



STUDIJŲ KOKYBĖS VERTINIMO CENTRAS

**ALYTAUS KOLEGIJOS
STUDIJŲ PROGRAMOS *VERSLO VADYBA*
(*valstybinis kodas - 653N20026*)
VERTINIMO IŠVADOS**

**EVALUATION REPORT
OF *BUSINESS MANGEMENT* (*state code - 653N20026*)
STUDY PROGRAMME
at ALYTUS COLLEGE**

Experts' team:

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Išvados parengtos anglų kalba
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DUOMENYS APIE ĮVERTINTĄ PROGRAMĄ

Studijų programos pavadinimas	<i>Verslo vadyba</i>
Valstybinis kodas	653N20026
Studijų sritis	Socialiniai mokslai
Studijų kryptis	Vadyba
Studijų programos rūšis	Koleginės studijos
Studijų pakopa	Pirmoji
Studijų forma (trukmė metais)	Nuotalinė (3); Išžėstinė (4)
Studijų programos apimtis kreditais	180
Suteikiamas laipsnis ir (ar) profesinė kvalifikacija	Vadybos profesinis bakalauras
Studijų programos įregistravimo data	2012-08-24

INFORMATION ON EVALUATED STUDY PROGRAMME

Title of the study programme	<i>Business management</i>
State code	653N20026
Study area	Social sciences
Study field	Management
Type of the study programme	College studies
Study cycle	First
Study mode (length in years)	Full time (3); Part time (4)
Volume of the study programme in credits	180
Degree and (or) professional qualifications awarded	Professional Bachelor of Management
Date of registration of the study programme	24 August, 2012

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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.	<i>The results of Survey (social partners)</i>
2.	<i>Students' feedback 2013-2015</i>
3.	<i>The list of International partners</i>
4.	<i>The procedure of attracting international students to the programme</i>
5.	<i>Study plans</i>
6.	<i>The guidelines of Final Thesis evaluation</i>

7.	<i>The Activity plan of Programme's development</i>
8.	<i>Timetables of part time and full time studies</i>
9.	<i>Questionnaire for alumni</i>
10.	<i>Questionnaire for students</i>

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

Alytus College (AC) is a state institution of higher education in the Southern Lithuania region.

The main goals of Alytus College are to provide higher education and professional qualification corresponding to the needs of the economy of Lithuania and the level of science and newest technologies, develop applied research activities that are necessary for the region, consult subjects of economy, provide conditions for continuous education, organize improvement of professional qualification and re-training, educate the society capable of working under the conditions of rapidly changing technologies.

The study programme of Business Management (BM) was launched at Alytus College in Lithuanian and English in 2012 and was updated in 2014.

The self-assessment report provides analysis and assessment of the BM study programme of Management study field at AC, gives a review on goals and learning outcomes (Los), analyses the present situation and summarizes the experience acquired during the implementation of the study programme.

In accordance with the plan of the study programme external assessment provided by the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education (SKVC) and by the order of AC Director No V-195 of 18 June 2014 and the order of AC Director No V-218 of 10 September 2015. The preparation work group consisted from 6 representatives of the areas analyzed including also students.

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 *16/May/2016*.

- 1. Prof. dr. Pandelis Ipsilandis (team leader)** *Professor of School of Business and Economics, Technological Education Institute of Larissa, Greece.*
- 2. Prof. dr. Tatjana Volkova,** *Professor of BA School of Business and Finance, Latvia.*
- 3. Dr. Pedro Pablo Cardoso Castro,** *Lecturer of Business School, Leeds Beckett University, UK.*
- 4. Ms. Lina Grigonytė,** *Executive director at Association of Management Consultants of Lithuania, Lithuania.*
- 5. Ms. Indrė Šadzevičiūtė,** *student of Vilnius Gediminas technical University study programme Entertainment Industry.*

II. PROGRAMME ANALYSIS

2.1. Programme aims and learning outcomes

The Expert Team agrees that the program goal is defined too broadly. It is emphasizing that students are prepared to make decisions instead of being prepared to manage an enterprise or its departments.

There is no statement in the goal given on which level of organization and for which positions students are prepared. Later, in the SER it is clearly stated, that study program prepares managers. At the same time, the goal of the study programme is aimed at application and implementation of management knowledge which will enable specialists to plan, organize and control company human, financial, material and information resources, evaluate efficiency of the company performance, changes and take reasonable decisions. Although, managers could be considered as specialists as well, a more coherent approach would be delivered by emphasizing that program aims to prepare managers throughout the whole SER. The Expert Team thinks that the program also would benefit if the goal of the program could be formulated more rigorously and would be applied consistently throughout communication with stakeholders.

