



CENTRE FOR QUALITY ASSESSMENT IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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**EVALUATION REPORT**  
**STUDY FIELD of MARKETING**  
at Kaunas University of Technology

**Expert panel:**

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5. **Mr. Žilvinas Kulvinskis**, *representative of social partners*;
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## Study Field Data

Title of the study programme	<b>Marketing</b>	<b>Marketing management</b>
State code	6121LX024	6211LX038
Type of studies	University studies	University studies
Cycle of studies	First cycle	Second cycle
Mode of study and duration (in years)	Full-time (4)	Full-time (2)
Credit volume	240	120
Qualification degree and (or) professional qualification	Bachelor of Business Management	Master of Business Management
Language of instruction	Lithuanian	Lithuanian
Minimum education required	High school degree	Bachelor's degree in marketing, economics or business or an equivalent professional qualification
Registration date of the study programme	10/03/2011	15/06/2011

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# I. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1. BACKGROUND OF THE EVALUATION PROCESS

The evaluation of study fields is based on the Methodology of External Evaluation of Study Fields approved by the Director of the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education (hereafter – SKVC) 31 December 2019 Order [No.V-149](#).

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

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

On the basis of this external evaluation report of the study field SKVC takes a decision to accredit study field either for 7 years or for 3 years. If the field evaluation is negative then the study field is not accredited.

The study field and cycle are **accredited for 7 years** if all evaluation areas are evaluated as exceptional (5 points), very good (4 points) or good (3 points).

The study field and cycle are **accredited for 3 years** if one of the evaluation areas was evaluated as satisfactory (2 points).

The study field and cycle are **not accredited** if at least one of evaluation areas was evaluated as unsatisfactory (1 point).

## 1.2. EXPERT PANEL

The expert panel was assigned according to the Experts Selection Procedure (hereinafter referred to as the Procedure) as approved by the Director of Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education on 31 December 2019 [Order No. V-149](#). The site visit to the HEI was conducted by the panel on 29 April, 2021. Due to the coronavirus pandemic, the site visit was conducted online using video conferencing tools (Zoom).

**Dr. Kristiina Tõnnisson (panel chairperson)**, Head of Johan Skytte Institute of Political Studies, University of Tartu, Estonia;

**Dr. Dario Miočević**, Associate Professor of Marketing at the Faculty of Economics, Business and Tourism, University of Split, Croatia;

**Dr. Ákos Varga**, Associate Professor at the Institute of Marketing, Corvinus University of Budapest, Hungary;

**Dr. Giedrius Romeika**, Director of the Institute of Social Sciences and Applied Informatics at Kaunas Faculty, Vilnius University, Lithuania;

**Mr. Žilvinas Kulvinskis**, Communication project manager, “Topo Centras”, part of EURONICS alliance, Lithuania;

**Ms. Alicia Presencio Herrero**, 1<sup>st</sup> year PhD student of Audiovisual Communication, Advertising and Public Relations, Complutense University of Madrid, Spain.

### 1.3. GENERAL INFORMATION

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

<b>No.</b>	<b>Name of the document</b>
1.	Virtual presentation of learning facilities used by marketing field students at Kaunas University of Technology.

### 1.4. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY FIELD/STUDY FIELD POSITION/STATUS AND SIGNIFICANCE IN THE HEI

Kaunas University of Technology (hereafter – KTU, also – the University) was established in 1920 and consists of 9 faculties and 8 research institutes as well as the departments of administration and support. The university provides study programmes of the first, second and third cycles altogether in 43 study fields and in 100 programmes (in the year 2019). Studies in the field of Marketing are offered by the School of Economics and Business (hereafter – SEB). The School is one of the largest faculties in the University. It offers four first cycle (including Marketing), nine second cycle (including Marketing Management) and two third cycle study programmes. According to Eduniversal Business School rankings, the School has received three Palms of Excellence and is among the 700 best business schools in the world.

## II. GENERAL ASSESSMENT

Marketing study field and **first cycle** at Kaunas University of Technology is given **positive** evaluation.

*Study field and cycle assessment in points by evaluation areas*

No.	Evaluation Area	Evaluation of an Area in points*
1.	Intended and achieved learning outcomes and curriculum	4
2.	Links between science (art) and studies	4
3.	Student admission and support	4
4.	Teaching and learning, student performance and graduate employment	4
5.	Teaching staff	3
6.	Learning facilities and resources	4
7.	Study quality management and public information	4
	<b>Total:</b>	<b>27</b>

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

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

3 (good) - the field is being developed systematically, has distinctive features;

4 (very good) - the field is evaluated very well in the national and international context, without any deficiencies;

5 (excellent) - the field is exceptionally good in the national and international context/environment.

Marketing study field and **second cycle** at Kaunas University of Technology is given **positive** evaluation.

*Study field and cycle assessment in points by evaluation areas*

<b>No.</b>	<b>Evaluation Area</b>	<b>Evaluation of an Area in points*</b>
1.	Intended and achieved learning outcomes and curriculum	4
2.	Links between science (art) and studies	4
3.	Student admission and support	4
4.	Teaching and learning, student performance and graduate employment	3
5.	Teaching staff	3
6.	Learning facilities and resources	4
7.	Study quality management and public information	4
	<b>Total:</b>	<b>26</b>

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

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

3 (good) - the field is being developed systematically, has distinctive features;

4 (very good) - the field is evaluated very well in the national and international context, without any deficiencies;

5 (excellent) - the field is exceptionally good in the national and international context/environment.

## III. STUDY FIELD ANALYSIS

### 3.1. INTENDED AND ACHIEVED LEARNING OUTCOMES AND CURRICULUM

*Study aims, outcomes and content shall be assessed in accordance with the following indicators:*

*3.1.1. Evaluation of the conformity of the aims and outcomes of the field and cycle study programmes to the needs of the society and/or the labour market*

The evaluated study programmes seem to be aligned with both EU and national strategies, as well as forecasts and statistics on what will be the core competencies in the future (WEF, OECD). National labour statistics corroborate the necessity for organizing and delivering the designated study programmes. Chartered Institute of Marketing and American Marketing Association have been consulted as the leading professional and academic associations in marketing. Tight collaboration with Lithuanian Marketing Association enables swift feedback on the current needs of the national labour market which can speed up the process of renewing and updating the study programme. However, this seems to be rather reactive than proactive.

