approved by the Department. But, plagiarism verification software, which would fully ensure academic honesty, is not installed yet.

6. Programme management

The *Business Management* study-programme is managed by Business Management Department (Department), which belongs to the *Business Management* Faculty of Business Management (Faculty). Department is responsible for programme management and quality assurance. The

department is run by the Head, who is responsible for the activity results of the department. Head of Department is a lecturer with extensive managerial, educational and research experience. He is accountable to the Dean and Deanery and delivers plans to them which are then checked to be in line of those of Faculty. He is responsible for the methods of studies implemented, study subjects quality (innovativeness, compliance with demand of labour market) and quality improvement, development of qualification of teachers (associate professors, lecturers, assistants), international exchange of students, research development. The department collaborates with Quality and Management Committee of Academic Board, social partners, employers, university scientists and students.

The responsibility of Faculty lecturer is to prepare plans of study subject, methodological material, to apply innovative evaluation methods of studies and learning outcomes, and to foster general and specific competencies of students. Lecturers are accountable to the Head, who assesses their activity results in written report. The summary of lecturer activity assessment report is presented to Deanery.

The Faculty is managed by the Dean, who is accountable to the Director of KK. The Dean makes annual and strategic (for 5 years) plans of Faculty. Annual plans are approved in Deanery, while strategic plans and activity programme for the period of 5 years are approved by Director of KK. The Dean is responsible for academic and economic results of Faculty.

Study Programme Committee (SPQ) is responsible for design, quality assurance, implementation, operation of each study programme, evaluation of potential and enrolled students' opinions, provision of recommendations for improvement. It consists of the Head of Department, business representatives and a student. Frequency of Study Programme Committee meetings is not set; it depends on the needs of programme changes.

Since 2007, the Department regularly collects and analyzes the data from Department and Faculty meetings, self-assessment surveys, reports of the chairperson of the Qualifying Board, the results of the investigations conducted by the Department, students' surveys about study quality, surveys of social partners, statistics of students' and lecturers' mobility, student "wastage" statistics. As stated in SAR, collected and analyzed information is compared to the data of similar programmes in other educational institutions, however it is not explained how benchmarking is done and what is the level of the Programme.

Internal study quality assurance system (SQAS) in the Faculty was developed and has been constantly improved, according to Total Quality Management system, which is implemented and used in the College. It is implemented through cycles and self-assessment and benchmarking. SQAS is focused on quality and management of study programmes and study subjects, the field of activities of staff and material resources. It is not clear, if SQAS is effective and extensively used and to what extent it is developed. The autonomy and objectiveness of implementation of the system and data collected is unclear. It is also undefined how collected data is processed and used in further improvements of the programme quality. SQAS is constantly being developed based on recommendations of external quality control and government institutions. It has been reported that the quality of studies is also being constantly improved, however the current situation and progress achieved is not clear.

It is mentioned in SAR that in 2000, Study Quality Management Office was established, the functions of which are to manage the improvement of study quality and assess of the results achieved. This office closely cooperates with faculties, departments, students and social partners in the process of improving the quality of the study programme. However it is not explained what is subordination of this office, results or conclusions of this Office are not provided. It is not clear if this Office was created at College level or at Faculty level. This was also not fully clarified in the meeting.

The experience gained during internships in foreign institutions is also used to improve quality of study programme.

It has been stated in SAR that at the end of semester students' surveys about study quality and satisfaction are carried out and analyzed. 86% of students are satisfied with study quality. The level of student "wastage" is low in the programme. The analysis of students' surveys led to introduction of more innovative studies, modified methods of evaluation, more flexible working hours of College facilities, increased focus on practical training. Also the lecturers' opinion is taken into account - improvement to study environment have been implemented, the number of computerized working places was increased.