As it is stated in the SER the goal and learning outcomes (LOs) of the BM study programme are aimed at application of acquired knowledge and skills in the professional activities. There are 3 specializations provided in the program: Finance Management, Organization of International Business and Marketing Management according to South Lithuania regional needs. Marketing specialization added recently after suggestion of Social Partners. The other 2 specializations existed since the introduction of the program. All these specializations are active, thus showing that specializations comply also with the interests of students.

The information about the professional activities students will be able to work after graduation from each of different specializations could provide clearer outcomes of the program and could be used to provide more information for attracting students and developing partnerships with business community.

As it is mentioned in SER the demand for the AC BM study programme and its importance is confirmed by the analysis of labour force demand and prognosis in Alytus County in 2012–2015, which shows a need and employment opportunities for specialists with higher education of management study field. This was also proved by stakeholders during the visit. The Study Programme (SP) management has to focus more on future needs of the region and adjustment of program accordingly thus demonstrating proactive approach to development of the programme.

There are 8 LOs defined at the level of the program. It is consistent with the general international practices for defining LOs on levels 6 to 8. The program aims and LOs are publicly available under the IT system www.aikos.smm.lt and accessible under AC website (<http://akolegija.lt/studiju-programa/verslo-vadyba/>), as well in annual AC publications, leaflets, brochures and media. The LOs of study courses are related to the LOs of the programme to ensure their achievement, i.e. each course clearly defines what concrete LOs student will achieve when studying this course.

The AC ensures that the programme aims and LOs are based on the academic and/or professional requirements, public needs and the needs of the labour market by conducting consultations with AC social stakeholders, evaluation of the changes of business environment, considering the results of the performed surveys. Every two years the study programme committee makes a survey on the alignment of the study programme outcomes to the labour market demands, delivering stakeholder survey on compliance of study programme with to the

labour market requirements.

When upgrading course programmes, AC teachers considered the requirements of employers, labour market needs, aiming at developing student creativity, training general and special skills, consulted with social stakeholders and representatives of academic staff who have experience in the implementation of BM study programme.

The study programme LOs are adjusted to the level of college studies to ensure alignment with the first level of Professional Bachelor's studies and the 6th level according to the description of the Qualifications Structure of Lithuania.

The title of the programme Business Management, its LOs, content and the qualification (Professional Bachelor of Management) offered are in general compatible with each other. During the visit the Expert Team has noticed that the Top management, SER members and Teachers recognize also the importance of promoting entrepreneurship within the programme, but this is reflected very little in LOs and content according to SER. Thus there is a room to make more visible the Entrepreneurship dimension of the program to ensure employability of graduates.

The BM study programme is dominated by the study courses related to analysis of the business environment, business incorporation, management and development opportunities, planning and management of the company financial sources. AC made a comparison with similar programs in Lithuania and found out that those programs have its specifics according to regional needs. AC used the experience of similar international programs. Unfortunately, the benchmarking with similar international programmes didn't lead to the possible improvement of students learning experience as the content and LO of studies could be more updated based on analysis of these programs. Benchmarking of the similar program with leading peers in the field has to be ongoing process, especially in the context that AC makes strong efforts to internationalize the programme by attracting international students.

The content of study program and courses would benefit from updating and adjustment by emphasizing more international context and entrepreneurship dimension. As it was clarified during visit, local companies are export oriented and thus requires managers with foreign language skills, as well cross-cultural management understanding. AC intends to expand its international cooperation (e.g. also considering dual degrees) to enhance student's international experience. This particular is important for ensuring viability of study program as the new competitive study program International Business is offered by AC in addition and thus could be more attractive for international students decreasing interest to study general business. Therefore, there is a need for market research for interests and choice of possible international students to deliver necessary corrective actions to ensure viability of the program.

2.2. Curriculum design

The curriculum design meets legal requirements (List of general requirements for study programmes of the first cycle degree studies and integrated studies confirmed by Order of the MES of the RL No V-501 of 09 April 2010; List of qualification structure of Lithuania confirmed by the Resolution of the GRL No 535 of 04 May 2010; List of study areas and fields according to which studies in higher education institutions are carried out confirmed by resolution of the GRL No 1749 of 23 December 2009; Description of cycles of studies confirmed by Order of the MES of the RL No V-2212 of 21 November 2011; List of study branches comprising study fields confirmed by Order of the MES of the RL No V-222 of 19 February

2010; Description of full-time and part-time modes of studies confirmed by Order of the MES of the RL No ISAK-1026 of 15 May 2009).

Study subjects and/or modules are spread evenly; their themes in most cases are not repetitive.

