



STUDIJŲ KOKYBĖS VERTINIMO CENTRAS
CENTRE FOR QUALITY ASSESSMENT IN HIGHER EDUCATION

INFORMATICS ENGINEERING FIELD OF STUDY

Klaipėda Valstybinė Kolegija

EXTERNAL EVALUATION REPORT

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I. INTRODUCTION

1.1. OUTLINE OF THE EVALUATION PROCESS

The field of study evaluations in Lithuanian higher education institutions (HEIs) are based on the following:

- Procedure for the External Evaluation and Accreditation of Studies, Evaluation Areas and Indicators, approved by the Minister of Education, Science, and Sport;
- Methodology of External Evaluation of Study Fields approved by the Director of the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education (SKVC);
- Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG).

The evaluation is intended to support HEIs in continuous enhancement of their study process and to inform the public about the quality of programmes within the field of study.

The object of the evaluation is all programmes within a specific field of study. A separate assessment is given for each study cycle.

The evaluation process consists of the following main steps: 1) Self-evaluation and production of a self-evaluation report (SER) prepared by an HEI; 2) A site visit by the review panel to the HEI; 3) The external evaluation report (EER) production by the review panel; 4) EER review by the HEI; 5) EER review by the Study Evaluation Committee; 6) Accreditation decision taken by SKVC; 7) Appeal procedure (if initiated by the HEI); 8) Follow-up activities, which include the production of a Progress Report on Recommendations Implementation by the HEI.

The main outcome of the evaluation process is the EER prepared by the review panel. The HEI is forwarded the draft EER for feedback on any factual mistakes. The draft report is then subject to approval by the external Study Evaluation Committee, operating under SKVC. Once approved, the EER serves as the basis for an accreditation decision. If an HEI disagrees with the outcome of the evaluation, it can file an appeal. On the basis of the approved EER, SKVC takes one of the following accreditation decisions:

- **Accreditation granted for 7 years** if all evaluation areas are evaluated as exceptional (5 points), very good (4 points), or good (3 points).
- **Accreditation granted for 3 years** if at least one evaluation area is evaluated as satisfactory (2 points).
- **Not accredited** if at least one evaluation area is evaluated as unsatisfactory (1 point).

If the field of study and cycle were **previously accredited for 3 years**, the re-evaluation of the field of study and cycle is initiated no earlier than after 2 years. After the re-evaluation of the field of study and cycle, SKVC takes one of the following decisions regarding the accreditation of the field of study and cycle:

- To be accredited for the remaining term until the next evaluation of the field of study and cycle, but no longer than 4 years, if all evaluation areas are evaluated as exceptional (5 points), very good (4 points) or good (3 points).
- To not be accredited, if at least one evaluation area is evaluated as satisfactory (2 points) or unsatisfactory (1 point).

1.2. REVIEW PANEL

The review panel was appointed in accordance with the Reviewer Selection Procedure as approved by the Director of SKVC.

The composition of the review panel was as follows:

1. Prof. dr. Peeter Normak, Professor at Tallinn University, School of Digital Technologies, Head of the Applied Informatics academic direction (Estonia);
2. Prof. dr. Elmar Cochlovius, Professor at Hochschule Furtwangen University, Dean of Studies, Faculty Computer Science and Applications (Germany);
3. Prof. habil. dr. Piotr Artiemjew, Professor at University of Warmia and Mazury Faculty of Mathematics and Computer Science, Head of the Computer Science Institute (Poland);
4. Justas Selenkovas, Co-Founder Join-Stock company „Softeta“ (Lithuania);
5. Rokas Stankūnas, Fourth-year student of Vilnius University's first-cycle study program Information Systems and Cyber Security (Lithuania).

1.3. SITE VISIT

The site visit was organised on 11 November 2025 onsite.

Meetings with the following members of the staff and stakeholders took place during the site visit:

- Senior management and administrative staff of the faculty
- Team responsible for preparation of the SER
- Teaching staff
- Students
- Social partners / employers.

The meetings were held in English. Translation was required during the meetings (except for the meeting with the students).

1.4. BACKGROUND OF THE REVIEW

Overview of the HEI

Klaipėda Valstybinė Kolegija (hereinafter referred to as KVK or the *College*) is a state-owned institution of higher education in the Republic of Lithuania. KVK's predecessor institution, the Klaipėda Teacher's Seminary, was founded in 1902 and later (1991) transformed into the Klaipėda Pedagogical School. This school merged with the Klaipėda Higher Medical School in 2001 to form Klaipėda Kolegija. In 2009, Klaipėda Kolegija merged with the Klaipėda Business and Technology College, resulting in the establishment of KVK.

KVK has three faculties (Economics, Technology and Health Sciences) and ten departments, offering 27 degree programs in 21 fields of study.

The Faculty of Technology comprises four departments: Environmental and Civil Engineering, Informatics and Electrical Engineering, Mechanical and Transportation Engineering, and Food Technology and Nutritional Sciences. The faculty offers ten study programmes.

Overview of the study field

The Department of Informatics and Electrical Engineering offers five degree programmes, three of which are in the field of informatics: Informatics, Informatics Engineering, and System Administration. The field of informatics comprises two study programmes – Informatics Engineering (first study cycle, hereinafter – INE) and System Administration (short study programme, hereinafter – SA). The INE study programme has been offered at KVK since 2016. The Informatics Engineering study programme has been awarded the Investors' Spotlight quality mark.

Previous external evaluations

The INE study programme was positively evaluated in all six areas in 2016 (with a grade of "3" on a four-point scale, in total 18 points) and accredited until July 1, 2020. The SA study programme has been accredited since 2024 (scoring 17 points).

Documents and information used in the review

The following documents or information have been provided by the HEI before or during the site visit:

- *Self-evaluation report and its annexes*
- *A selection of final theses*
- *The Regulations of the Study Programme Committee*
- *Syllabi of the study programmes (in Lithuanian)*
- *Action Plan of the Faculty of Technology for 2025 (in Lithuanian)*
- *Procedure for Managing Applied Research (in Lithuanian)*
- *Minutes of the 07.01.2025 and 26.02.2025 meetings of the Informatics and Electrical Engineering department (in Lithuanian)*
- *The Code of Academic Ethics (in Lithuanian)*
- *Opinions of Employers on the Preparation of Graduates (in Lithuanian).*
- *Survey on graduate satisfaction with their studies six months after graduation (in Lithuanian).*
- *The equal opportunities policy and its implementation procedure (in Lithuanian).*
- *Templates of the Student Satisfaction Questionnaire for the years 2024 and 2025*
- *First-year Students Questionnaire on Adaptation.*
- *Students Questionnaire on Internal Practices.*
- *Students Questionnaire on External Practices*
- *Students' Questionnaire on the Study Subjects.*
- *Questionnaire on Employee Opinions about the Preparation of Graduates for Work Activities (in Lithuanian).*
- *Graduate Career Monitoring Survey After 3 Years from Graduation (in Lithuanian).*
- *Employee Microclimate Assessment Questionnaire (in Lithuanian)*

- *Internationalization Promotion Action Plan 2024-2026 (in Lithuanian)*
- *Membership lists of the study programme committees (in Lithuanian)*
- *Minutes of the two last meetings of the Informatics Engineering Study Programme Committee (in Lithuanian)*
- *The Strategic Plan of KVK for 2025-2029*
- *KVK Digital Transformation Strategy for 2022-2027*
- *Lists of student mobility that took place in 2021-2024 (incoming) and 2024 (outgoing)*
- *Student dropout statistics for the academic years 2021/2022 – 2024/2025*

Additional sources of information used by the review panel:

The Review Panel had access to a large number of KVK regulations in English available on public websites, including (a selection):

- *The Study Regulations of the Klaipėda Valstybinė Kolegija*
- *The Quality Policy of the Klaipėda Valstybinė Kolegija*
- *The Quality Manual*
- *The Provisions for Awarding Scholarships*
- *The Description of the Procedure for Organising and Evaluating Practice*
- *The Appeals Submission and Examination Regulations*
- *The Description of the Procedure for Individualisation of the Study Process for Students/Unclassified Students, Students with Special Needs*
- *The Study Result Recognition Procedure*
- *Description of the Procedure for Monitoring Students' Academic Performance and Providing Academic Assistance*
- *The Procedure for Providing Psychological Assistance*
- *The Procedure for the Organisation and Assessment of Internships*
- *The Code of Academic Ethics*

II. STUDY PROGRAMMES IN THE FIELD

Title of the study programme	Short cycle/LTQF 5	First cycle/LTQF 6
	SYSTEM ADMINISTRATION	INFORMATICS ENGINEERING
State code	5701BX009	6531BX005
Type of study (college/university)	college	college
Study cycle	Short cycle studies	First cycle studies
Mode of study (full time/part time) and nominal duration (in years)	Full-time (2 years)	Full-time (3 years)
Workload in ECTS	120	180
Award (degree and/or professional qualification)	System Administrator	Professional Bachelor of Computing
Language of instruction		
Admission requirements	Secondary educational and occupational qualification	Secondary or higher education
First registration date	01/09/2023	28/06/2016
Comments (including remarks on joint or interdisciplinary nature of the programme, mode of provision)		

III. ASSESSMENT IN POINTS BY CYCLE AND EVALUATION AREAS

The **short cycle** of the *Informatics engineering* field of study is given a **positive** evaluation.