Activity of Department, lecturers, Faculty are analyzed and assessed in annual self-assessment report which is presented to departments, Deanery, lecturers, students, Director of the College. Report includes assessment of lecturers' pedagogical activity and qualification development. Department is assessed by to the level of study program quality, level of qualification of

academic staff, results achieved in research development. Faculty is assessed according to the following criteria: management, implementation of study programmes, staff qualification, international activity, research development, material resources. Deanery is eventually responsible for studies quality.

As a result of changes made based on evaluations and analysis mentioned above, the quality of studies improved, however it is difficult to measure this improvement. It has been mentioned in SAR that student thesis quality has improved, however it is not clear by how much and how the thesis quality was evaluated. Overview of the student's thesis by the experts indicated that theses' quality is average.

Study programme assessment and improvement activity is attended and positively influenced by stakeholders (students, staff, lecturers, employers and graduates). Students participate in surveys about the quality of organising studies and teaching. The results from 2011 study showed that 60.5% of students think that they are satisfied with the academic workload. Graduates participate in the Alumni club, although their participation level is low. Employers' surveys are organized, which results are taken into account when learning outcomes are modified, content of study subject are adjusted, new subjects are introduced. Stakeholders participate in career days, round table discussions, Qualification Commission of final theses of students, deliver public lectures and seminars. They also participate in the activities of Study Programme Committee.

The system for assuring the quality of the study programme exists and all stakeholders have possibility to affect the quality of the study programme, however it needs to be improved continuously. Internationalization of the College and mobility of students in this particular program need to be increased. International co-operations have been strengthened, the network of foreign partners has expanded, and the mobility of teachers has increased. The number of courses taught in English increased, however it might not be sufficient for the current needs of the labour market. As stated in SAR, the quality of programme increased after shifting to ECTS system. Overlapping subjects were eliminated, the amount contact hours were adjusted, students' final assessment was changed as cumulative assessment system was introduced. From 2006, public presentations of Self-Assessment Reports are organized and placed publicly on the College website.

College teachers, departments and faculties prepare self-assessment reports, however there is no external quality evaluation by a separate institution in the College. Internal quality assurance

system is functioning, but not sufficient and not effective enough. The feedback system (such as evaluation of teachers) has been developed. Furthermore, in currently existing quality assurance system the participation rate is not clear, also unclear feedback provision and receiving process. It is not clear how the program's quality has been evaluated in the past, what is the level of improvement from year to year. Plans for further quality development are in place, areas of responsibility are defined well. Stakeholders and faculty community participate in the process of quality development. The benchmarking of study quality could be used. In conclusion, there is no well working, fully implemented quality assurance system, as College lacks external (independent) quality assurance system.

The management structure of faculty is clear and effective, tasks and responsibilities allocated adequately. However, it is not clear, why Faculty of Business and Management has two *Business Management* programmes which have the same learning outcomes and study subjects. It could be more effective to control and increase the quality of one program instead of supporting and developing two identical programmes in the same Faculty.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Learning Outcomes should evolve from the bottom-up. The Expert team would encourage the College to make a matrix of all the 'intended' learning outcomes and then discuss with lecturers of each individual course what it should focus on.
2. Albeit initiatives taken as expressed in the Self Evaluation Report (p 10) internationalisation for the staff and students currently mainly means ERASMUS student mobility. Several measurements could be taken to enhance the meaning of "Internationalisation" for the College. Incoming students should be offered some internships in Lithuanian companies – of course this needs agreement with the social partners, but they have indicated that they would be willing to co-operate. It would be advisable to build joint-degrees. College should consider invitation of international guest-speakers to talk about their business and their economic environment.
3. The College needs to better distinguish between the material it offers in *Entrepreneurship, a part of course*, and in classes for *SMEs*. For the start-up entrepreneurs the needs are in the areas of market research, market potential, risk management, skills in the management team and of course everything in the area of finance (e.g. working capital management, investment advice).
4. Applied practice is very well established, nearly too much planned, and no place for the students to develop critical thinking about the industry and the work they do.
5. The College has shown weaknesses in implementing correctly the ECTS as a workload measurement system. It would be advisable to focus more on the 'module approach' and not follow the College rules, i.e. veritable modules should be recreated and the practice at the college not to be continued: modules are some lectures which are bundled together. (see page 12/13).
6. Self-study room facilities were too small; the study room facilities need to be increased, i.e. in addition to the lecturing rooms and their equipment, space should be available for students where they can work on their own and in groups. Priority should be given to access the electronic databases from home, in particular as there is not enough space available for individual work at the College. This would enhance dramatically the efficiency from working at home and would allow for better preparation for the classes.
7. Behaviour at the College is regulated by ethical codes: one for students and one for teachers – they should be united and jointly agreed on.