There is a room for content of the subjects and/or modules improving to ensure consistency with the type and level of the studies. For example, some subjects are at too high level for undergraduate program (e.g., *Strategic Company Finance Management* and *Investment Projects*), the titles of some courses (e.g., *Marketing Planning and Management*, *Personnel Management*) need to be reconsidered in order to match with the latest developments in the field of studies. The Personnel Management plays more strategic role in the companies nowadays.

Thus modernizing the title of the course *Personnel Management* by replacing it as *Human Resource Management* would shift the focus on the content as well.

Some study courses are too limited by ECTS (e.g., *State Finance System and Taxes*, *Integrated marketing communication*, etc. on 3 ECTS level). This amount is not sufficient for delivering the content required. The study course *Company Economics* content has to be updated as it is partly overlapping with course *Personnel management*, *Finance management* and *Management* study courses.

The course *Company Economics* mainly focuses on the elements of business plan and some of its content is overlapping with the course *Fundamentals of Business planning* (3 ECTS), in addition, including other aspects of entrepreneurship: developing idea of business, setting company directions of development, sources of finances, stakeholders analysis, thus looking from perspective of individual entrepreneur to develop its own business. Therefore, possibility to combine both study courses under course *Entrepreneurship* would allow ensuring development of employability skills and providing deeper competencies to students to start own business.

Macroeconomics and *Microeconomics* could be integrated under a new course with more practical content, for example, Applied Economics thus linking impact of Economics on company performance, but not focusing on Economics content, which is currently too general.

The invitation of local managers for discussion, introducing case studies on issues how Economic environment has impacted their business and then analysis on theoretical background behind it would deliver higher value to the student and be more relevant for the program delivered.

There is a possibility to merge some other courses, for example, the study course Analysis of Company Activities is partly overlapping with study course Finance management.

There were suggestions coming from Social partners was reported by SER team to include study course on Export management with special focus on Scandinavian markets. Social Partners during the meeting and emphasized the need to enhance: Foreign languages / HR management / Project Management / Accounting competencies from graduates. Social partners emphasized the specific proposals to introduce Sales technologies course by concentrating on more particular things, for example, including activities of Customs office in addition to Logistics content.

As it was observed both from SER and during the visit there is no study course on Innovation management and Strategic management in the program. Due to the small number of students it is understandable that program offers only limited optional courses for student's choice and only 1 subject has to be chosen as an elective. But for the further program improvement it would be necessary to reconsider wider options to broaden reflection on student's interests.

The scope of the programme in general is sufficient to ensure LO. The volume of the study programme is 180 ECTS credits meeting the legal requirements for College level studies. The

duration of the full-time (FT) studies is three years, while that of part-time (PT) is four years. The study plan consists of 34 courses (average 10 courses per year): compulsory – 28 (150 ECTS), optional – 6 (30ECTS), including 2 (6 ECTS) – alternative. The volume of courses in majority of cases is sufficient for achieving the study outcomes. Although there are courses for 3 ECTS, for example, Fundamentals of Business planning, Management Accounting, Project Management, Macroeconomics, etc. Wherever it is possible there is an opportunity to merge courses the level 6 ECTS thus avoiding fragmentation of the courses and allowing delivering deeper and integrated content of the course. Modularization of the program leads to more cooperation among teachers and shared understanding about the course LO and methods in achieving them.

Students have to choose 3 courses out of the proposed: 2nd language, Business Social Responsibility and Economics of Social Security. Although, the small number of students limits learning experience for elective courses.

The study programme includes 4 practical trainings with total volume of 30 credits and 3 course papers/projects, 2 of them dealing with the study field, and 1 with specializations. The study programme is completed by the evaluation of competencies of the graduate through the preparation and defence of his/her final project. The volume allocated for Final Thesis is 9 credits which correspond with legal requirements.

The list of course literature contains latest academic sources. In addition, as it was mentioned above, the definition of the titles of the subjects need updating to reflect the latest advances in the field and be internationally compatible and a review on the relevance of some of them as it was discussed in the section above should be considered.

2.3. Teaching staff

The Expert Team held a fruitful meeting with teaching staff which was attended by most of the teaching staff of the particular program. The study programme is provided by the staff meeting legal requirements. The BM study programme has at least a Master's degree or equivalent tertiary qualification. 3 doctors and 25 master's work in the BM study programme; 68 per cent of teachers working in the BM study programme have at least 3 years of practical experience in the area of the subject taught; 18 per cent of the subjects of the study field are taught by doctors. The qualifications and the number of the teaching staff are adequate to ensure LO.

Most of staff works FT for the AC. There are 5 year's contracts in place requiring regular reassessment to keep position and thus teaching staff cares about their professional development. The AC creates conditions for the professional development of the teaching staff necessary for the provision of the programme. There is an annual development plan for every staff member.