According to the expert committee's judgement, the aims and LOs of the both first and second cycle programmes are aligned with the needs of the society and labour market. In this regard, various sources of robust evidence are provided. Explication of target positions for students that graduate from first and second cycle programmes is provided in detail. The organization in two cycles follows distinct competencies required by practice. The special attention has been given in avoiding duplication of the content and LOs in many different courses although some topics from some courses are later on extended in-depth through individual courses covering specific marketing issues. During the sessions with students, alumni and social partners it became evident that KTU offers rounded marketing programmes in both cycles offering crucial analytical, entrepreneurial, creative and technical skills. According to feedback generated through sessions with students, alumni and social partners, KTU's programmes in marketing have a strong reputation and enjoy positive word-of-mouth in the general public.

*3.1.2. Evaluation of the conformity of the field and cycle study programme aims and outcomes with the mission, objectives of activities and strategy of the HEI*

SER provides evidence that all study programmes are well aligned with the mission, vision and strategic goals of KTU (SER, p. 10). This is also indicative in the way the study programmes are delivered. The same goes with showcased study programmes in marketing. The SER presents the well defined pillars of KTU' strategy and during the interview with KTU's management it became evident that the adopted strategy is a guiding principle for all of its employees.

The coherence between strategic posture and study programmes is well explained and the arguments provided seem to corroborate this reasonably well. However, the opinion of the expert committee is that KTU falls short on this promise. For instance, since increased internationalization is one of the pillars of the KTU' strategy there is surprisingly lack of evidence on practicing it in the evaluated study programmes. This became evident during the sessions held with teachers and students. The expert committee commends KTU for entering the process of acquiring AACSB accreditation that should bolster the school's internationalization efforts.



### *3.1.3. Evaluation of the compliance of the field and cycle study programme with legal requirements*

The study programme is well aligned with legislative requirements and KTU provides clear and detailed evidence on this in SER (SER, p. 10-12). The study programme structure, LOs, credits are elaborated well and corroborate the value-added contribution of each course to the overall study programme aims (Annex table 3).

According to the expert committee's judgement there is a clear and logical alignment matrix between study programme aims and LOs with individual courses. The study programme learning outcomes are organized around the key groups, namely: the subjects are intended to provide knowledge and the ways to apply it, to develop research, special skills, social skills and personal skills. The credits allocation is done accordingly by taking into account the actual workload of the student in each course. This includes the aligned allocation for actual contact work hours and student's individual work hours. Study programme committee (SPC) is in charge of the study programme reviews and besides formalized procedures there are instances where teachers individually adapt the course content and their teaching and assessment methods. Expert committee unanimously agrees that such reviews should continue periodically through direct consultations with all the important stakeholders.

### *3.1.4. Evaluation of compatibility of aims, learning outcomes, teaching/learning and assessment methods of the field and cycle study programmes*

Alignment matrix showing interrelation between study programmes' and individual course's LO seems to have a clear logical structure for each of the study programmes showcased in the SER (Annex table 3). Course syllabi seem to cover all the necessary information for the students. Study programmes use a wide array of teaching and assessment methods which seem to be aligned with the aims and LOs and contribute to the development of students' competencies (Annex table 4).

Compatibility between study programme aims and LOs on one side and teaching and assessment methods on the other side is provided in greater detail than average which is commendable. The KTU provides a breakdown on how specific sets of skills (identified in 1.3) are streamlined across the years of both undergraduate and graduate study programmes in Marketing. Each course is developed according to pre-approved methodology used at University-wide level. The methodology requires all the necessary information to be provided for the course implementation, among which credits allocation, assignments, literature, teaching/learning and assessment method and leading teacher. Teachers in both programmes seem to use a wide array of teaching methods and according to students' view, the practical component is especially praised (through real case studies, guest practitioners and company visits). On top of this, practical relevance of the study programme is strengthened through *Practice* course. The assessment methods seem to be diverse and aligned with aims and LOs at both course and study programme levels. Students have expressed satisfaction with the level of workload in courses. However, the expert committee agrees that more research-driven perspective and academic depth should be incorporated at the undergraduate study programme since there is evidence of students' being very open to research activities (joint publishing of academic papers as shown in Annex table 9).

### *3.1.5. Evaluation of the totality of the field and cycle study programme subjects/modules, which ensures consistent development of competences of students*

The undergraduate study programme comprises general subjects of university studies (providing horizontal skills such as media philosophy or sustainable development), subjects of study field (dominant), electives and internship. All attained LOs are later consolidated during the preparation of bachelor's or final degree projects. Basic analytical courses (statistics, mathematics, IT) and general economics courses (microeconomics and macroeconomics) are reserved for the first year of studies. The second year of studies enables students to gain knowledge in basic business functions (management, organization, finance, accounting) and attain ability to conduct research through designated research methods course. Third and fourth year are reserved for core marketing subjects dealing with marketing in different contexts and areas. The *Final degree project* and *Internship* are planned for the second semester of the fourth year. In the graduate programme, the students attend specialist marketing courses, more complex than at the undergraduate level. The academic depth is achieved by research method courses, research project 1 & 2 courses (which eventually build the final degree project), numerous helpful analytical courses as well as other organizational methodologies.

According to the expert committee's assessment, the study programmes at both undergraduate and graduate level provide complete education for future marketing professionals. The periodic updates and reviews occurred per students' requests and by monitoring closely the trends in the business environment with special focus on the emerging skills and competencies. The students praise this proactive approach since the undergraduate programme has been voted as the best one among the university students. The main strength of the graduate programme was the external accreditation by CIM (UK) and AMA (USA) and the study programme has been identified as the one that successfully meets the international standards in the marketing profession. Also, during the sessions with social partners, it was confirmed that KTU's marketing programmes equip students with all the required skills and students graduating from KTU marketing programmes have a much broader view of how marketing functions in a broader company ecosystem.