8. The College should establish a programme change process. In such a process/design different time-checkpoint must be included. It must contain the description: who can initiate a change of the program, when, why, with what support and what are the stages that such an initiative has to run through. The Process must produce reports with action items and identify named-persons (not units) to fulfil the required activity.
9. An Internal Quality processes is not really established. The evaluation of the different classes is left to the lecturer and he collects the evaluations from the students directly. Changes as consequence of critique are left to the lecturer, and depend on his/her wish to answer to student/social partner suggestions.
10. The link with social partners is very intense and very good – but should include a formal dimension as well. The existing informal relationships are quite unreliable, if senior partners would change and ‘former agreements’ would like to be re-installed.

IV. SUMMARY

The intended learning outcomes are clear, and well-communicated, and the programme meets local labour market needs. Teaching staff are experienced and demonstrate significant engagement in professional development and the sharing of good practice. General and specialist facilities, this means the rooms and their equipment, are of a high standard and students benefit from considerable practical experience, within and outside the College, the latter aided by good relations with social partners. Students find staff accessible and supportive. Students exhibit a good level of mobility as regards the gaining practical experience. The College has adopted a good approach to self-assessment.

The College uses a transparent admission system for selection of candidates. Organization of teaching process and social support is beneficial for achieving intended learning outcomes and the grading system in place enables correct assessment of achieved learning outcomes. The academic support system could be improved, as many first year students drop out due to academic failure or leave the studies by their own request. Also, the faculty should take proactive measures to encourage students to participate in research and other scientific activities, to establish a student union, hobby groups etc. In addition, it is recommended to implement an anti-plagiarism program to fully ensure academic fairness.

The College needs to encourage and support increased staff competence in the English language and increased use of research to inform teaching. Students must be encouraged and supported to make greater use of databases and other external sources in their studies and submitted work.. There is a need to clarify the Quality/Change cycle and its 'formal' communication to stakeholders. This should include clear terms of reference for key programme management committees and the production of a Quality Manual setting out respective responsibilities of administrative staff, teachers, students and social partners. Questionnaire design should be reviewed to ensure that more meaningful questions are asked, including more open questions. Furthermore, students should be provided with more formal feedback of outcomes/results from questionnaire surveys. The College should ensure that student views across years and modes of study are collected to present an holistic 'whole picture' to the students.

V. GENERAL ASSESSMENT

The study programme *Business Management* (state code – 653N20008) at Kaunas College is given **positive** evaluation.

Study programme assessment in points by fields of assessment.

No.	Evaluation Area	Evaluation Area in Points*
1.	Programme aims and learning outcomes	3
2.	Curriculum design	3
3.	Staff	3
4.	Material resources	3
5.	Study process and assessment (student admission, study process student support, achievement assessment)	3
6.	Programme management (programme administration, internal quality assurance)	2
	Total:	17

*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:

Volker Gehmlich

Grupės nariai:
Team members:

Richard Mischak

Mindaugas Butkus

Erika Vaiginienė

Andrius Zalitis

**KAUNO KOLEGIJOS PIRMOSIOS PAKOPOS STUDIJŲ PROGRAMOS VERSLO
VADYBA (VALSTYBINIS KODAS – 653N20008) 2014-05-13 EKSPERTINIO
VERTINIMO IŠVADŲ NR. SV4-233 IŠRAŠAS**