According the SER during the analysed period, teachers actively participated in international mobility, conferences, seminars and various training courses. They also themselves organized and held a number of training courses, seminars and this was proved during the interview with teaching staff.

The teachers of BM study programme constantly improve their practical competencies. They participating in internships, keep close relations with employers of Alytus city and region, and self-government institutions, share their experience and knowledge. The BM study programme has been implemented since 2012; therefore, the teachers of the study field courses have sufficient practical and teaching experience in a higher school.

Many teachers working within the programme are members of various associations, unions and

societies (for example, Lithuanian Association of Marketing, Lithuanian Association of Adult Educators, Lithuanian Association of Language Teachers, Lithuanian Association of English Language Teachers (LAKMA), Lithuanian Union of Lawyers, Society of the Lithuanian Language, etc.) thus bringing professional experience in the class.

In spite of the ongoing efforts to improve English proficiency of teachers, there is still a need to continue these efforts in the light of further internationalization of the program. This was a suggestion also coming from the students.

During the period under assessment teachers of the BM study programme provided expert services in assessing study programmes, reviewing methodological publications of teachers of higher education institutions. According to SER teachers write project proposals and participate in project implementation of European Social Fund, Erasmus, Leonardo da Vinci (Innovation Transfer), Lithuania – Poland 2007-2013, INTERREG IIIA, and INTERREG IVC programs, create new study programmes, modules and teaching materials.

The teaching staff of the programme is involved in research (art) directly related to the study programme being reviewed. The list of publications provided assures that the research activities is one of the priorities at AC. Teachers of the BM study programme are conducting applied research and/or improved their competencies in the projects implemented by AC. According to SER Teachers during the period of accreditation prepared 22 articles for reviewed publications in international databases, 23 articles in other publications.

Although the Final Thesis of students rare contains references for the journals; in majority cases the references are based on internet resources and academic books. Thesis is more descriptive rather than reflected on analytical content of current development in the field. There is also an opportunity for involving students in teacher's research activities and thus to meet the expectations of the stakeholders to gain competencies to carry out research on company performance. The teachers have to reflect more on latest research findings in the field and their own research outcomes in the study course content.

2.4. Facilities and learning resources

The premises for studies are adequate both in their size and quality. AC provides comfortable environment and modern facilities for students. All study rooms are equipped with the necessary equipment: computers, multimedia projectors, etc. The area of the premises designed for the realization of the BM study programme is 1370 m², 1010 m² of which are intended for theory studies (depending on the occupation of premises, they are also used by students of other AC study programmes), 360 m² – for practical work. 10 study rooms are used for theory teaching, 5 rooms –for practical work. Most of the study rooms have 30 seats, 3 auditoriums have 40 to 120 seats. From 8 (in Business Simulation Company, so there work is organized into sub-groups) to 30 students can work in practical teaching rooms at the same time. All premises are suitable for organizing the learning process according to the labour safety and hygiene requirements (permit–hygiene passport No 26 of 14-02-2014 issued by Alytus Public Health Centre).

The teaching and learning equipment (laboratory and computer equipment, consumables) are adequate both in size and quality. Hardware and software is updated considering current level of technological progress, the latest scientific achievements and demands of the labour market. VMware virtualization solution based on VDI-Virtual Desktop Infrastructure is successfully used to improve the AC study process. Due to the functional VPN (Virtual Private Network) network, students and the staff have the availability of virtual desktop environments, the

MOODLE learning environment for both AC internal and external network.

Students can have free and unlimited wired and wireless Internet connection and perform independent work. Most students who live in the hostel use their own computers as they have free Internet access. AC is actively involved in project work. In 2012, an interactive SANAKO Lab 300 lingua-phonetic language learning laboratory was purchased under the project "Creation of a Regional Technology Centre" (No VP3-2.2-ŠMM-15-K-01-014).

In order to ensure modern study environment and opportunities to develop skills in working with the latest hardware and software, AC regularly updates the servers and storage devices for improving students and teachers working environments, to supplement and update specialized software using its special funds and ESF funds.

The national plagiarism detection system plag.lt is used to check students' individual work and Thesis. The system is available also to teachers.

The library funds, the periodicals reading room, the electronic reading room, the Business Incubator and the self-study centre of foreign languages are available for students in the IISC. Library provides necessary resources both printed and digital ones thus give opportunity for students to enrich learning experience.

According to the data of January 1, 2015, the funds of the AC IISC consisted of more than 20 thousand publications. 958 copies of books were added to the library funds (SER, 19). AC is a member of the Association of Lithuanian Science libraries (LMBA) and Association of Lithuanian College Libraries (LKBA). Teaching materials (textbooks, books, periodical publications, databases) are adequate and accessible in the AC. The AC has to work on ensuring that students are able to access data basis from home thus setting the necessary infrastructure for broader access from distance to the available data basis.