### *3.1.6. Evaluation of opportunities for students to personalise the structure of field study programmes according to their personal learning objectives and intended learning outcomes*

According to evidence presented in SER (SER, p. 20-21), SPC is trying to ensure that students are able to personalize their study programme in many aspects. For instance, students are able to choose from a wide array of optional courses, learn languages which are not necessarily related to marketing but are important because they equip students with functional knowledge from other fields of business. In the process of preparing and writing the final thesis, the students are able to freely choose the topic they want to investigate.

According to the expert committee's judgement, there is limited personalization for students, they only have 12 credits allocated for elective courses in the sixth semester of undergraduate study programme. This proportion is higher at graduate programme in Marketing Management. However, the personalization is strived to be achieved through courses where students have freedom to choose specific topics for the projects, assignments that are sometimes related to real business problems. Also, the possibility of doing an internship increases their education experience.

### *3.1.7. Evaluation of compliance of final theses with the field and cycle requirements*

The procedures and regulations underlying the final thesis preparation, writing and defence are in place and transparently listed. According to SER (SER, p. 21-23), during thesis

preparation, writing and defence, students are tackling all the important aims and LOs of the study programme. As noted by KTU, some of the theses have been directly ordered by social partners which makes them more relevant in achieving the tight connection with business practice. The final list is approved upon approval by SPC and the process is coordinated by both SPC and project supervisor. Whereas final projects in the first cycle are mostly focused on resolving a specific problem in a given organization, the second cycle final degree projects tend to focus more on applied research, connecting tighter with the research focus of KTU.

According to SER and sessions with key constituents, the expert committee concludes that the overall process of attaining the final degree thesis is in accordance with regulation and substantiates the aims of the both first and second cycle study programmes. In terms of work, students can engage in consultation with the supervisor and have a choice to attend the trainings organized by KTU library with a goal of improving their research skills related to bibliographic database search, proper citing of academic sources. The anti-plagiarism system has been in place since 2020 which further helps sustaining academic integrity. The defence is organized in front of the commission which comprises both practitioners and academics validating the practical relevance and academic depth undertaken by students.

### ***Strengths and weaknesses of this evaluation area:***

#### ***(1) Strengths:***

1. Study programmes are up to date, without overlaps between cycles. Both cycles seem to provide rounded programmes to students in terms of competencies.
2. There is evidence on the systematic approach at institutional level in revising the programme.
3. The practical and research components are strongly emphasized in the study programme.
4. The school is using its strong reputation and word of mouth for the marketing of study programmes.

#### ***(2) Weaknesses:***

1. Personalization of the studies should be further strengthened.
2. The strategic framework is very ambitious but in reality there are problems in practising it, especially in terms of achieving stronger footprint in internationalization and research excellence.

## **3.2. LINKS BETWEEN SCIENCE (ART) AND STUDIES**

***Links between science (art) and study activities shall be assessed in accordance with the following indicators:***

***3.2.1. Evaluation of the sufficiency of the science (applied science, art) activities implemented by the HEI for the field of research (art) related to the field of study***

The research output (SER, Annex 7) shows a strong tendency in participating conferences and publishing in CA WoS and Scopus indexed articles. This also strengthens the idea of increasing relevant research activity. The self evaluation report states that “Sustainable international academic partnerships, cooperation with companies, associations and their networks in project activities significantly contribute to increasing the internationality of Marketing studies”. It also states that KTU obtained second place (weighted sum) among Lithuanian institutes in research output and performance in the study field of Management. The budget

allocation shows significant development of research focused on a high international level in the fields of Management and Economics. KTU manages to achieve and maintain very good quality through developed academic networking, international partnerships, evolving infrastructure, human resources and research strategies.

The expert committee would like to point out some minor shortcomings: further strengthening of international research (with a stronger focus on the field of marketing) would be advised. The KTU seeks for internationalization, thus it would be advised to publish research papers on an international, top tier level. This could provide a strong validation for such aspirations.

According to the meeting with the teaching staff, the expert committee can state that there is a clear connection between research and teaching activities. This remark was further approved by the students. The research committee also welcomes the idea of the willingness of the teaching staff to participate in various kinds of academic conferences, where (besides the theoretical insights) they are able to learn more about new educational sources and tools as well.

The expert committee finds that putting too much focus on conferences poses some threat for the future: the teaching staff should put the effort in developing a higher standard of research activity. The expert committee recognises the potential of neuromarketing equipment of KTU, but also feels that it should have a wider availability: training, research projects and cooperation with alumni and social partners could provide further opportunities in high quality research outputs and/or even securing funds.

### *3.2.2. Evaluation of the link between the content of studies and the latest developments in science, art and technology*

The expert committee admits the factual statements of the self-evaluation report as the integration of latest development in science into the study process is carried out by the reviews and updates of the topics of the study modules. The teaching and learning methods presented are based on relevant sources and examples, including contributions from social partners and alumni.

The expert committee recognises the well structured study portfolio of the study programmes. However, it would be advised to provide a wider variety of courses for two reasons: in order to avoid overlaps and to provide a growing interest in further aspects in the field of marketing. Currently, the research focus is on a broader area (management and economics), therefore an emphasis added to marketing is advised. According to the meeting with the management, KTU is on the right path in searching for new ways to implement theoretical knowledge into practice.

### *3.2.3. Evaluation of conditions for students to get involved in scientific (applied science, art) activities consistent with their study cycle*

The information gathered during the meetings shows that students are involved in scientific and applied science activities. They are encouraged and participate in student scientific conferences, prepare publications together with lecturers, participate in scientific competitions (e.g. Google initiatives) and have possibility to get additional professional certification (e.g. Google Ads certification).