No.	Evaluation Area	Evaluation points ^{1*}
1.	Study aims, learning outcomes and curriculum	3
2.	Student admission and support	3
3.	Teaching and learning, student assessment, and graduate employment	4
4.	Teaching staff	4
5.	Learning facilities and resources	4
6.	Quality assurance and public information	3
Total:		21

The **first cycle** of the *Informatics engineering* field of study is given a **positive** evaluation.

No.	Evaluation Area	Evaluation points ^{2*}
1.	Study aims, learning outcomes and curriculum	3
2.	Links between scientific (or artistic) research and higher education	4
3.	Student admission and support	3
4.	Teaching and learning, student assessment, and graduate employment	4
5.	Teaching staff	4
6.	Learning facilities and resources	4
7.	Quality assurance and public information	3
Total:		25

1*, 2*

1 (unsatisfactory) - the area does not meet the minimum requirements, there are substantial shortcomings that hinder the implementation of the programmes in the field.

2 (satisfactory) - the area meets the minimum requirements, but there are substantial shortcomings that need to be eliminated.

3 (good) - the area is being developed systematically, without any substantial shortcomings.

4 (very good) - the area is evaluated very well in the national context and internationally, without any shortcomings.

5 (exceptional) - the area is evaluated exceptionally well in the national context and internationally.

IV. STUDY FIELD ANALYSIS

AREA 1: STUDY AIMS, LEARNING OUTCOMES AND CURRICULUM

1.1.	Programmes are aligned with the country's economic and societal needs and the strategy of the HEI
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FACTUAL SITUATION

1.1.1. Programme aims and learning outcomes are aligned with the needs of the society and/or the labour market

KVK self-evaluation report (hereinafter referred to as SER) states that the relevance of the two study programmes is high for the region. This relevance is grounded in strategic alignment: in formulating the study programmes' objectives and results, consideration was given by the Klaipėda Economic Development Strategy 2030 and the Lithuanian Progress Strategy "Lietuva 2030." These national and regional strategies specifically identify key economic and technological trends, notably "Pramonė 4.0", confirming the study programmes' alignment with current and future regional labour market needs.

The structure of study programmes, the content of courses, study results and their consistency with the study methods are reviewed annually and regularly discussed with social partners. However, direct feedback from business partners indicates a practical challenge: while lecturers receive and use feedback from post-internship evaluations to adjust courses, there is still a reported lack of clarity from businesses regarding the expected skills of graduates. The findings indicate that the current formal mechanisms for joint cooperation with specific companies do not fully support a mutual understanding of required competencies. Alumni highlighted that they gained a clear understanding of industry expectations primarily through their mandatory internship programs, which also served as a direct pathway to employment.

The data shows that the alignment between final thesis work and practical industry integration is limited. Currently, approximately 50% of thesis topics originate from real company cases. Alumni and employers noted that the relevance of thesis content to actual business problems, modern technologies, and current industry trends varies significantly.

Regarding the INFORMATICS ENGINEERING study programme

From the perspective of a social partner, the Informatics engineering study programme is exceptionally relevant to the current and future needs of the labour market. There remains a significant and unmet demand for high-level ICT talent, and this programme is structured to directly address that gap by producing skilled alumni.

The programme focuses on competencies that are critical to the region's industrial and manufacturing sectors. The inclusion of IoT (Internet of Things) skills directly supports the ongoing digital transformation and "Pramonė 4.0" initiatives within companies.

Furthermore, the emphasis on developing project and team management abilities is a significant strength. This ensures that graduates possess not only the necessary technical expertise but also the collaborative and leadership skills essential for a modern, agile work environment. These combined competencies are highly sought after and crucial for the long-term success of graduates in the labour market.

Regarding the SYSTEM ADMINISTRATION study program

While we acknowledge the programme's relevance was discussed with the regional development agency "Klaipėda ID," we retain significant reservations about its immediate market viability and broad impact.

Primary concern is that the programme, which has not yet been implemented, may be too narrowly focused. The competencies described appear to target a highly specific niche of system administration, which may only be relevant to a small number of specialized companies within the region. This contrasts with the broader, more flexible ICT (Information and Communications Technology) skillsets currently in high demand.

From the industry's point of view, the question arises whether such a specialized program can effectively contribute to the overall growth potential and labour needs of the region. The risk is that it may produce graduates for whom there are limited local positions, instead of addressing the larger, more urgent demand for specialists with versatile software development, data analysis, and digital transformation skills.

1.1.2. Programme aims and learning outcomes are aligned with the HEI's mission, goals, and strategy

Both study programmes, Informatics Engineering and System Administration, directly correspond to the KVK mission to ensure "study content based on market needs." The Informatics Engineering programme aligns particularly strongly with the strategic direction to develop "applied science activities oriented towards the sustainable development of the country," by preparing high-level ICT specialists necessary for the region's Pramonė 4.0 transformation. This programme's content, which includes the Internet of Things and project management, also reflects the goal of ensuring a quality study process.

The System Administration programme is an attempt to meet a specific market need, which is consistent with the mission's provisions.

ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSION (regarding 1.1.)

The two ICT study programmes under review, Informatics Engineering and System Administration, demonstrate the alignment of the strategic direction of KVK with the country's economic and societal needs. The Informatics Engineering programme is highly relevant, directly addressing the regional labour market's urgent need for high-value ICT specialists.

The current breadth of the SA study programme presents a challenge to market alignment. Graduates report difficulties in securing employment within their specialized field, attributing this to a perceived gap in understanding specific skills required by regional businesses. While the programme offers a variety of courses, its broad scope has not fully translated into a clear set of competencies recognized by industry partners, leading to uncertainty about graduate expectations. To remedy this, the College should enhance the strategic alignment of the curriculum with social partners, particularly by dedicating increased effort to improving the structure and relevance of internship programs.

1.2.	Programmes comply with legal requirements, while curriculum design, curriculum, teaching/learning and assessment methods enable students to achieve study aims and learning outcomes
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FACTUAL SITUATION

1.2.1. Programmes comply with legal requirements

The first-cycle study programme Informatics Engineering and the short-cycle study programme Systems Administration comply with all legal requirements. The study programmes have been developed and are continuously updated in accordance with the legislation in force in Lithuania, such as the *Law on Higher Education and Research of the Republic of Lithuania* as well as the sixth level of the European Qualifications Framework, the first cycle of studies of the European Qualifications Framework for Higher Education, and the requirements set out in the *Descriptor of the Informatics Study Field Group*.

The internal Quality Management System established at KVK complies with LST EN ISO 9001:2015 standard, and the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System, and the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG).

The Alignment of INE Study Programme Modules with the Learning Outcomes indicates that in general, most of the learning outcomes are covered by a substantial number of modules.

However, both of the learning outcomes 2.1. "To define a problem within the professional practice of computer engineering" and 2.2. "To prepare the necessary data and information from various sources to address a specific professional practice problem in computer engineering." are addressed by only two modules. Learning outcomes 2.3. "To analyse the data, information, and potential solutions required to address a specific professional practice problem in computer engineering, based on defined criteria." and 2.4. "To evaluate the data and information needed to solve a computer engineering professional practice problem and to justify solutions with reasoned conclusions." are both covered by nine and twelve modules respectively. All of these outcomes are members of the Field descriptor group 2, "Skills in Conducting Research", but should be evenly covered to avoid imbalances.

Thus regarding group 2, the INE study programme seems to strongly focus on advanced topics such as the Analysis and Evaluation of data and information to address specific problems (2.3 and 2.4), rather than to problem definition (2.1) and subsequent information gathering and preparation to address the problem (2.2). For a first-cycle course, this might be unbalanced and could limit the efficiency and quality of the problem solving capabilities of the participants.

The Design of the SA study programme follows the recommendations of Information and Communication Technologies and Inclusive and Creative Society – of the Government Strategic Analysis Centre (STRATA). Learning outcomes comply with the requirements of the Law on Science and Studies of the Republic of Lithuania, the fifth level of the European Qualifications Framework, and the Descriptor of the Informatics Study Field Group.

The alignment of SA Study Programme Modules with the Learning Outcomes indicates that in general, most of the learning outcomes are covered by a sufficient number of modules and this appears to be well-balanced.

The amounts of credits and study hours in each study programme have been selected in such a way as to meet the requirements defined in the above-mentioned documents: The first-cycle INE program consist of 180 credits, of which 36 credits are for an internship and 12 credits for a thesis; the total amount of hours is 4800, of which 47% are contact hours, and 53% are for independent work.