The AC has adequate arrangements for students' practice. Business Practical Training is divided into two parts – first of all, students learn to perform the functions of personnel, purchasing, accounting and sales staff in the Business Simulation Firm (6 credits), i.e., students are enabled to gain practical experience in the organization of the company's activities and to prepare to work in real companies. After that, the students carry out the rest of the practical training in real companies (3 credits).

The Career Office and the International Office need severe upgrading especially in the context of internationalization as both offices been situated in the place with another sign on the door.

AC cooperates successfully with companies of Alytus and other regions in organizing professional practical training. Students of the study programme choose individually the company in which they intend to carry out their practical training and adjust that with the supervisor of the practical training and the Head of the Department. There are agreements in place with companies from Alytus and other cities and regions that are considered basic corresponding to the requirements for the workplace of a potential graduates. AC cooperates with the Lithuanian Business Employers' Confederation, Lithuanian Business Association and Vilnius Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Crafts, etc., which provide students with a perfect opportunity to find an attractive place for their practical training in well-known Lithuanian companies and acquire real work experience corresponding to their specialty.

2.5. Study process and students' performance assessment

The admission requirements are well-founded and are defined by AC Student Admission Rules. Since 2009 AC has been taking part in general admission to Lithuanian higher schools and acting

according to general provisions of this admission. The applicants for BM study programme must have secondary school education. The organisation of the study process ensures an adequate provision of the programme and the achievement of the learning outcomes. The assessment system of students' performance seems to be clear, adequate and publicly available; Students deliver feedback on the learning progress, both informally and formally. However, findings from the meeting with students did not convince the Expert Team that it is done systematically. The Expert Team recognizes the need for supporting weak students but there is no such mechanism in place yet. This could be direction for further development of the program.

There are 27 first year students (14 full time (FT) and 13 part time (PT)) admitted for FT studies in 2015. The entrance level of students is declining reflecting demographical situation of the society. This leads to high dropout rates. According to SER (p.26) it is reported that the drop-out rate is 38 %. It is mainly due to the academic failure. The AC is introducing different means to tackle this issue but more focused efforts to address this issue need to be placed. F.e., by organizing round table discussions with the teachers from partner institutions to learn best practices, to provide support from more mature students, etc.

The BM study programme has international students. The study programme attracted 35 international students. They reported positive attitude towards learning experience in AC, but at the same time lack more integration with local students, some international students strongly recommended to improve teachers' English language skills. During the assessed period the first cohort of international students graduated the BM study programme.

AC teachers use traditional and modern study methods linking closely the study content with real problems in different areas and their solutions adapted to study forms, structural discussions, interview, reports, presentations with IT, analysis of audio and visual materials, expert work in teams, project preparation, discussions with practitioner's professionals and guest lecturers abroad. Invitation of guest lecturers, also from abroad on regular basis could add learning experience to students.

Students are encouraged to participate in research, artistic and applied research activities; Students have opportunities to participate in student's research conferences, Business Simulation Company contest, students governing bodies, student mobility programmes, etc. The majority of the BM's programme students under supervision of their teachers made a number of applied research surveys according to the request of social partners. The student's mobility is very low and it is mostly int'l student that take advantage of it. There are a few incoming students annually 2 – 4 only from Turkey. Diversification of countries for incoming students would be helpful to enrich learning experience for "internationalizing at home".

In order to increase the study quality and foster internationalization during the period under assessment teachers of foreign higher education institutions delivered lectures, for example, from Portugal, Poland, Turkey, USA, etc. This practice needs to be continued for the benefits of the students and community in large. The expertise of the foreign faculty can be exploited by organizing seminars for stakeholders on topics might be interested for local society.

The AC ensures an adequate level of academic and social support. There are Moodle materials for every study subject available, both in Lithuanian and English language. For part time students there are 2 sessions twice a year organized. Consultations are available for all students.

The timetable is made considering the BM study plan and is based on external and internal regulations.

The Career and Public Relations Centre is in place to provide necessary assistance on the career

opportunities related to studies. The role of this Centre could be expanded to provide consultations to increase motivation for first and second year students who are underperforming academically to show the possible career opportunities opened for them after graduation. This is linked to the upgrade of the space allocated to it.

The disabled students of AC can get financial support which is granted by the Department of the Disability Affairs. There is also a special hardware and special desks acquire to meet special needs of those students.

Professional activities of the majority of graduate's meet the programme providers' expectations. AC has the ALUMNUS club through which AC keeps in constant touch with AC graduates. The members of this club share their experience in the organized seminars, help to make projects, supply proposals about the improvement of the study process and study programme.