The expert committee recognises that students can enhance their analytical skills during different classes. The expert committee also admits that the students have strong fundamentals in general marketing theory and have strong analytical skills. These statements were further validated during the meeting with students and alumni as well.

### ***Strengths and weaknesses of this evaluation area:***

#### ***(1) Strengths:***

1. SEB has a very good systematic approach to research activities.
2. There is a strong connection between research and education.
3. The programmes have a systematic approach to combining scientific and practical skills.

#### ***(2) Weaknesses:***

1. Alumni involvement is too weak taken into account alumni willingness to contribute to the programmes.

## **3.3. STUDENT ADMISSION AND SUPPORT**

### ***Student admission and support shall be evaluated according to the following indicators:***

#### ***3.3.1. Evaluation of the suitability and publicity of student selection and admission criteria and process***

The admission criteria depend on the type of study: admission to undergraduate studies is administered and organized following the Regulations for Student Admission to Kaunas University of Technology approved by KTU Senate every year. For admission to the graduate programme, students need to have a Bachelor's degree in the Business and Management group of study fields (economics, social studies, communication or public relations), or prove 12 credit worth modules in Business and Management group of study fields, or to demonstrate at least one year of professional experience in the study field. To be admitted to the graduate programme, a motivation letter is always required.

Information related to admissions to first cycle study programmes is available on the website of the Lithuanian Association of Higher Education for General Admission (LAMA BPO), on the KTU website in the Admissions section and in the KTU publication on undergraduate studies. Admission to the graduate programme is implemented via KTU information system of admission to master's degree programmes.

In 2017, 44 students were selected for the first cycle programme, 41 in 2018 and 33 in 2019. For the second cycle programme, 21 students were admitted in 2017. In 2018 they were 17 and in 2019 - 25 (SER p. 35, tables 4 and 5).

The admission criteria are public and accessible on the university's website and, during the meeting with students, they did not report any problems when analysing them. The University consistently applies pre-established and public standards that cover all phases of the 'life cycle' of students: admission, advancement, recognition and certification.

#### ***3.3.2. Evaluation of the procedure of recognition of foreign qualifications, partial studies and prior non-formal and informal learning and its application***

The University applies the evaluation of the learning achievements acquired via non-formal and informal education and the acknowledgement of competences that allows the person's

competences acquired via non-formal education to be evaluated and acknowledged as the learning outcomes. For learning outcomes, 75% of the studies can be validated. In the event that a student decides to do an Erasmus experience, their results will be validated following current European students legislation. The student has to coordinate the plan of partial studies and the inclusion of learning outcomes with the faculty's Vice-Dean for Studies in advance.

It is very positive that KTU has taken into account the learning achievements obtained in the work activities, non-formal adult educational system, unpaid work and volunteering, traineeships, courses, seminars, projects, independent learning. In such cases, a maximum of 50% of the scope of the study programme can be included.

### *3.3.3. Evaluation of conditions for ensuring academic mobility of students.*

The minimum duration for international student mobility is 3 months. They can choose mobility destinations which are available on the web. They have the exchange studies opportunity of 1-2 semesters or summer/winter programmes abroad under the bilateral cooperation and student exchange agreements signed between KTU and the university partners. Students have at their disposal another series of scholarships for international stays. The marketing study programmes of both cycles are offered only in Lithuanian, thus there are no full-time students from abroad.

University strongly encourages international stays and gives great importance to the knowledge of foreign languages. In fact, it offers electives in the study plan that contemplate C1 levels of English, Russian, German... There are initiatives that promote the internationalization of students, such as the Erasmus Café or information talks about stays abroad.

### *3.3.4. Assessment of the suitability, adequacy and effectiveness of the academic, financial, social, psychological and personal support provided to the students of the field*

KTU carries out initiatives that benefit the student, such as the Mentoring Program, GIFTed Talent Academy and bridging courses of basic study modules (English language, mathematics, physics, chemistry, information technologies) for the first year students of the first cycle, in addition to the necessary tutorials when requested and from Academic advisors-lecturers.

They have financial aid, such as the University's talent scholarships, scholarships by enterprises, Sponsor's scholarship, and scholarships for having an active participation in the extracurricular activities. They also cover the expenses of representation in activities in which students represent the University. Economic funds are also used for student situations. Students benefit from the free activities of the KTU Sports and Wellness Center and have psychological help if they need it. Students with special needs are provided with support for studies, adaptation of infrastructure, financial, psychological support, etc.

Marketing field students have a broad and strong scholarship program of their own. Without a doubt, this is a strong point of the University. A wide range of activities that support and complement the development of students is a differential feature of the competition. Comprehensive care is provided to the physical and psychological needs of a student. They can also have spiritual support if they have religious needs. Personalized attention to students through figures of reference, such as the figure of the Mentor, influences the completion of their studies in a satisfactory way, reducing the dropout and failure rate.

### *3.3.5 Evaluation of the sufficiency of study information and student counselling*

Communication with students occurs mainly by email. Undergraduate students participate in an orientation Welcome Week, and graduate students have the Info Evening for the same purpose. A peer mentor is assigned to a group of the first year students and helps to solve any problems that may arise. Students know how it works and who their representatives are in the KTU Students' Association and the School's Students' Association.

Information reaches students in a timely and accurate manner via the University system. The students claim to be constantly informed and highlight the closeness of their teachers when it comes to solving their doubts and problems. In addition, they know and participate in the activities of the Students Council. The University takes into account and addresses the diversity of students and their needs, allowing flexible learning pathways.

#### ***Strengths and weaknesses of this evaluation area:***

##### ***(1) Strengths:***

1. KTU offers full student support covering all major aspects of the needs: physical, psychological, intellectual as well as spiritual.
2. Communication with the University is constant and valued positively by students.

##### ***(2) Weaknesses:***

1. It is recommended to continue encouraging students to carry out stays abroad, since the KTU has the necessary resources.