The SA short studies program consists of 120 credits, of which 40 credits are for internships and 6 credits are for the final project; the total amount of hours is 3200, of which 53% are contact hours, and 47% are for independent work. The SA study programme has a strong

focus on exposing participants to industrial work experience. This is reflected in two separate industrial placements, as it should help students to gain substantial and well-grounded practical work experience during their studies. This will help successful graduates to quickly become productive once they have entered the labour market.

The structure of both study programmes meets the requirements set out in the *Descriptor of the Group of Study Fields of Computing* and is also in line with the international curricula recommendations governing the field of study (software engineering), as developed and maintained by the ACM, the IEEE Computer Society and EQANIE (European Quality Assurance Network for Informatics Education).

1.2.2 Programme aims, learning outcomes, teaching/learning and assessment methods are aligned

The INE courses are grouped according to their content and complexity. Higher complexity requires the students to invest more time into a particular module. Modules which cover more general competencies usually have a volume of 3 credits, e.g. Professional Communication and Professional Foreign Language (English), as they usually result in a workload of 80hrs. Modules covering practical knowledge and skills, e.g. Programming and Computer Architecture range from 4 to 9 credits as they will require 106-240 hrs.

Similar to the design of the INE programme, the scope of the SA modules reflects their contribution to the learning outcomes. Courses providing general knowledge have a volume of 3 credits according to their workload of 80hrs, while modules with focus on practical skills have a volume of up to 6 credits (160hrs).

To ensure the quality of study and assessment methods, KVK has established a systematic and yearly review, joined by an evaluation and update process. This allows rapid and timely adaptation to new legal requirements, changing needs of the labour market, alumni feedback as well as innovative developments and technologies. In addition, KVK organizes regular career fairs and discussion forums with local IT companies to receive additional market and technology insights.

The design of both the INE and the SA study programme follows a well-structured process to ensure the compatibility of the aims, learning outcomes, teaching and learning methods and assessment methods. After defining the study programme learning outcomes based on the programme objective, the next step was to define the learning outcomes of each subject. Each subject contributes to a number of learning outcomes in such a way that all of the required outcomes are addressed by a number of subjects. Then, the learning methods for each subject are aligned with its particular learning outcomes. Subjects focused on the acquisition of knowledge use lectures, reading, discussions, etc., while subjects which concentrate on skill development use the learning methods of group work, project assignments, lab experience etc. Finally, the assessment methods are compatible with the learning methods: written tests and surveys are used to assess knowledge while individual skills are assessed using methods such as project presentations, reports, etc.

1.2.3. Curriculum ensures consistent development of student competences

Both study programmes, INE and SA, follow the strategy to begin with providing general and basic knowledge and then later progress to more advanced and specialized topics. INE subjects are organized into three branches, namely electronics, system administration and programming where each branch of topics follows this principle.

Specifically, the branch of programming might benefit from additional subject courses such as modules for SW-Engineering, Formal Methods, IT-Project Management, Requirements Engineering as long as Software Engineering is seen as a vital and important part of Informatics Engineering.

Students of the INE programme can choose two study subjects from a list of free electives. These electives are placed in the 3rd and 4th semester. This guarantees that fundamental skills have already been acquired during semester 1 and 2. Also the student has already developed a broad overview of his field of study to identify areas where he wants to deepen his expertise. In addition, during higher semesters the study programme relies on a number of vocational internships to establish close links between academic education and practical work experience in the industry. To prepare students for their internships and provide sufficient professional skills, various subjects cover vocational competencies throughout the study course but in particular in the early semesters.

The SA short study programme follows similar guidelines as the INE programme. Compared to INE the SA programme is more focussed on the practice of system administration, but still covers basic knowledge of Physics, Programming and Computer Architecture. Within SA, internships occupy a more substantial part of the study programme (40 credits out of 120).

1.2.4. Opportunities for students to personalise curriculum according to their personal learning goals and intended learning outcomes are ensured

In the INE programme, students can choose 2 electives with a total of 6 credits. In addition, in the 6th semester, they can choose one of two subjects.

Compared to other study programmes, the possibilities of a student to personalise her study programme seem to be rather limited. No clear indication of courses from other study programmes, participation in international exchange programmes (e.g. Erasmus) to enhance academic mobility, special courses during summer vacation or participation in dedicated excellence programmes has been indicated. All of these could provide valuable possibilities for students to personalize their studies. The same holds true for the SA programme.

1.2.5. Final theses (applied projects) comply with the requirements for the field and cycle

In both programmes, INE the final thesis and SA the final project, marks the end of the study programme, i.e. each student needs to completely pass all previous subjects and complete his vocational internships to be eligible to defend his thesis/project. The scope of an INE thesis is 12 credits, while the scope of an SA final project is 6 credits.

In their thesis work, INE students need to demonstrate knowledge and skills they have acquired during their studies. This – as mentioned - might include the application of project management methods. However, it is not specified which area of study within the INE program deals exclusively with the presentation and teaching of project management in general and IT project management in particular.

Both programmes follow a two-step process to evaluate and assess the work which has been accomplished for a thesis or final project. Before the final presentation, supervised by the Final Thesis Defence Commission, can take place, the student has to defend his work before an internal faculty commission including three lecturers. During the last 3 years, 31 INE students have successfully completed their final thesis while the SA study programme has not fully started yet.

ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSION (regarding 1.2.)

The first-cycle study programme Informatics Engineering and the short-cycle study programme Systems Administration comply with all legal requirements.

The alignment of SA Study Programme Modules with the Learning Outcomes indicates that in general, most of the learning outcomes are covered by a sufficient number of modules and this appears to be well-balanced. The alignment of the INE programme indicates a slight imbalance in the coverage of group 2 of the learning outcomes, "Skills in Conducting Research". For a first-cycle course, outcome 2.1 and 2.2 should be in focus rather than 2.3 and 2.4. Some important aspects of project management in general, and IT project management in particular, are only vaguely addressed. Strengthening these skills will increase graduate employability and open doors to competitive industries, including Medical and Hardware Manufacturing (e.g., Teltonika).

The faculty of KVK has established feedback processes for continuous improvement of the programmes. Student interviews indicated that only 25% of the students will provide feedback on a per-subject basis, which might limit the efficiency of the quality improvement process.

Also, students several times indicated their strong desire to get a deeper exposure to computer programming and software engineering practices. This includes a collection of various programming languages beyond JavaScript.

AREA 1: CONCLUSIONS

AREA 1	Unsatisfactory - 1 Does not meet the requirements	Satisfactory - 2 Meets the requirements, but there are substantial shortcomings to be eliminated	Good - 3 Meets the requirements, but there are shortcomings to be eliminated	Very good - 4 Very well nationally and internationally without any shortcomings	Exceptional - 5 Exceptionally well nationally and internationally without any shortcomings
Short cycle			X		
First cycle			X		

COMMENDATIONS

1. None

RECOMMENDATIONS

To address shortcomings

1. The SA programme needs to be thoroughly reviewed in close consultation with a wider range of regional employers to examine whether its niche competencies truly align with the market or whether the curriculum needs to be expanded.

For further improvement

1. Actively provide and advertise to students of both programmes compelling and attractive possibilities to personalize their study programme including academic mobility.
2. Assign a person from administration who is responsible for arranging regular discussion with social partners on the relevance of the study programmes and areas.

3. Establish and strengthen a more formal process to collaborate and communicate with social and industry partners to receive rapid and early feedback on current and future skill requirements of the labour market. This will help to sharpen the profile of the INE programme.
4. Add a learning outcome in the area of project management to the INE program and ensure that it is achieved.

AREA 2: LINKS BETWEEN SCIENTIFIC (OR ARTISTIC) RESEARCH AND HIGHER EDUCATION

2.1.	Higher education integrates the latest developments in scientific (or artistic) research and technology and enables students to develop skills for scientific (or artistic) research
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FACTUAL SITUATION

2.1.1. Research within the field of study is at a sufficient level

Research within the field of study is at a sufficient level, although it is still conducted to a limited extent and its further strengthening remains a priority. The publishing of KVK researchers in WoS/Scopus have slightly increased over recent years, 2 papers in 2022, 3 in 2023, 5 in 2024. Examples of papers' titles: "Machine learning-driven approach for a COVID-19 warning system", "Using seismocardiogram mathematical model for simplified adjustment of adaptive filter", "The requirements enhancement based on a problem domain model", "Technology and experiences in shaping the future of education", "Assessing and measuring the vulnerability of highway construction projects with BIM using artificial intelligence optimization algorithms".