2.6. Programme management

Responsibilities for decisions and monitoring of the implementation of the programme are clearly allocated. This is assured also by Quality assurance system (QA) on the AC level. The team was able to observe that the QA system in place and recently was certified by officially recognized bodies. The Academic Board approves the dishonesty prevention system and controls its implementation. Based on information provided by AC there is an Academic Code of Ethics in place and each student has to sign, as well every exam form includes students commitment to behave honestly during exam.

There are several management structures in place for making decisions of the implementation of the program: Council, Academic Board, Faculty Council and different committees. The Study Programme Committee is responsible for the implementation of the programme and continuous quality improvement. There are clear processes in place for delivering the tasks. The composition of Committee includes a teacher of the department of the study programme acting as a Chairperson, the faculty dean, student representative, 1 teacher who has professional experience related to the BM study programme, 2 employers. The Committee has open working format as invites other experts for work. Committee meets twice a year and gives proposals to the Faculty Board on improvement of the study programme and its updating. Once in three years in the spring semester it performs self-assessment of the study programme and presents it to the study quality assurance centre together with the plan of renovation and report on implementation. The decisions of the committee are influenced by the teachers working in the study programme, recommendations of the graduates and employers, results of the surveys on student opinion and changes in the labour market. External social stakeholders working in innovative business companies contribute to the assessment and improvement of the study quality. While assessing the study programme, the committee consults with associations of business structures, managers and employees of regional companies.

Information and data on the implementation of the programme are regularly collected and analysed. The analysis of the BM student fluctuation shows that in 2015, 62 per cent of full-time students successfully completed the study programme. The drop-out is 38 per cent. The reasons for drop-out are: transfer into another study mode – 5 per cent, and academic failure – 33 per cent. The AC is aware on the issue based on the following assumptions: the increased unemployment rate, high emigration of young people and worsened material situation. The 33% is rather high drop-out rate and the reasons behind need to be closely monitored in order to provide timely and tailored support on individual basis.

AC provides necessary support to those students in forms more efficient forms and measures of feedback timely hand-in of assignments and projects, more efficient use of information that was received in consultations, and improvement of student understanding of the importance of their achieved results in the future career, information on social and academic support and strengthening student motivation through cooperation with stakeholders. Students of BM study programme take an active part in applied research, study quality assurance and self-government activities. Student research skills are trained during preparation of reports, course projects, and graduation theses. During the assessed period, the students of BM study programme did applied research on requests of companies in their graduation theses. Students take an active part in organizing annual applied research conferences. This has to be encouraged furthermore by inviting students from other Colleges and international ones.

The outcomes of internal and external evaluations of the programme are used for the improvement of the programme; Course subjects are reviewed annually. There is a process in place for modification in subject descriptors (about 20%). As it was noticed during the visit there is an opportunity to organize teachers and program management meetings on program level to discuss the latest developments locally and internationally in the field of studies and ensure that they are reflected in the study program avoiding its overlapping in different courses.

The evaluation and improvement processes involve stakeholders. Social stakeholders are included into different work groups (e.g. self-assessment of the study programme, study programme committee, research, preparation of study quality assurance regulations, etc.) and commissions (teacher certification, contest, qualification, etc). The Council includes 2 university scientists, 2 representatives of business, 1 representative of ALUMNI, 1 student and 3 representatives of the management. Social stakeholders can make influence on the content of the study subjects and outcomes of studies.

Students together with representatives of the management prepare questionnaires and initiate research in order to assess the teaching quality, perform surveys and present reports. In the process of improvement and assessment of AC study quality, students often take initiatives while representatives of AC students together with academic staff meet faculty deans and heads of departments to discuss the current issues, supply proposals and remarks on quality assurance and improvement of the study process.

The reports of chairpersons of the Qualifying Board and analysis of materials of student surveys show dominance of positive assessments of the teaching process. However, there are still things to be improved: more efficient use of opportunities provided by professional practical training in order to strengthen professional and teamwork skills; more active training of skills of practical work; development of more efficient interpersonal relations between teachers and students.

The internal quality assurance measures are effective and efficient. The Internal Study Quality Management System based on ISO 9001 standard and the main ESG areas was implemented and confirmed by AC Academic Board in 14-01-2013 and is certified on 28th of May, 2013. The Quality guide is in place, quality indicators and comparative assessment indicators are also determined and confirmed.

The Expert Team was not fully convinced that there is a development plan in place for the programme. The plan which was submitted upon request of the team during the visit had many discrepancies thus leaving the doubts if the development goals and tasks are the high priority for the program management.