## **3.4. TEACHING AND LEARNING, STUDENT PERFORMANCE AND GRADUATE EMPLOYMENT**

***Studying, student performance and graduate employment shall be evaluated according to the following indicators:***

*3.4.1. Evaluation of the teaching and learning process that enables to take into account the needs of the students and enable them to achieve the intended learning outcomes*

The first cycle Marketing is a full-time study programme, second cycle Marketing Management has been implemented in a cyclical form. At the end of the spring semester, students (with the assistance of the head of the study programmes of the field, SPV) make individual study plans for the coming academic year, where the modules they choose from a list of optional modules (electives) are indicated. With regard to students' individual study plans, schedule of classes is prepared together with lecturers working in the field following the procedure regulating class scheduling. Students of the study programmes of the field are involved in research activities carried out by the academic staff of the field and in the research mentorship programme.

The nature and amount of elective subjects, the possibility to deepen knowledge and competencies by engaging in scientific activities create preconditions to state that the teaching and learning process properly enables to take into account the needs of the students and to enable them to achieve the intended learning outcomes. Nevertheless, "cyclical" form of second cycle Marketing Management programme, in combination with the duration of studies typical of full-time studies (2 years, 4 semesters), raises doubts about appropriate

conditions for quality acquisition of knowledge and skills. Does the cyclical principle of study organization (as it is usually understood and treated in university studies organization context) is capable of "accommodating" all study hours from 120 credits to the time of four semesters? Especially having in mind that practically all students are working (information received during the virtual visit). There is a risk that due to the cyclical form of studies, part of the hours devoted to independent work will simply disappear due to incompatibility with students work activities.

#### *3.4.2. Evaluation of conditions ensuring access to study for socially vulnerable groups and students with special needs*

The consultations on the issues of studies to the students with special needs are provided by the University's Student Information and Service Centre. All general information is provided in the section for the first year students at the University's website. A social welfare coordinator at the Department of Student Affairs acts as a mediator in providing consultations if the student has issues related to studies (in cooperation with the faculties), scholarship competitions, financial support, assistance, and adaptation of studies. The flexible forms of the achievement evaluation are applied while assessing the learning achievements of the candidates with special needs.

During the virtual visit, the expert panel observed a lack (or absence) of physical places for informal communication and cooperation, as a social part of the studies (including those accessible to the disabled), which, in our opinion, could also be included in the set of support services.

After evaluating the provided information and analysing the additional documents, based on the confirmations received during the virtual visit, it can be stated that assurance of access to study for socially vulnerable groups and students with special needs is implemented by informing/consulting, academic assistance, psychological services, and as a system functions in a proper way.

#### *3.4.3. Evaluation of the systematic nature of the monitoring of student study progress and feedback to students to promote self-assessment and subsequent planning of study progress*

Department of Academic Affairs prepares an annual report of the monitoring of the students' learning outcomes and presents it to the Rector's office. The report includes the indicators of the progress of students and repeated examinations, the evaluation of the effectiveness of newly introduced measures for the quality of studies, the discussion about the reasons for termination and interruption of studies, the attendance indicators, the violations of academic ethics, the results of attendance and testing of the bridging courses and other information relevant to the evaluation of systematicity of the monitoring of the quality of studies and the progress of the students' studies. At the Faculty the results of the report are discussed during the meeting of Dean's office for academic affairs. Faculty employees are informed during the staff meeting.

The Programme Steering Committee is constantly monitoring students' achievements in the Academic Information System (AIS): overall grade point average, data of the current semester's intermediate and final assessments, records of attendance in classes. In the middle of each semester the Committee also holds round table discussions where together with students they talk about the study process, content of each module and work of a teacher or a team of teachers.



Based on the analyzed information provided and evidence gathered during the virtual visit, it can be assumed that students study progress monitoring systems (regularity of activities, characteristics of the analyzed criteria, presentation and implementation of investigated results) are functioning properly.

#### *3.4.4. Evaluation of employability of graduates and graduate career tracking in the study field.*

KTU Career and Development Centre and Strategy Monitoring and Process Office monitor and collect data on graduates' employment and occupation following the analysis indicators by Government Strategic Analysis Centre (STRATA). The employment rates of first cycle graduates in Marketing 12 months after graduation are improving, since the number of graduates working in lower qualification jobs went from 21% in 2017 to 0% in 2018; in addition, the amount of graduates who do not have paid employment reduced from 41% in 2017 to 28% in 2018.

SPV, SPC members, supervisors of both cycles final projects contact the graduates in order to find out what knowledge or competencies they lack in professional activities, how they could be enhanced in the study process. The opinion of employers is collected in different ways: through discussions with social partners through talks about the level of competence of graduates in the field, with the representatives of companies participating in the Career Days event organised by the University. Feedback from both graduates and employers is discussed during the meeting of academic staff teaching in the field study programmes and during the meeting of the Dean's office for studies.

After analyzing all the information provided and collected, it can be stated that graduate career tracking is implemented using primary and secondary data analysis, the results of the activity are shared with stakeholders (Teachers, Students, Alumni, Employers). The University is taking steps to capitalize on these results (e.g. Career Days organization). Presented graduate employability quantitative and qualitative indicators show progress and correspond to the overall average of the situation.

#### *3.4.5. Evaluation of the implementation of policies to ensure academic integrity, tolerance and non-discrimination*

By signing the learning agreement and the declaration of academic integrity, the students undertake to follow the academic discipline, the procedure stipulated by the Code of Academic Ethics and the University's other internal legislation, to perform the tasks independently and honestly. Before the preparation of the written works, students have to read the requirements applied to the written works, including the requirements for citation of sources and preparation of the list of references.

The University applies the Guidelines for the Organisation and Performance of the Assessment of Study Modules; its objective is to assure integrity, transparency and quality of the assessments performed at the University. The lecturers are constantly provided with training teaching them to formulate the tasks allowing them to assure academic integrity. The University has prepared the Guidelines for the Detection of Plagiarism in the Students' Written Works. To ensure the originality of the final works written in the Lithuanian language, they are inspected using the co-occurrence inspection subsystem EPAS (ESAS) of the Lithuanian Academic Electronic Library eLABa. The works written in the foreign languages are inspected using the international co-occurrence inspection system iThenticate.