<...>

V. APIBENDRINAMASIS ĮVERTINIMAS

Kauno kolegijos studijų programa *Verslo vadyba* (valstybinis kodas – 653N20008) 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	3
5.	Studijų eiga ir jos vertinimas	3
6.	Programos vadyba	2
	Iš viso:	17

* 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

Numatomi studijų rezultatai yra aiškūs ir apie juos gerai informuojama, o programa atitinka vietos darbo rinkos poreikius. Dėstantis personalas yra patyręs ir reiškia aktyvų norą tobulinti profesinius gebėjimus bei dalintis gerąja praktika. Bendroji ir specialioji įranga, t. y. patalpos ir jų įranga, atitinka aukštus standartus, o studentams naudinga gauti praktinės patirties kolegijoje ir už jos ribų, pastaroji įmanoma dėl palaikomų gerų ryšių su socialiniais partneriais. Studentai mano, kad personalas yra lengvai pasiekiamas ir jiems padeda. Studentai demonstruoja gerą judrumo lygį, kuris padeda įgyti praktinės patirties. Kolegija priėmė gerą įsivertinimo metodiką.

Kandidatų atrankai kolegija naudoja skaidrią priėmimo sistemą. Mokymo proceso ir socialinės paramos organizavimas padeda siekti numatomų studijų rezultatų, o sukurta vertinimo pažymiais sistema padeda teisingai vertinti pasiektus studijų rezultatus. Galėtų būti gerinama akademinės pagalbos sistema, kadangi daug pirmo kurso studentų iškrenta dėl akademinės nesėkmės arba savo noru išsibraukia iš studijų sąrašų. Fakultetas taip pat turėtų imtis aktyvių priemonių skatindamas studentus dalyvauti moksliniuose tyrimuose ir kitoje mokslinėje veikloje, steigti studentų sąjungas, bendrų pomėgių grupes ir kt. Be to, rekomenduojame įgyvendinti nesąžiningo mokymosi stabdymo programą, kad būtų visiškai užtikrintas akademinis sąžiningumas.

Kolegija turi skatinti ir paremti personalą, kuris gerina savo anglų kalbos kompetenciją ir dėstyto gerinimo tikslais labiau vadovaujasi moksliniais tyrimais. Studijuojant bei teikiant rašto darbus studentus reiktų raginti ir padėti jiems dažniau naudotis duomenų bazėmis ir kitais išoriniais ištekliais. Reikia išaiškinti Kokybės/pokyčių ciklą ir jo „oficialų“ ryšį su socialiniais dalininkais. Jame turėtų būti aiškiai nurodyti esminių programos valdymo komitetų įgaliojimai ir Kokybės vadovas, nurodantis atitinkamas administracijos personalo, dėstytojų, studentų ir socialinių partnerių atsakomybes. Reikia peržiūrėti klausimyno juodrašį ir užtikrinti, kad jame būtų pateikiami reikšmingesni klausimai, įskaitant atviresnius klausimus. Be to, studentus reikia oficialiau informuoti apie apklausos klausimyno rezultatus. Kolegija turėtų užtikrinti, kad būtų fiksuojamas studentų požiūris kasmet ir skirtingų studijų formų studentų, siekiant studentams pristatyti visapusišką „bendrą vaizdą“.