All teachers are involved in the activities of study quality improvement and assessment. There

are tasks provided to each teacher involved in the program under QA system. The implementation of the study programme and quality assurance are based upon AC Statute, Regulations of Studies, Faculty Rulebook, regulations on the activities of the Study Programme Committee, regulations on teacher certification and competition to hold particular positions, assessment criteria for academic activities, procedure of preparation and certification of teaching materials, procedure of accreditation of AC distance learning courses, the order of transfer of study results, procedure of preparation, presentation, defence and assessment of course papers, procedure of organization of practical training (educational, professional, final), procedure of preparation, submission, defence and assessment of reports on practical training, procedure of choosing optional subjects of AC, etc. The programs are constantly improved considering new legislation, new challenges and requirements for higher education, trends of AC activities and development of the conception of quality in higher education. Serious problems of academic ethics are discussed in the Faculty Board and department meetings. There is a procedure in place for improper fulfilment of students duties provided in AC Statutes.

Nevertheless, the team have noticed that there is no coherent approach among teaching staff regarding the assessment of students. The centralized policy on College level on late assignment submission would be beneficial both for program management, teaching staff and students;

The cooperation with Kaunas University of Technology and other partners are aiming to enhance the quality improvement of the study program.

As the Expert Team observed during the site visit, the issue of isolation of international students, particularly in the accommodation part of the student experience is the exposition to diversity. It will demand to consider for both, recruitment and delivery cultural issues such male/female orientation and its incidence in the interaction with peers.

A clear internationalization policy and development plan with definition of targets and supported by a rationale countries selected must be developed. Opportunistic recruitment from different countries can provide only temporary solutions to the sustainability of the program. Clear plans will be more effective, particularly if related with the diplomatic agenda for the country/region/EU as it may bring social and economic support in long run.

2.7. Examples of excellence *

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

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

1.

To review the intended LOs and the goal of the program to ensure that they are of high quality and provide better focus based on the close review of trends in the European context to enhance the content and attractiveness of the course, particularly if aiming to attract international students.

2.

To update the content of the program based on broader, through enhanced participation of teaching and management staff in re-designing the program and LOs by focusing on continuous update. The definition of the titles of the subjects need updating and a reviewed by focusing on the relevance of some of them.

3.

A clear internationalization plan with definition of targets and supported by a rationale has been developed. "Opportunistic" recruitment can provide only temporary solutions to the sustainability of the program, particularly, if related with the diplomatic agenda for the country/region/EU as it may bring economic support. Give encouragement to marketing efforts to increase the numbers of students on to this program.

4.

A plan for improvement of language skills of teachers, especially in English, as well on contemporary methods of Virtual Learning Environment and Immersive learning is recommended.

5.

To develop Assessment policy and Academic support policy on College level ensuring coherent approach among teachers to deliver this and provide clear rules applied for students to pass the course and graduate the program.

6.

To develop the AC level policy on literature sources, including references to latest articles from scientific journals available used in the Final Thesis.

IV. SUMMARY

Strengths:

1. There is a quality culture in place both on the level of AC and program level;
2. Strong cooperation with business companies and other stakeholders locally and internationally;
3. Teachers are qualified and motivated and majority of them work full time thus forming a good methodological basis for continuity and development of the program;
4. Students receiving good support and teaching and management staff are accessible; Internships are well organized and international mobility awareness is present. Internationalization of the program is in place thus demonstrating strong efforts to ensure sustainability of the program;
5. Comfortable teaching and learning environment, modern facilities, tools and platforms and available library resources.

Areas for improvement:

1. The goal and LOs of the program is defined too broadly by emphasizing that students are prepared to make decisions instead of being prepared to manage an enterprise or departments;
2. The content of the study courses would benefit from updating. Some titles of the courses not reflecting the latest developments in the field. Not enough visibility of Entrepreneurship dimension in the program to ensure employability of graduates;
3. There is an inconsistency for student's assessment and not clear rules for assessment in place. Apparently there is not an institutional/department policy on this issue;
4. There is no support policy and focused mechanisms on central level for tackling high level drop-out rates on individual and group level;
5. The level of teaching staff proficiency in English;
6. The AC is on early stage of internationalization thus reflects on weak integration of local and international students.

V. GENERAL ASSESSMENT

The study programme BUSINESS MANAGEMENT (state code – 653N20026) at ALYTUS COLLEGE is given **positive** evaluation.

Study programme assessment in points by evaluation areas.