If a case of academic violation is identified, the act of establishment of academic violation is filled in; it is analysed and the decision is made by the faculty's Dean or the Commission for Settlement of Academic Violations. The University assures tolerance and non-discrimination by implementing the Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy. Its objective is to ensure the equal position of all the University's employees, students and the persons who apply to the University, regardless of their gender, sexual orientation, disability, race, ethnic origin, nationality, religion, faith, language, origin, social status, convictions or views, citizenship, family status, intentions to have a child (children) and application of the equal opportunities and diversity principles in all the areas related to the functions of the University.

Assurance of academic integrity activities carries a systematic approach. They are properly documented and there is logical relations and interaction between documents and instructions. The process is consistent, starting from the entrance to the university and ending with the final thesis defense procedure. Information, publicity and training activities allow us to conclude that the University is not focused on "catching and punishing" but on prevention. On the other hand, identified academic violations indicate that the system is actually working. Provided information regarding Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy suggests that tolerance and non-discrimination policy is being implemented.

#### *3.4.6. Evaluation of the effectiveness of the application of procedures for the submission and examination of appeals and complaints regarding the study process within the field studies*

The University applies the Guidelines for the Submission and Processing of the Students' Appeals and Complaints. Before the submission of an appeal or a complaint, the student has to get acquainted with the documents regulating the area of the alleged violation, other important information, and, if needed, consult the Vice-Dean for Studies of his/her faculty. If possible, first of all, University encourages to solve the issue with the employee/student who made the decision.

An appeal or a complaint is transferred to the head responsible for the area of activities who assembles an interim board of appeal or a complaint settlement commission (consisting of at least three members; one of them is a representative of students). If an appeal or a complaint is related to the violation of academic ethics, the document is transferred to the chairman of the Board of Academic Ethics. The interim board of appeal or the complaint settlement commission analyses the appeal or complaint within 10 working days after the date of the receipt of the properly submitted appeal or complaint, makes a decision and notifies the interested persons. Time for appeal of the decision to the University's Dispute Settlement Commission is 10 working days.

After examining the submitted and collected information, it can be concluded that submission and examination of appeals and complaints regarding the study process is properly documented, the process works systematically, the conditions of its organization create preconditions for an open, objective settlement of the dispute. Practical applications show that it works.

#### *Strengths and weaknesses of this evaluation area:*

##### *(1) Strengths:*

1. The academic integrity system is thoroughly designed, oriented to prevention and education.

2. The student study progress monitoring system is well organized and properly serves as a preventive measure to reduce student dropout.

**(2) Weaknesses:**

1. "Cyclical" form of second cycle Marketing Management programme in combination with the duration of studies typical of full-time studies is not working too well (2 years 4 semesters).
2. Lack of physical places for informal communication and cooperation, as a social part of the studies (including those accessible to the disabled).

### 3.5. TEACHING STAFF

*Study field teaching staff shall be evaluated in accordance with the following indicators:*

*3.5.1. Evaluation of the adequacy of the number, qualification and competence (scientific, didactic, professional) of teaching staff within a field study programme(s) at the HEI in order to achieve the learning outcomes*

Qualification of teachers is aligned with the respective regulations and requirements and evidence shows that all teachers delivering in the study programme have at least 3-year of experience. The study modules of the first cycle programme Marketing are coordinated and taught by 28 teachers, 29% of whom are professors, 53% associate professors and 18% lecturers. The ratio of student/teacher is favourable in both programmes. The study modules of the second cycle programme Marketing Management are coordinated and taught by 19 university teachers, 53% of whom are professors, 42% are associate professors and 5% are lecturers. There is evidence on scholarly research of teachers including journal publications, academic conference attendances and memberships in academic and professional associations (Annex table 12). In addition, the SER provides evidence on increasing the practical relevance of the study programmes by inviting guest practitioners to deliver courses and also to deliver specific topics in certain modules (SER, p. 54).

The composition of the teaching staff is adequate based on experience and age, and there is a favorable ratio between the number of teachers and number of students. Good practice is seen in the transfer of know-how between more experienced (approaching retirement) and younger teachers. Although evidence shows that research output is becoming of higher quality (number of publications indexed in Scopus or WoS), it should be more aligned with teaching interests. For instance, there is a significant mismatch between teaching and research (i.e., marketing teachers are rarely seen publishing in renowned international marketing journals, rather these are either general business journals without clear orientation or internationally-recognized domestic business journals).

*3.5.2. Evaluation of conditions for ensuring teaching staffs' academic mobility*

According to evidence presented in SER, KTU employees are encouraged to use the Erasmus+ mobility programmes for teaching and training (SER, p. 56-57). Also, the possibility to use other funding and support schemes exists. There is evidence of a strategic approach to mobility in the conditions under which the teacher can undertake mobility. The proportion of teachers going on mobility is still under 50% which severely undermines the internationalization efforts.

*3.5.3. Evaluation of the conditions to improve the competences of the teaching staff*

The care for teacher's professional development is under the coordination of The Head of the Academic Centre for Economics, Business and Management. There is evidence of a strong support system for developing teaching and didactic competencies (Edu\_Lab) (SER, p. 57-59). For the development of research competencies, teachers have a possibility to apply for external funding.

The evidence shows that the majority of teachers have attended didactic training to improve their teaching methods. According to the expert committee's assessment, the systematic support for developing research competencies among teachers is present through provision of many workshops, webinars, trainings, etc. However, the expert committee got the impression that this is mostly implemented through an ad-hoc approach without a clear strategy. Increasing research excellence is mandatory if KTU wants to live up to its mission of becoming a relevant research-oriented institution in the international context.

### ***Strengths and weaknesses of this evaluation area:***

#### ***(1) Strengths:***

1. Systematic approach to workload creates opportunities for teachers to further develop either in teaching or research.
2. Teachers are supported in developing pedagogic and research competencies.