III. REKOMENDACIJOS

1. Studijų rezultatus reiktų gerinti. Ekspertų grupė skatintų kolegiją sukurti visų „numatomų“ studijų rezultatų lentelę ir po to aptarti juos su kiekvieno atskiro dalyko dėstytojais, numatant, kam reikės skirti daugiausiai dėmesio.
2. Nepaisant savianalizės suvestinėje (10 p.) įvardintų iniciatyvų, personalo ir studentų internacionalizacija šiuo metu daugiausiai apsiriboja ERASMUS studentų judumu. Galima būtų imtis keleto priemonių, siekiant sustiprinti „internacionalizavimo“ reikšmę kolegijai. Atvykstantiems studentams reiktų pasiūlyti atlikti praktiką kai kuriose Lietuvos bendrovėse, žinoma, dėl to reiktų susitarti su socialiniais partneriais, bet jie jau nurodė, kad norėtų bendradarbiauti. Patartina sukurti jungtinius laipsnius. Kolegija galėtų apsvarstyti galimybę pakviesti pranešėjų iš užsienio skaityti paskaitų apie savo verslą ir ekonominę aplinką.
3. Kolegijai reiktų geriau išskirti siūlomą medžiagą apie verslumą, kaip dalyko sudedamąją dalį ir SVĮ (smulkių ir vidutinių įmonių) paskaitose. Pradedantieji verslininkai nori tirti rinką, rinkos potencialą, rizikos valdymą, valdymo grupės įgūdžius ir, be abejo, viską, kas susiję su finansais (pvz., apyvartinio kapitalo valdymą, patarimus investavimo klausimais).
4. Sudarytos labai geros sąlygos atlikti praktiką, beveik per daug suplanuota, nesuteikiant studentams galimybės vystyti kritinį mąstymą apie pramonę bei jų atliekamą darbą.
5. Kolegijai prasčiau sekėsi teisingai įgyvendinti ECTS, kaip darbo krūvio nustatymo sistemą. Patartume daugiau dėmesio skirti „modulio principui“, o ne laikytis kolegijos taisyklių, t. y. reiktų atkurti tikrus modulius, o praktiką kolegijoje reiktų nutraukti. Moduliai yra kelios kartu sujungtos paskaitos (žr. 12-13 psl.).
6. Savarankiško mokymosi patalpos yra per mažos. Reiktų tobulinti mokymosi patalpų materialinius išteklius, t. y. šalia auditorijų ir jų įrangos, studentams reiktų įrengti erdvę, kurioje jie galėtų mokytis savarankiškai ir grupėse. Pirmenybę reiktų teikti prieigai prie elektroninių duomenų bazių iš namų, ypač dėl to, kad kolegijoje nepakanka vietos individualiam darbui. Tai labai pagerintų darbo namuose produktyvumą ir leistų geriau pasirošti paskaitoms.

7. Elgesys kolegijoje nustatomas etikos kodekse: vienas yra skirtas studentams, kitas – dėstytojams, kodeksai turėtų būti apjungti ir bendrai patvirtinti.
8. Kolegija turėtų nustatyti programos pokyčių procesą. Į šį procesą reikia įtraukti skirtingus kontrolinius laiko taškus. Jam reiktų sukurti aprašą: kas gali inicijuoti programos pokyčius, kada, kodėl, su kieno pagalba ir kokie etapai nurodo, kad reikia imtis tokios iniciatyvos.

Įvykdžius šį procesą, reikia pateikti ataskaitas, kuriose būtų nurodyti atlikti veiksmai ir įvardinti asmenys (ne padaliniai), kurie turi reikiamą veiklą atlikti.

9. Nėra realiai įsteigtų vidinių kokybės procesų. Dėstytojas atlieka skirtingų paskaitų vertinimą, o studentai jam tiesiogiai pateikia vertinimus. Reaguodamas į gautą kritiką, dėstytojas pats įgyvendina pokyčius ir tai priklauso nuo jo (jos) noro reaguoti į studentų / socialinių partnerių siūlymus.
10. Su socialiniais partneriais palaikomi labai stiprūs ir geri ryšiai, tačiau jie turi būti oficialiai įforminti. Užmegzti neoficialūs ryšiai yra gana nepatikimi, jei vyresnieji partneriai pasikeistų, reiktų iš naujo perrašyti „ankstesnius sutarimus“.

<...>

Paslaugos teikėja patvirtina, kad yra susipažinusi su Lietuvos Respublikos Baudžiamojo kodekso¹ 235 straipsnio, numatančio atsakomybę už melagingą ar žinomai neteisingai atliktą vertimą, reikalavimais.

¹ Žin., 2002, Nr. 37-1341.