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

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

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

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

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

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ALYTAUS KOLEGIJOS PIRMOSIOS PAKOPOS STUDIJŲ PROGRAMOS *VERSLO VADYBA* (VALSTYBINIS KODAS – 653N20026) 2016-09-27 EKSPERTINIO VERTINIMO IŠVADŲ NR. SV4-216 IŠRAŠAS

<...>

V. APIBENDRINAMASIS ĮVERTINIMAS

ALYTAUS KOLEGIJOS studijų programa *VERSLO VADYBA* (valstybinis kodas – 653N20026) vertinama **teigiamai**.

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

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

2 - Patenkinamai (tenkina minimalius reikalavimus, reikia tobulinti)

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

4 - Labai gerai (sritis yra išskirtinė)

<...>

IV. SANTRAUKA

Stiprybės

1. Ir kolegijos, ir studijų programos lygiu įdiegta kokybės kultūra.
2. Glaudžiai bendradarbiaujama su įmonėmis ir kitais vietos bei tarptautiniais socialiniais dalininkais;
3. Dėstytojai yra kompetentingi ir motyvuoti, daugelis dirba visą darbo laiką taip sudarydami gerą metodologinį pagrindą programos tęstinumui ir plėtrai;
4. Studentai gauna reikalingą pagalbą, dėstytojai ir vadovybė yra prieinami. Gerai organizuota praktika, studentai supažindinami su tarptautinio judumo galimybėmis. Programos tarptautiškumas yra, tai rodo, kad dedama daug pastangų programos ilgalaikiškumui užtikrinti.
5. Patogi studijų aplinka, moderni įranga, priemonės ir praktinės programos prieinami bibliotekos ištekliai.

Tobulintinos sritys

1. Šios programos tikslas ir numatomi studijų rezultatai apibūdinti pernelyg plačiai, pabrėžiant, kad studentai yra rengiami daryti sprendimus, o ne vadovauti organizacijai ar padaliniais.
2. Būtų naudinga atnaujinti studijų dalykų turinį. Kai kurių dalykų pavadinimai neatspindi naujausių aptariamos srities pasiekimų. Šioje programoje nepakankamai ryški verslumo dimensija, kuri padėtų užtikrinti absolventų įsidarbinamumą.
3. Studentų rezultatų vertinimas nenuoseklus, nėra aiškių vertinimo taisyklių. Institucija / katedra, matyt, neturi politikos šiuo klausimu.
4. Nesukurta centriniu lygmeniu pagalbos politika ar mechanizmai, skirti spręsti didelio nubyrėjimo problemą asmens ar grupės lygmeniu.
5. Nepakankamas dėstytojų anglų kalbos žinių lygis.
6. Alytaus kolegijos tarptautiškumas yra ankstyvojoje stadijoje, ir tai rodo silpną vietos bei tarptautinių studentų integraciją.

<...>

III. REKOMENDACIJOS

1. Persvarstyti studijų programos *Verslo vadyba* tikslą ir numatomus studijų rezultatus siekiant užtikrinti, kad jie būtų kokybiški ir geriau orientuoti remiantis atidžiai išnagrinėtomis Europos tendencijomis, sustiprinant dalykų turinį ir patrauklumą, ypač jei siekiama pritraukti tarptautinius studentus.
2. Atnaujinti programos turinį įtraukiant daugiau dėstytojų ir vadovybės į programos ir numatomų studijų rezultatų keitimo procesą, orientuojantis į nuolatinį atnaujinimą. Reikia atnaujinti studijų dalykų pavadinimus ir atkreipti dėmesį į kai kurių dalykų aktualumą.
3. Turi būti parengtas aiškus tarptautiškumo didinimo planas su apibrėžtais tikslais ir loginiu pagrindu. „Oportunistiškas“ priėmimas gali būti tik laikinas sprendimas siekiant šios programos ilgalaikiškumo, ypač jei jis siejamas su šalies / regiono / ES diplomatine darbotvarke, nes tai gali atnešti ekonominės naudos. Skatinti rinkodaros pastangas siekiant padidinti šios programos studentų skaičių.
4. Rekomenduojama sukurti dėstytojų kalbos (ypač anglų) įgūdžių gerinimo planą, taip pat mokyti šiuolaikinių virtualios mokymo(si) aplinkos ir įtraukaus ugdymo metodų.
5. Kolegijos lygmeniu nustatyti vertinimo ir akademinės pagalbos teikimo tvarką užtikrinant darnų dėstytojų požiūrį į jos įgyvendinimą ir nustatyti studentams aiškias taisykles dalykų egzaminų išlaikymui ir šios studijų programos baigimui.

6.

Kolegijos mastu nustatyti naudojimosi literatūros šaltiniais tvarką, įskaitant nuorodų į mokslinių žurnalų naujausių straipsnių pateikimą baigiamuosiuose darbuose.

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

Vertėjos rekvizitai (vardas, pavardė, parašas)