During the years under evaluation, KVK researchers published in a wide variety of journals of different publishers, including the following: IEEE Access – publisher: Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE), Smart Structures and Systems – publisher: Techno-Press, Computers and Electrical Engineering – publisher: Elsevier (Pergamon–Elsevier Science Ltd), Sustainable Environmental Development / Darnios aplinkos vystymas – publisher: Klaipeda Kolegija

, Balkan Journal of Electrical & Computer Engineering – publisher: Batman University (Turkey), Engineering and Educational Technologies – publisher: Kauno technikos kolegija (Kaunas Technical College), Journals, Marine Pollution Bulletin – publisher: Elsevier ScienceDirect, SWorldJournal (International periodic scientific journal) – publisher: D.A. Tsenov Academy of Economics, Svishtov (Bulgaria), Mathematics – publisher: MDPI (Basel, Switzerland).

KVK researchers are also publishing at computer science conferences, such as International Scientific Conference on Power and Electrical Engineering of Riga Technical University (RTUCON), International Conference of Education, Research and Innovation (ICERI), International Conference on Applied Human Factors and Ergonomics and Affiliated Conferences, International European Congress on Advanced Studies in Basic Sciences, Role of Higher Education Institutions in Society: Challenges, Tendencies and Perspectives, Verslas, technologijos, biomedicina: inovacijų įžvalgos, International Conference on Advances in Computing, Communication and Security (I3CS), International Scientific Conference "Students on Their Way to Science", Engineering for Rural Development, International Conference Electronics.

The research carried out is related to the field of study. The lecturers plan and carry out their applied research in accordance with the subjects and scientific fields they teach, and the results are systematically integrated into the teaching of the INE and SA programmes through updated course content, topics for term papers and theses, and practical exercises.

KVK cooperates with external partners, universities (e.g. Häme University of Applied Sciences (Finland), Riga Technical University (Latvia), Tallinn University of Technology (Estonia), VIA University College (Denmark), Moncton University (Canada), Khulna University (Bangladesh), University of Tabuk and Prince Sattam bin Abdulaziz University (Saudi Arabia), Al-Azhar University (Egypt), University of Madeira (Portugal), Dibrugarh University (India), Haliç University and Bandirma Onyedi Eylül University (Turkey)), as well as with companies and organisations such as UAB JUNG Vilnius, Legrand Polska Sp. z o.o. (Poland), UAB Laudemita, UAB Compservis, and Klaipėda Paul Lindenau Training Centre, to carry out research in the field of study.

2.1.2. Curriculum is linked to the latest developments in science, art, and technology

KVK lecturers carry out research, and the results of research and R&D projects are transferred to the content of study courses. This is achieved, for example, through modifications to the course syllabi.

The KVK conducts an annual quantitative and qualitative evaluation of applied research, using a scale from 1 to 9 (higher = better) to measure the quality of experimental development (ED) and applied research (AR). For example, the project “The Development of Digital Twins of Real Market Objects and Processes” (where students work with virtual/augmented reality environments and digital twin concepts) was rated ED6 and was directly incorporated into the content of the Multimedia Technologies subject.

The research (level ED6) on the effects of innovative wearable devices with feedback on the functions of the human musculoskeletal system has been integrated into the areas of programming and IT systems practice as well as computer architecture, where students develop databases, data processing algorithms, mobile applications, administration websites, and monitoring and analysis systems based on real engineering problems.

In recent years, topics and modules such as Information Security, Cloud Computing, Multimedia Technologies, and Smart Device Technologies have been integrated, along with content related to IoT, cybersecurity, deep tech, and machine learning delivered by business and academic partners through guest lectures and seminars.

This suggests that the latest scientific developments are regularly integrated into the study content.

2.1.3. Opportunities for students to engage in research are consistent with the cycle

INE students participate in research during practical and laboratory classes, during professional internships carried out at the KVK practical base and in companies, as well as in the preparation of final projects and, in particular, studying dissertations of academics, which are the main formal opportunities for students to engage in research activities.

Students take the Applied Research Methodology course, participate in research together with lecturers, and use research data in their dissertations, articles, and conference presentations. For example, in 2022–2023, INE students gave three presentations at the national scientific

conference “Business, Technology, Biomedicine: Innovation Insights”, while in 2024 they prepared four presentations and four articles published in post-conference materials.

In order to systematically support student involvement in research, annual information and methodology seminars are organised for thesis writers (Topicalities of Writing Final Theses), and the library conducts regular training sessions on searching for information in databases, open source resources, using the virtual library and the eLABa system.

Students can also initiate their own research projects by participating with lecturers in a competition for applied research ideas, and they gain additional skills and experience by participating in national and international competitions such as “Learn-Calculate-Remember” and Portathon. The available information does not describe a separate, formalised mentoring programme or indicate specific awards. Consideration could be given to clarifying the methods of involving students in research and systematically collecting data on the number or percentage of students participating in such activities.

ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSION (regarding 2.1.)

The level of research activity in the INE areas are sufficient in relation to field studies, although it is conducted on a relatively limited scale.

Data from 2022–2024 indicate an increase in the number of publications in journals indexed in WoS/ Scopus (from 2 publications in 2022, through 3 in 2023, and 5 in 2024), confirming growing publication activity.

The content of study programmes takes into account the latest technological trends, in the development of subjects such as Information Security, Cloud Computing, Multimedia Technologies, Smart Device Technologies, as well as content related to IoT, Cyber Security, Deep Tech and Machine Learning, selected in collaboration with partners from business and academia.

Student involvement in research is consistent with their study cycle and takes place through practical and laboratory classes, professional internships, the Applied Research Methodology course, the preparation of research-based theses, participation in conferences and publications, and in research idea competitions and events such as Learn-Calculate-Remember and Portathon.

In summary, it can be stated that the students of the INE are involved in applied research in a manner appropriate to their stage of study.

However, research groups with a clear identity and scope have not been established, which would allow students with similar research interests to be brought together for joint research and development activities.

AREA 2: CONCLUSIONS

AREA 2	Unsatisfactory - 1 Does not meet the requirements	Satisfactory - 2 Meets the requirements, but there are substantial shortcomings to be eliminated	Good - 3 Meets the requirements, but there are shortcomings to be eliminated	Very good - 4 Very well nationally and internationally without any shortcomings	Exceptional - 5 Exceptionally well nationally and internationally without any shortcomings
Short cycle				–	
First cycle				X	

COMMENDATIONS

1. KVK has a well-structured system for monitoring applied research.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To address shortcomings

1. None

For further improvement

1. Develop and implement a structured reward and recognition system for teachers who demonstrate sustained and proactive engagement in research activities with students.
2. Establish formal student research clubs or design-oriented project groups in key INE areas, bringing together students with similar research and design interests.

AREA 3: STUDENT ADMISSION AND SUPPORT

3.1.	Student selection and admission is in line with the learning outcomes
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FACTUAL SITUATION

3.1.1. Student selection and admission criteria and procedures are adequate and transparent

General student admissions are conducted through the Association of Lithuanian Higher Institutions for Centralised Admissions (LAMA BPO) under regulations set by the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport of the Republic of Lithuania (ŠMSM). Each year, the Director of KVK approves the student admission rules, which are published on the KVK website. These rules outline key information for applicants, including competitive score criteria, additional points, and tuition details. The minimum competitive score is 2. This information is clearly presented on the KVK website.

According to statistics of 2021-2023, there was an increase in applicants for the INE study programme, however a sharp drop in applicants was observed in 2024. While this is not a definitive indicator, this could be a result, due to Klaipėda University offering an informatics engineering study programme. The Minimum Competitive Score consistently rose from 2.18 in 2021 to 3.60 in 2024, raising the admission baseline. The maximum competitive score was volatile, peaking at 9.37 in 2021 before a sharp drop and partial recovery to 8.81 in 2024. Overall, the Average Competitive Score increased, reaching a period-high of 5.81 in 2024 after dips in 2022 and 2023. It's worth mentioning, that the yearly dropout rate is about 13 and 35

percent to the number of students that are enrolled in the INE study programme. As of writing this report, statistics for INE admissions are publicly available on the KVK website.

Effective from 2024, eligibility for the SA study programme requires applicants to have at least secondary education and a professional qualification at Level IV of the Lithuanian Qualifications Framework. Admission is determined by a Competitive Score that ranks applicants, calculated as the sum of weighted components. First admissions only began in 2024. No applicants met the competitive score requirements, therefore no individuals were accepted into the study programme. As of writing this report, statistics for SA admissions are not publicly available on the KVK website. A lack of this information could confuse prospective students as to why the SA study programme is not publicized, while INE information is presented.

Additionally, applicants may be admitted to KVK in a higher year if they have completed prior higher education studies (partial or full) or hold a Level IV professional qualification. Competencies and completed subjects are recognized and transferred based on KVK procedures, and the final decision is made by the respective faculty dean. Admission rules are available on KVK, AIKOS, and LAMA BPO websites and are promoted through events and school presentations.