#### ***(2) Weaknesses:***

1. The research output is highly skewed towards domestic-based journals (although internationally-recognized). More effort is needed to support and motivate higher production in top tier journals (e.g. ABS, ABDC).
2. There is low outgoing teacher mobility.

## **3.6. LEARNING FACILITIES AND RESOURCES**

***Study field learning facilities and resources should be evaluated according to the following criteria:***

***3.6.1. Evaluation of the suitability and adequacy of the physical, informational and financial resources of the field studies to ensure an effective learning process***

Marketing study programmes are implemented with the help of infrastructures and resources which are substantial for reaching intended study programme outcomes. 3 computer labs, Bloomberg Finance and Market Research Laboratory, a conference hall and 22 classrooms, almost half of them dedicated for teaching and working in group seminars, equipped with computers and multimedia.

All KTU computers are connected to wireless internet with both basic and professional software needed for analytical and scientific research purposes. Exceptional resource is Bloomberg Finance and Market Research Laboratory, perfecting the knowledge of market analysis, business, economics and finance models. 33 Bloomberg Professional terminals are available for 68 hours per week, 30% (20.4 hours) of the time is allocated to research.

Both teachers and students can choose specific computer software used only in their module, the licenses of which are purchased for each semester by the School, e.g. different simulation, marketing engineering or neuromarketing softwares or equipment are used. Freely available programmes are used to strengthen digital marketing skills, develop campaign analytical

skills. It is commendable that KTU is getting part of its equipment from partnership with other Universities or Social partners.

Moodle is used as the main tool to everyday study implementation. VPN can be provided by KTU to access remote resources, and ZOOM, MS Teams and Adobe Connect to implement distance learning. Entrances into learning facilities, classrooms with height adjustable tables, libraries and also special hardware and software, as Braille printer or reading tools create good possibility to study for the students with special needs. One of the biggest physical libraries, databases of scientific literature and data sources that the Library subscribes to allow access to the major scientific publications and other relevant information.

### *3.6.2. Evaluation of the planning and upgrading of resources needed to carry out the field studies*

The infrastructure and equipment of the School seem to be constantly renewed, in case of equipment failure, new one is purchased. Despite the fact that the Faculty is in a new building from 2014, major renovations of facilities are being carried out periodically and there are also planned new ones for the upcoming period. However, while renewing buildings, there seems to be a lack of attention to the informal part of the studies - KTU students identified that there is a lack of social spaces where students could have informal gatherings.

The sum allocated each year to renew Library resources seems to be substantial, and there is a clear process for teaching lecturers and students to use these resources fully. Also, there is a clear process of renewing resources, carried out by the KTU administration at the beginning of each semester. As the university has a huge number of subscriptions, there should be greater attention to the statistics of actual usage of these electronic resources (time spent, frequency) and part of administration decisions should be based on that, not avoiding decisions to stop subscribing to certain resources and allocating the money to more frequently used and for a search of a new ones.

### **Strengths and weaknesses of this evaluation area:**

#### **(1) Strengths:**

1. All University's resources are well funded and clearly oriented to reach learning outcomes.
2. University has a clear and well implemented process of resources renewal.

#### **(2) Weaknesses:**

1. University should pay more attention to the social part of the studies, dedicating a substantial number of spaces for group tasks and other after class activities and encouraging students to make good use of them not only for formal tasks but also for informal meetings and team building.
2. University could gather and keep more informative records of the current resources to make even better use of them and be able to make more precise optimizing decisions.
3. KTU has all possibilities to become a mecca for marketing studies also in a sense of resources and, for that purpose, management should develop a clear and bold vision for the nearest 5-10 years.

## **3.7. STUDY QUALITY MANAGEMENT AND PUBLIC INFORMATION**

*Study quality management and publicity shall be evaluated according to the following indicators:*

### *3.7.1. Evaluation of the effectiveness of the internal quality assurance system of the studies*

The structure of internal quality management, the monitoring system has a coherent form, carefully adjusted to the institutional matrix. It is recognizable that the existence of the Quality Manual (SER, p. 66) serves as the written description of the internal quality assurance system. Further elaboration of this document would be advised in future SER.

The expert committee accepts the current structure of internal quality assurance: as the core principles stem from the KTU's vision and mission, and the European Foundation for Quality Management, KTU aspires to address everyday issues in accordance with the aforementioned framework. It is also clearly visible that KTU aspires to maintain the link between teaching and research activities. It is acknowledged that significant changes happened since the last evaluation as the committee meetings became regular.

Regarding the internal quality assurance system, it can be stated that it is carefully established and viable. The expert committee welcomes the involvement of third parties in internal quality management, such as students and social stakeholders. This aspect certainly provides a higher standard in quality management. The expert committee admits results of content management regarding the study programmes.

### *3.7.2. Evaluation of the effectiveness of the involvement of stakeholders (students and other stakeholders) in internal quality assurance*

The variety of subjects can ensure the possibility of giving up to date knowledge – especially by involving third party contributors. As the stakeholders are involved in every level of decision making, the quality management approach is excellent from the students' perspective. The social stakeholders (alumni) involvement in internal quality assurance also seems adequate: the Alumni Organisation provides firm ground to share up to date, relevant knowledge to active students.

The expert committee admits the efforts of evaluating feedback from students, teaching staff, social partners and alumni. The expert committee also admits the efforts of KTU to involve their main stakeholders, the students, in every step of the quality assurance process. The expert committee points out that - based on the site visit - the frequent communication with alumni and social partners still could be improved. It is advised to establish new formal and informal ways of communication with them.

### *3.7.3. Evaluation of the collection, use and publication of information on studies, their evaluation and improvement processes and outcomes*

The constant quality surveys (whereas students have the opportunity to evaluate the content of the modules, teaching methodology, teacher's competence and submit their suggestions) provide not only quantitative, but qualitative data as well. The STRATA provides a remarkable opportunity for monitoring graduates' careers after they complete their studies. The annual review of study programme content (involving stakeholders and staff) reflects the rapid changes on the market. The expert committee acknowledges the good level of information flow. All information about the study programmes, the admissions, learning outcomes, the structure of study programs, and guest lecturers are available on the KTU website.