3.1.2. Recognition of foreign qualifications, periods of study, and prior learning (established provisions and procedures)

The KVK Procedure for the Transfer of Partial Study Results governs the recognition of academic achievements for individuals transferring from or continuing studies at KVK after studying at any Lithuanian or foreign higher education institution. Transfer of results is unrestricted when based on coordinated study content, such as under a mobility agreement (e.g., Erasmus+ exchange). If requirements are not met during coordinated partial studies, students can complete missing modules free of charge. When study content is uncoordinated, results are transferred focusing on the compliance of learning outcomes with the requirements of the desired KVK subjects.

Applicants must submit a detailed application and official documentation (transcript of records, module descriptions, information about the achievement evaluation system, percentage distribution of grades) to the department head. The head of the department assesses the formal requirements and content compliance based on several general criteria, including the fact that final theses/exams cannot be transferred and that credits from another type of higher education institution cannot exceed 75% of the first-cycle program volume.

During the period 2021–2024, there were 45 total instances of credit transfer for INE students. It's worth mentioning that the number of transcripts processed is generally increasing. However no credit transfers occurred for the SA programme because there were no signed study agreements in place.

Moreover, KVK has a formal process to validate non-formal learning. This procedure is applicable to several applicant groups, including those with substantial work experience (minimum three years) but no higher education in their field, those working outside the scope of their existing higher education qualification, and those resuming interrupted studies. The process involves consultation, evaluation, and formalization, guided by principles such as accessibility, flexibility, transparency, and objectivity. Recognized learning achievements are recorded as study results, with the specific limitations that freely chosen subjects are credited without restriction, final theses and examinations cannot be credited, and the total volume of credited achievements cannot exceed 75% of a first-cycle study programme.

ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSION (regarding 3.1.)

KVK's student selection and admission procedures are clear, transparent, and follow national regulations, with information published on the KVK website and communicated through events and school presentations. Admission rules, competitive scores, and eligibility criteria for both the INE and SA programmes are clearly defined, and there are formal procedures for admitting students into higher years, recognizing prior studies, and transferring credits. The College also has processes to validate non-formal learning, ensuring fairness and flexibility for applicants with relevant work experience or interrupted studies. Overall, the aim of providing adequate and transparent admission and recognition processes is met.

However, the fact that the number of students signing the agreement has dropped dramatically in 2024 (from 33 to 14) calls for a conceptual rethinking of the admissions process and the marketing of the study programme. The prerequisite for marketing effectiveness - i.e. increasing admissions - is to design a curriculum profile that not only takes into account the needs of society, but also clearly distinguishes itself from curricula with a similar profile offered by other higher education institutions.

3.2.	There is an effective student support system enabling students to maximise their learning progress
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FACTUAL SITUATION

3.2.1. Opportunities for student academic mobility are ensured

The International Relations Department (IRD) at KVK organizes and promotes student exchange, primarily through Erasmus+ bilateral agreements, informing students of both the INE and SA programmes via biannual meetings, the KVK website, and various departmental communication channels. KVK has established 35 Erasmus+ cooperation agreements. Students selected for mobility receive grants for travel and living expenses, and successfully completed credits are formally included in their academic transcripts.

The process of using mobility opportunities is as follows: submission of an application on the KVK website, followed by researching and contacting potential foreign partner universities to verify application deadlines, registration procedures (which may require transcripts and language certificates), and details regarding the language of instruction, course lists, and semester dates. After preliminary selection, students must coordinate the proposed study plan, ensuring a 60–70% curriculum match with the KVK study plan, with the department head or program curator, who then informs the International Relations Department (IRD) for official nomination to the host institution. Finally, student must complete the host university's forms, finalize the Online Learning Agreement, submit an application via the Moodle system, and sign the grant agreement provided by the IRD, after which the Erasmus grant is transferred within 30 days; students are advised to plan travel, accommodation, and insurance afterwards.

Over the last three years only ten INE students have participated in Erasmus+ Blended Intensive Programmes (BIP). While neither INE nor SA study programmes are offered in their entirety in English or any other foreign language, KVK had 33 incoming exchange students (16 semester studies, 17 BIPs) over the period of 2021 - 2024.

It's worth noting that incoming exchange students have a wide selection of modules they can choose from in the Faculty of Business, Faculty of Health Sciences, Faculty of Technologies. This helps the students to pick modules that are closer to their original HEIs study programme's objectives and results. However, it's also worth mentioning that the module descriptions presented to incoming exchange students are too abstract - only annotation is provided, which can be insufficient for the incoming exchange student to decide what modules fit their study programmes learning objectives best.

3.2.2. Academic, financial, social, psychological, and personal support provided to students is relevant, adequate, and effective

KVK offers academic, psychological, financial, or social support and provides information on the institution's website. Academic support is provided primarily via the study retention programme (attendance and progress monitoring) and lecturer consultations. As for the latter, students can register for additional consultations with lecturers to help address existing knowledge gaps.

KVK maintains a study retention programme designed to support student success, which incorporates attendance and progress monitoring, offers additional consultations, and grants students the flexibility to choose lecture methods or study according to an individual plan. The standard academic schedule includes a free academic support week immediately following each examination session, allowing students to address academic issues without charge. Furthermore, KVK accommodates students requiring scheduling flexibility – such as those with special needs, pregnant students, new parents, or those employed in their field of study – by permitting them to attend lectures on an individual schedule for valid reasons.

Financial support consists of various types of scholarships. Firstly, incentive scholarships are awarded for a full semester based on academic progress, and one-time premiums recognizing excellence in applied research, sports, and public activities. Social scholarships and various student loans for tuition, living expenses, and partial studies are administered by the State Studies Foundation. Furthermore, students experiencing financial difficulties can arrange to pay tuition fees in instalments. Social support is comprehensive for students with disabilities, who are eligible for targeted payments or social scholarships, with KVK actively adapting both the physical environment (e.g., wheelchair lifts) and study conditions (e.g., modified materials, extended exam time, personal assistants) according to individual needs to ensure study accessibility.

KVK students benefit from various support and engagement opportunities organized by the KVK Student Representation, which provides information on social campaigns, projects, and events via its website and organizes cultural and entertainment activities. Beyond formal representation, KVK actively encourages student activities that foster community spirit, exemplified by hosting blood donation events biannually in collaboration with the National Blood Centre. Furthermore, the College supports volunteer initiatives, such as the Informatics and Electrical Engineering Department's volunteering afternoon at a local animal shelter.

Psychological counselling is also available at KVK and it encompasses three main areas: consultation through individual or group psychological counselling, with the goal of determining methods and applying techniques to address students' psychological problems; education for students, faculty, and staff on psychological, pedagogical, and social psychology topics; and prevention through the implementation of programs and crisis intervention. To ensure accessibility and universality, students are allotted up to five consultations per academic year.

There is mention of the possibility to increase the number, if necessary, on an individual basis. During the meeting with students, they expressed that the current regulations are enough.

3.2.3. Higher education information and student counselling are sufficient

Information on the processes of studies are completed by doing a first-year student introduction programme. During the initial study week, students receive introductory lectures from key personnel - including the Associate Dean, Head of Department, and Studies and Career Centre staff - who cover the study process, academic requirements, available support, and information systems. The effectiveness of this three-month program is subsequently evaluated via a student survey, with results discussed among academic staff, student representatives, and group tutors. Furthermore, student representation is integrated into key decision-making bodies, such as the Study Programme Committee and the KVK Academic Council, ensuring academic changes are broadly communicated and that student perspectives on study-related issues are regularly addressed in meetings with group tutors.

In April 2023, an institutional evaluation was conducted, and one of the recommendations provided was the establishment of a student problems register. During the site visit, the KVK administration was asked about the current situation regarding the aggregation of students' problems. They responded that feedback is constantly analysed - if critical remarks are made, action is taken without delay, while problems are officially recognized as systemic only if the same issue is reported in feedback forms across multiple semesters. While this approach represents an improvement, the establishment of a register and periodically officially informing students about addressed changes could additionally help underline recurring issues more clearly, ensure greater transparency in how concerns are monitored, and provide a structured basis for long-term quality assurance decisions.

ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSION (regarding 3.2.)

KVK provides a strong student support system, offering help with academics, finances, social and psychological issues, and opportunities for student mobility through Erasmus+ and incoming exchanges. Programs like study retention, flexible scheduling, scholarships, and support for students with disabilities show that the College responds well to students' needs. Orientation programs and student representation help students get information and advice when needed. However, module descriptions for incoming students are sometimes too vague, and there is no formal register to track recurring student problems, which makes it harder to see patterns and improve services.

AREA 3: CONCLUSIONS

AREA 3	Unsatisfactory - 1 Does not meet the requirements	Satisfactory - 2 Meets the requirements, but there are substantial shortcomings to be eliminated	Good - 3 Meets the requirements, but there are shortcomings to be eliminated	Very good - 4 Very well nationally and internationally without any shortcomings	Exceptional - 5 Exceptionally well nationally and internationally without any shortcomings
Short cycle			X		
First cycle			X		

COMMENDATIONS

1. Psychological counselling services are available to students, offering individual and group sessions, preventive activities, and crisis intervention.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To address shortcomings

1. Develop and implement a strategy aimed at increasing student enrolment.
2. Update the module descriptions adding additional information on contact hours, individual workload, learning outcomes, teaching and learning methods, assessment methods and strategies, and a summary of all topics covered.

For further improvement

1. Improve and formalize the collaboration with the local industry and social partners to sharpen the profile of the study programmes and to encourage prospective students to enrol.
2. Establish a students' problem registry and periodically officially communicate implemented changes to students.

AREA 4: TEACHING AND LEARNING, STUDENT ASSESSMENT, AND GRADUATE EMPLOYMENT

4.1.	Students are prepared for independent professional activity
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FACTUAL SITUATION

4.1.1. Teaching and learning address the needs of students and enable them to achieve intended learning outcomes

The main document establishing the system, conditions, organisation, and implementation of the Studies at the KVK is *the Study Regulations of the Klaipėda Kolegija*. It also defines the rights and obligations of students and unclassified students, as well as their relationship with the KVK. The organisation and execution of the monitoring of KVK students' academic performance and the provision of academic assistance is regulated by the *Description of the Procedure for Monitoring Students' Academic Performance and Providing Academic Assistance* (hereinafter referred to as Description) of Klaipėda Kolegija. According to this document, teachers are responsible for monitoring student academic performance, informing students and providing assistance based on interim and/or final evaluations, improving teaching quality.

The content and organization of subjects (subject objective, content and learning outcomes, procedure for assessing knowledge and skills, teaching methods, independent assignments, and list of required literature) are introduced in the introductory lecture to the subject. The feedback questionnaire filled out by students at the end of each semester also includes a question about the extent to which the teaching methods facilitated the achievement of the intended learning outcomes.

The conditions, methods and procedures for the individualisation of the study process for students/unclassified students, students with special needs arising from disability and/or

learning difficulties are set out in a separate document - *The Description of the Procedure for Individualisation of the Study Process for Students/Unclassified Students, Students with Special Needs of Klaipėda Kolegija*.

The EDINA environment and Moodle are used to describe participation in ongoing learning activities and interim results. Students considered the consultation opportunities to be sufficient - in addition to regular weekly consultations, additional consultations are also available. As an example of taking students' wishes into account, lecturers cited the fact that the proportion of specific examples in subjects has been increased. At the same time, students and alumni expressed a desire for closer cooperation with companies, more company visits, and longer internship periods. In summary, it was thought that the subjects could be more practically oriented. Company representatives also mentioned that at times they are not sufficiently informed about the College's requirements for internships and the skills of interns. Nevertheless, according to the alumni who attended the meeting, they had no problems finding work after graduating from KVK.

Taking into account students' interests is somewhat limited by the fact that the curriculum has only two small-scale (3 ECTS) electives. The Review Panel was assured that there are plans to offer these subjects as free electives, allowing students to choose them also from other study programmes.

4.1.2. Access to higher education for socially vulnerable groups and students with individual needs is ensured.

At the start of the academic year KVK provides information to students on opportunities to apply for social scholarships or a targeted grant from the State Studies Foundation. In 2023 three students received social scholarships, while in 2024, the scholarships were granted to four students.

KVK provides provisions for students with special educational needs, encompassing both academic flexibility and environmental accessibility. Academically, students are granted access to specialized resources and various adjustments to the study process, including access to computers in the reading room, flexible lecture attendance, individual consultations with lecturers, the opportunity to utilize an individual study plan, adapted assignment submission formats, and the option to change their mode of study (full-time/part-time), along with access to psychological counselling. Furthermore, the KVK learning environment and facilities are physically adapted to promote accessibility, featuring accessible entrances, lifts, sanitary facilities, and specialized technological equipment, such as computer workstations with screen magnification and screen readers for visually impaired students, and alternative input devices and ergonomic chairs for those with motor impairments. Between 2022 and 2024, the INE study programme specifically enrolled four students with special educational needs.

It is worth mentioning that KVK has a dedicated detailed Violence and Harassment prevention policy in place. The policy defines unacceptable behaviours, reporting procedures, investigation processes, and responsibilities. It establishes clear rules, protections, and preventive measures to ensure a safe, respectful environment for all community members.

ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSION (regarding 4.1.)

The learning process and the rights and obligations of the parties are described in detail in the College documents. Main documents are also available in English. The organization of studies for students with special needs is stipulated separately. Although, according to the lecturers,

the internship processes have been changed in recent years, it probably needs further improvement, especially when planning the internship in collaboration with companies. The suggestions from students and alumni regarding the curriculum and teaching focused mainly on the practical relevance of learning – the emphasis could be placed more on solving business and real-world problems. Lectures by top experts from companies on development trends in the field and their practical application were considered particularly valuable.

4.2.	There is an effective and transparent system for student assessment, progress monitoring, and assuring academic integrity
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FACTUAL SITUATION

4.2.1. Monitoring of learning progress and feedback to students to promote self-assessment and learning progress planning is systematic

As indicated in section 4.1.1, monitoring of learning process and providing feedback to students is well regulated in the KVK documents. Student attendance and progress are recorded in the EDINA and Moodle environments. Through them, students can also monitor their progress in their studies. The feedback questionnaire completed by students at the end of each semester also includes questions about the extent to which students have received feedback about their studies from both the lecturer and the department.

4.2.2. Graduate employability and career are monitored

KVK has an established and systematic system for monitoring graduate employment and career outcomes. Objective tracking is conducted using data from SODRA, the Employment Services, STRATA, and the Education Management Information System (EMIS). Subjective tracking is carried out through graduate surveys administered via the Career Management Information System (CMIS), conducted at defined intervals after graduation.

Employment data for INE programme graduates is regularly collected and analysed. EMIS, SODRA, and STRATA data show consistently high employment rates for recent cohorts, including information on qualification levels and salary indicators. Subjective survey results provide insights into graduates' satisfaction with their studies, labour market integration, and career progression. KVK also systematically gathers employer feedback to assess graduates' readiness and competency alignment with labour market needs.

Overall, a comprehensive, continuous, and multi-source monitoring system is in place, combining both objective employment data and subjective evaluations from graduates and employers.

4.2.3. Policies to ensure academic integrity, tolerance, and non-discrimination are implemented

The main document that defines the values and ethical standards of the members of the College (staff and students), based on the fundamental principles of academic ethics (academic integrity, tolerance and non-discrimination), is the *Code of Academic Ethics*. Compliance with the principles is monitored by the Commission of Academic Ethics. Students commit to adhering to these principles by signing a learning agreement and a *Declaration of Academic Integrity*. The plagiarism detection software used is Turnitin. The feedback questionnaire that students fill out at the end of each semester also includes questions about the extent to which lecturers ensure the academic honesty of the students, and how tolerant

and non-discriminating the learning atmosphere is. To ensure equal opportunities, the College has created a document entitled *The Equal Opportunities Policy and its Implementation Procedure*.

4.2.4. Procedures for submitting and processing appeals and complaints are effective

The procedure of submitting and processing appeals and complaints is regulated in the document *KVK Procedure for Submitting and Examining Appeals and Complaints*. Between 2022 and 2024, there were no appeals or complaints regarding the INE study process. The students who participated in the meeting also admitted that there had been no reason to submit appeals.

ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSION (regarding 4.2.)

There is an effective and transparent system for assessing students, monitoring progress and ensuring academic integrity - these areas are adequately covered by regulations and their compliance is ensured.

AREA 4: CONCLUSIONS

AREA 4	Unsatisfactory - 1 Does not meet the requirements	Satisfactory - 2 Meets the requirements, but there are substantial shortcomings to be eliminated	Good - 3 Meets the requirements, but there are shortcomings to be eliminated	Very good - 4 Very well nationally and internationally without any shortcomings	Exceptional - 5 Exceptionally well nationally and internationally without any shortcomings
Short cycle				X	
First cycle				X	

COMMENDATIONS

1. KVK has a detailed violence and harassment prevention policy.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To address shortcomings

1. None

For further improvement

1. Increase the proportion of practical learning in the courses, for example by using more case studies and involving leading experts from companies in their analysis.
2. Review the organization of internships in cooperation with company representatives to ensure a more complete alignment of students' competencies and internship tasks.
3. Develop a mechanism that would motivate experts from ICT companies to give lectures.

AREA 5: TEACHING STAFF

5.1.	Teaching staff is adequate to achieve learning outcomes
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FACTUAL SITUATION

5.1.1. The number, qualification, and competence (scientific, didactic, professional) of teaching staff is sufficient to achieve learning outcomes

KVK in the field of Informatics Engineering study meets the general requirements for conducting studies in the Republic of Lithuania - the staff of the INE study programme meets the pedagogical and academic requirements outlined in the *Law on Science and Studies of the Republic of Lithuania* and the *General Requirements for the Implementation of Studies*.