### *3.7.4. Evaluation of the opinion of the field students (collected in the ways and by the means chosen by the SKVC or the HEI) about the quality of the studies at the HEI*

The expert committee considers the existence of a quality culture to be proven, since the University not only collects the satisfaction of its stakeholders, but also reports on the results thereof. Students say they take their opinions very seriously. The University provides information on its activities, including the offer of programmes and their selection criteria, expected learning outcomes with that programme, the qualifications they lead to, the teaching, learning and assessment procedures used, information about employment.

***Strengths and weaknesses of this evaluation area:***

***(1) Strengths:***

1. The frequency of surveys ensures both qualitative and quantitative data is analysed.
2. The participation of students ensures the maintenance of high quality teaching material and methods.

***(2) Weaknesses:***

1. The underperforming communication with alumni might lead to not using relevant materials and methods demanded by the job market.
2. The University could provide more up-to-date, more detailed information regarding quality assessment results.

## IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

Evaluation Area	Recommendations for the Evaluation Area (study cycle)
Intended and achieved learning outcomes and curriculum	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Study Programme Committee is advised to engage in gradual internationalization of the study programme by offering some pilot courses to be delivered in English.</li> <li>2. The recruitment (even for on a short-term basis) of international lecturers and scholars could be encouraged.</li> <li>3. KTU should work harder in motivating Lithuanian students to attend English-based courses.</li> <li>4. Increase the possibilities for students to personalize their educational experience.</li> </ol>
Links between science (art) and studies	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To create better, more accessible conditions for Alumni to implement their initiatives (especially those related to scientific activities) by contributing to the development and improvement of Programmes.</li> <li>2. Develop a motivating system for students to take part in scientific activities.</li> </ol>
Student admission and support	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. It is recommended to continue encouraging students to carry out stays abroad, since the KTU has the necessary resources.</li> </ol>
Teaching and learning, student performance and graduate employment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Expert committee advises paying more attention to the social part of the studies and creating physical resources to support them.</li> <li>2. It is recommended to additionally consider whether the "Cyclical" form of studies in combination with the duration of Full Time studies is really the most suitable for ensuring the quality of Master level studies.</li> </ol>
Teaching staff	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. KTU is encouraged to motivate staff to apply more for international mobility and contribute to the international profile of the school as envisioned in the school's strategy.</li> <li>2. The expert committee suggests to KTU management to develop a more systematic approach for supporting research activities through providing additional funding for researchers that engage in excellent scholarly research recognized at international level (aimed at top tier publications according to AJG or ABDC rankings).</li> <li>3. KTU is advised to introduce a system that should take into account the balance between teaching and research in a way that more productive researchers have lower teaching load and vice versa.</li> </ol>



<p>Learning facilities and resources</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. KTU should pay more attention to the social part of the studies, dedicating a substantial number of spaces for group tasks and other after class activities and encouraging students to make good use of them not only for formal tasks but also for informal meetings and team building.</li> <li>2. KTU could gather and keep more informative records of the current resources to make even better use of them and be able to make more precise optimizing decisions.</li> <li>3. KTU has all possibilities to become a mecca for marketing studies also in a sense of resources and, for that purpose, management should develop a clear and bold vision for the nearest 5-10 years.</li> </ol>
<p>Study quality management and public information</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Develop a formal approach towards alumni to implement their insights in quality management.</li> <li>2. Create new channels to share all quality assessment results publicly (both in English and Lithuanian).</li> </ol>

## V. SUMMARY

Both programmes (Marketing and Marketing Management) are up to date, without overlaps between cycles. Both cycles seem to provide grounded programmes to students in terms of competencies. There is evidence of the systematic approach at institutional level in revising the programmes. The practical and research components are strongly emphasized in the study programmes. The school is using its strong reputation and word of mouth for the marketing of study programmes, though personalization of the studies could be further strengthened.

SEB has a very good systematic approach to research activities and there is a strong connection between research and education. Also, the programmes have a systematic approach to combining scientific and practical skills. The strategic framework is very ambitious but in reality there are problems in practising it, especially in terms of achieving a stronger footprint in internationalization and research excellence. The research output is highly skewed towards domestic-based journals (although internationally-recognized). More effort is needed to support and motivate higher production in top tier journals (e.g. ABS, ABDC). The low outgoing teacher mobility should be increased as well.

Both communication within the university as well as with companies and employers is constant and open, though alumni involvement is too weak taken into account their willingness to contribute. KTU offers full student support covering all major aspects of the needs: physical, psychological, intellectual and spiritual. The school applies a good academic integrity system, oriented to prevention and education. It is recommended to encourage students to carry out more stays abroad, since the KTU has the necessary resources.

Systematic approach to workload creates opportunities for teachers to further develop their career either in teaching or research. Teachers are supported in developing pedagogic and research competencies. "Cyclical" form of second cycle Marketing Management programme in combination with the duration of studies typical of full-time studies is not working too well (2 years 4 semesters) and should be analysed once more.

All University's resources are well funded and clearly oriented to reach learning outcomes. University has a clear and well implemented process of resources renewal, but there should be more attention to the social parts/social spaces of the studies. University could keep more informative records of the current resources to make even better use of them and be able to make even more precise optimizing decisions. KTU has all possibilities to become a mecca for marketing studies in the region.

**Expert panel signatures:**

1. **Dr. Kristiina Tõnnisson (panel chairperson)**, academic
2. **Dr. Dario Miočević**, *academic*
3. **Dr. Ákos Varga**, *academic*
4. **Dr. Giedrius Romeika**, *academic*
5. **Mr. Žilvinas Kulvinskis**, *representative of social partners*
6. **Ms. Alicia Presencio Herrero**, *students' representative*