The average age of teachers of the study programmes in the field of study is 54 years.

At KVK, lecturer's working hours dedicated to R&D are planned according to the *KVK Procedure for Determining Full-time Workload*, with R&D activities, constituting 44% for a docent, 35% for an assistant, 28% for a junior assistant, 20% for a senior lecturer, 17% for a lecturer, and 17% for a lecturer-practitioner. All lecturers teaching in the INE study programme hold at least a Master's degree or equivalent in a relevant field, and in 2024–2025, 27.77% of the subjects are taught by researchers, including three lecturers (13.64%) holding a doctoral degree in INE (or Informatics). Teaching experience ranges from 1 to 40 years, and 54.55% (12 out of 22) of the lecturers have practical work experience in their teaching field, with 45.45% having at least three years of such experience.

The lecturer to student ratio in recent years (from 12.72 to 15.05 students per lecturer) remains within the national guideline for Technological Sciences (not more than 20 students per lecturer).

Teachers' scientific activities are partially related to the courses in the field of Study.

Teachers are regularly assessed every 5 years, where assessment considers education, research interests and research results, teaching and practical experience, and application of innovative teaching methods and tools. At least 77.27% of teachers in this study programme have English language skills at the B2 level.

ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSION (regarding 5.1.)

The qualifications and competence of the teaching staff are sufficient (fully met) to achieve the intended learning outcomes. However, the relatively high average age of the teaching staff requires the development and implementation of a long-term teaching staff development program.

5.2.	Teaching staff is ensured opportunities to develop competences, and they are periodically evaluated
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FACTUAL SITUATION

5.2.1. Opportunities for academic mobility of teaching staff are ensured

KVK has a sufficient number of Erasmus+ agreements with foreign institutions in the field of Informatics Engineering, with 35 cooperation agreements signed, and employees are encouraged to use the Erasmus+ mobility programme for teaching and training.

In addition to the Erasmus+ programme, KVK teachers have other mobility opportunities (for example, participation in blended intensive programmes and international projects).

In the assessed period, teaching and training visits were carried out to countries like Portugal, Germany, Poland, Croatia, Bulgaria, Greece, Hungary, Turkey, Romania, Estonia, Spain, Albania and the Czech Republic, while foreign teachers were visiting KVK from Turkey, Latvia, Estonia and other partner countries.

The proportion of INE lecturers who went abroad to teach, compared to all lecturers teaching in the field, was 28% in 2022, 19.05% in 2023, and 22.73% in 2024.

The proportion of visiting lecturers in the INE study programme was 44.00% of all lecturers in the field in 2022, 23.81% in 2023, and 22.73% in 2024.

The mobility of teachers depends on their personal initiative, and the call for staff to participate in the Erasmus+ teaching and learning mobility programme is announced annually.

5.2.2. Opportunities for the development of the teaching staff are ensured

Opportunities for the development of the teaching staff are ensured.

The KVK teachers are able to improve their didactic competencies by participating in training sessions (for example, Changes in Match Checking - Turnitin Originality and Draft Coach, Guidelines for the Ethical Use of Artificial Intelligence in Research and Studies, Artificial Intelligence: Possibilities, Tools and Applications) organised by KVK and external providers.

KVK teachers improve their scientific and practical competence by participating in national and international conferences, research competence trainings and seminars in Lithuania and abroad (for example, Fundamentals of Research and Innovation, Advancing Open Science: The Barcelona Declaration and Open Research Information, Violations Related to Research Data, How to Recognize R&D Services/Works).

Between 2022 and 2024, lecturers in the INE study programme dedicated over 329 hours to research competence training, more than 1,049 hours to developing general competencies (digital, entrepreneurship, leadership, intercultural), and 1,132 hours to developing subject-specific competencies.

Teachers' professional and competence development is discussed and evaluated at annual interviews organised by department heads, where lecturers' plans and results as well as student feedback are taken into account.

ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSION (regarding 5.2.)

KVK provides structured support for lecturer mobility and competence development.

It holds the Erasmus+ ECHE, has an Internationalisation Promotion Action Plan (2024–2026), and 35 cooperation agreements in the INE field.

Mobility is supported by clear rules (B2 language requirement, open calls, grants for travel/living, salary retention) and regular international weeks with foreign visitors.

Outgoing and incoming lecturer rates show that these opportunities are used, including through BIPs and cooperation with partners such as Polytechnic of Medimurje in Čakovec, Hochschule Fulda, Tallinn University of Technology and Newton University.

KVK also has a system for competence development based on the KVK Staff Qualification Improvement Procedure and national guidelines.

Training is financed from KVK funds, EU structural funds and, where relevant, staff resources.

Lecturers participate in activities on teaching/learning, research, general and subject-specific competencies, with significant training hours each year.

Needs are identified through institutional objectives, student feedback and annual performance reviews, and results are reported annually.

Overall, the conditions for academic mobility and competence development are sufficient and are supported at the institutional level, although the use of international industry experts in teaching could be expanded.

AREA 5: CONCLUSIONS

AREA 5	Unsatisfactory - 1 Does not meet the requirements	Satisfactory - 2 Meets the requirements, but there are substantial shortcomings to be eliminated	Good - 3 Meets the requirements, but there are shortcomings to be eliminated	Very good - 4 Very well nationally and internationally without any shortcomings	Exceptional - 5 Exceptionally well nationally and internationally without any shortcomings
Short cycle				X	
First cycle				X	

COMMENDATIONS

1. None

RECOMMENDATIONS

To address shortcomings

1. None

For further improvement

1. Strengthen the international and professional profile of teaching staff by attracting more foreign teachers to KVK, establishing a structured scheme for regularly inviting leading industry and research experts as guest lecturers in Informatics Engineering and related areas, and supporting lecturers' continuous professional development.

AREA 6: LEARNING FACILITIES AND RESOURCES

6.1.	Facilities, informational and financial resources are sufficient and enable achieving learning outcomes
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FACTUAL SITUATION

6.1.1. Facilities, informational and financial resources are adequate and sufficient for an effective learning process

Facilities are on an appropriate level: classrooms are well equipped for face-to-face and online education, and each year, the KVK invests in classrooms and laboratories adapted to active learning methods. Students have access to specialised computer rooms and laboratories, and the faculty is in the process of building a new *Centre for Innovative Technology* which will contain several new laboratories. There is a sufficient number of computer workstations available, which are accessible to the students. In addition, students have access to commercial software which is licenced and regularly updated by the faculty.

As internships play an important role in both study programmes, the faculty has established processes to administrate the internship modules in close cooperation with the industry partners. A list of potential companies and businesses is compiled and maintained, from which the student might choose an appropriate company.

Students of both the INE and the SA study programmes can access the KVK library including a comprehensive collection of subject-related academic literature. The library also provides in-house and external access to a large number of eBooks. Additional material for each subject is provided by the individual lecturer via the online Moodle platform, thus allowing students to work on their courses from off-campus sites.

KVK and the Faculty of Technology are focused to support and assist students and visitors with special needs. Dedicated measures include ramps for easy access to various facilities as well as specific equipment available in the library to help visually impaired people to utilize its resources.

Based on recommendations of the previous external evaluation, the Department has renewed some of the computer workstations and related material. It could be made more expressive, when did this happen, i.e. what is the average age of the computer workstation equipment of the various laboratories. In addition, a Product Lifecycle Plan could be established to make sure that advanced students have access to the most recent and most powerful equipment in their labs while older computers can be out-phased and used in beginners' projects. This will optimize the utilization of expensive computer equipment and – while rapidly ageing – will maximize its useful lifecycle.

6.1.2. There is continuous planning for and upgrading of resources.

The KVK IT infrastructure and equipment is constantly maintained and monitored. In the event of equipment failure or the need to upgrade existing equipment, new equipment is purchased if financial possibilities allow. There is a well-structured planning process in place, driven by the lecturers to post new requests to the Department. The Department in turn provides planning input to the Faculty of Technology, which then posts the requests to the top-level planning commission of KVK.

The library has allocated an annual budget used for renewing and extending its resources, e.g. more than 24.000€ have been used for publications in the field of Technology and Natural Sciences.

ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSION (regarding 6.1.)

Facilities are on an appropriate level: classrooms are well equipped for face-to-face and online education. Both faculty and institution understand the need of continuous and dedicated

investments in infrastructure and equipment to create engaging spaces and stimulating environments adapted to active learning methods. However, to make sure, necessary budget is allocated sufficiently according to priorities, the faculty will benefit from adopting a formal budgeting process including sponsoring activities as suggested by various social partners.

Collaboration between the institution and the social and industry partners are very important to maintain the quality of the study programmes and to sharpen their profile to prospective new students. While industry partners have expressed their willingness and readiness to provide valuable feedback and support – even in a more formal commission – the faculty can proactively approach the partners and invite them to contribute.

This should be relevant not only on a per-student basis during supervision of her internship, but also even more so on a strategic scale to improve the scope of the study programmes.

AREA 6: CONCLUSIONS

AREA 6	Unsatisfactory - 1 Does not meet the requirements	Satisfactory - 2 Meets the requirements, but there are substantial shortcomings to be eliminated	Good - 3 Meets the requirements, but there are shortcomings to be eliminated	Very good - 4 Very well nationally and internationally without any shortcomings	Exceptional - 5 Exceptionally well nationally and internationally without any shortcomings
Short cycle				X	
First cycle				X	

COMMENDATIONS

1. None

RECOMMENDATIONS

To address shortcomings

1. None

For further improvement

1. Implement a strategic budgeting process to guarantee state-of-the-art computer and laboratory equipment for the future. This might include sponsorships from local businesses.

AREA 7: QUALITY ASSURANCE AND PUBLIC INFORMATION

7.1.	The development of the field of study is based on an internal quality assurance system involving all stakeholders and continuous monitoring, transparency and public information
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FACTUAL SITUATION

7.1.1. Internal quality assurance system for the programmes is effective

The main documents regulating quality assurance are the *Quality Policy of Klaipėda Valstybinė Kolegija/Higher Education Institution* and the *Quality Manual of Klaipėda Kolegija*

. The *Quality Manual* also contains a holistic *Process Interaction Scheme* that integrates the main activities (strategic management, studies, applied research, continuing education, consulting, international activities, supporting processes). The implementation of the quality system is one of the tasks of KVK's Quality Centre. At the department level, the department head is responsible for the quality of operations. The most important instruments for ensuring the quality of the study program are subject-level surveys (conducted at the end of each semester), annual surveys on student satisfaction with the study quality, annual surveys on graduates' satisfaction with their studies, surveys of students who dropped out, biennial surveys of employers regarding the preparation of graduates for professional life, and surveys on employee satisfaction.

The study programme committee (SPC) will generalize the results of the surveys and make proposals for improving both the study programme and teaching. The composition, functions, work organization, rights, and responsibility of the SPC is stated in the *Regulations of the Study Programme Committee*. However, this document is very general in describing the tasks and responsibilities of the SPC, limiting it to administrative/organizational tasks.

There is a separate KVK website dedicated to the topic of quality. Unfortunately, the English version was partially temporarily unavailable during the assessment.

7.1.2. Involvement of stakeholders (students and others) in internal quality assurance is effective

Although the self-evaluation report states that regular meetings with stakeholders are conducted, feedback collected from employers and graduates indicates that cooperation practices are not fully clear to all parties. Several business representatives reported limited understanding of how collaboration with the College is organised and expressed uncertainty about the specific skills they can expect from graduates, as well as whether the College fully understands the competencies required by companies.

Survey participation is voluntary and not formally organised, and many employers stated that they do not receive regular feedback requests or structured follow-up. Teachers reported that communication with employers mainly takes place during and after student internships. Only some graduates indicated that they had received surveys. Overall, while mechanisms for stakeholder involvement exist, the consistency and clarity of cooperation vary among different stakeholder groups.

7.1.3. Information on the programmes, their external evaluation, improvement processes, and outcomes is collected, used and made publicly available

General information about the 3-year Informatics Engineering study programme is published on the KVK website (<https://www.kvk.lt/en/program/informatics-engineering/>). The subjects in the curriculum are described only at the level of their titles; the content, scope and other aspects of the subjects are not described in the public website. An earlier (2016) evaluation report of the study programme is publicly available (in Lithuanian). Feedback from stakeholders are regularly collected. Summaries of the survey results are published on the KVK website (in Lithuanian). Both study programmes are registered in the AIKOS system. Some general information about the study programmes is published on the AIKOS and LaMA BPO websites, while more specific information about events, job offers, competitions, etc. can be found on social media (Facebook)

7.1.4. Student feedback is collected and analysed

Feedback from students is collected both at the subject and at the programme level. The first (student satisfaction survey) is conducted in the student management system EDINA system, conducted each semester, after the final subject evaluations. The results are first discussed in the Study Programme Committee (SER uses the acronyms SPC and CSP). SPC decisions are then discussed in the Department, and depending on the importance of the decisions, also in the Faculty of Technology council or KVK Academic Council. A separate survey is conducted for students who have dropped out of their studies in order to determine the reasons for discontinuing their studies. However, since answering the questionnaire is not mandatory for students, the question arises as to how generalizable the results are to the entire study group.

ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSION (regarding 7.1.)

The feedback questionnaires have covered all important parties. However, there are still opportunities for their more effective use. For example, company representatives expressed their willingness to participate more in the development of the curriculum and subjects.

The most important expert body for curriculum development and identifying key problems related to teaching activities, as well as developing solutions, is the Study Program Committee; the task of organizing the activities of the Study Program Committee lies with the Head of the SPC. However, the tasks and responsibilities of the Head of the SPC in the strategy aspects of the study programme - analysis of development trends in the field, cooperation with other higher education institutions and other important parties in the development of study programme, marketing of the study programme, etc. - are undefined.

AREA 7: CONCLUSIONS

AREA 7	Unsatisfactory - 1 Does not meet the requirements	Satisfactory - 2 Meets the requirements, but there are substantial shortcomings to be eliminated	Good - 3 Meets the requirements, but there are shortcomings to be eliminated	Very good - 4 Very well nationally and internationally without any shortcomings	Exceptional - 5 Exceptionally well nationally and internationally without any shortcomings
Short cycle			X		
First cycle			X		

COMMENDATIONS

1. None

RECOMMENDATIONS

To address shortcomings

1. Define in detail the tasks and responsibilities of the Study Programme Committee and its head in the development and implementation of the study programme, and ensure their implementation.

For further improvement

1. Develop and implement motivators for students to participate as much as possible in responding to feedback surveys.
2. Formalise the feedback collection process with employers and graduates. Implement the system that works for all parties.

V. SUMMARY

The current report addresses two study programmes: 1) a short cycle study programme Systems Administration (SA) and 2) a first cycle study programme Informatics Engineering (IE). Both study programmes is given a positive evaluation (total evaluation points 21 and 25, correspondingly).

It should definitely be highlighted as a positive fact that the public website of the KVK contained English translations of practically all regulations related to the KVK's educational activities. This significantly simplified the work of the expert panel, whose academic members do not speak Lithuanian. This is also important in terms of increasing foreign cooperation and student exchange - getting more incoming students. Unfortunately, there were few English-language documents related to other academic activities - especially research and development - on the College's public website. More in-depth descriptions of subjects could also be available to better inform potential incoming students.

It should also be noted as a positive fact that practically all lecturers are involved in research and development activities and have published scientific publications in the last five years. At the same time, research activities could be more focused on 2–3 strategic research topics, such as: (1) Artificial Intelligence and Data-Driven Engineering Systems, (2) Smart Technologies, IoT and Digital Twins, and (3) Secure and Sustainable Engineering Systems. This focus would create favourable conditions for the establishment of active and effective research and development groups, regular research seminars, joint publications, and other systematic research activities. It would also enhance the image of the KVK as a center of competence in 2-3 selected fields.

However, the expert panel considers the lack of students in assessed study programmes to be the biggest problem: while enrolment figures for the INE programme more than halved in 2024, the SA programme failed to open enrolment at all. Improving the situation requires not only doing better or more of what has been done so far, but also rethinking/reconceptualizing all academic activities. And employers and alumni should be more involved in this process than before. The identity of the renewed study programmes, their distinction compared to the study programmes offered by other Lithuanian universities and universities of applied sciences, as well as the perspectives for professional activity and growth should be clearly highlighted. Whether the main distinguishing features will be, for example, the extensive involvement of top specialists from companies in teaching, the transformation of the curriculum from subject-based to product development-based, the creation of a module(s) in the curriculum that addresses female students, or something fourth or fifth, or a combination of these, parties with broad - including international - experience should be involved in defining this, of course, this must be accompanied by effective marketing of study programmes.

Another important problem is the high average age of teaching staff, which expert panel considers to be the second major problem. Solving this also requires special measures, such as, for example, offering to the most capable students adequate academic challenges and directing them to targeted master's and doctoral studies after graduation. It was somewhat unexpected that translation had to be used in the interviews - the need to improve the English language skills of the lecturers was highlighted already in the 2016 evaluation of the INE study programme.

To motivate companies to contribute to solving these tasks, a strategic partner status could be developed and implemented.

The expert panel received excellent support in preparing and carrying out the visit, for which we express our sincere thanks to SKVC and the staff of KVK. We note the good readability of the KVK self-analysis report (SER) - it was informative, structured according to a system of standards and sufficiently focused. The only difficulty was the fact that the SER contained references mostly to Lithuanian-language documents (the academic experts did not speak Lithuanian).
