



CENTRE FOR QUALITY ASSESSMENT IN HIGHER EDUCATION

EVALUATION REPORT
STUDY FIELD of BUSINESS
at Vytautas Magnus University

Expert panel:

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Report language – English

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Study Field Data*

I.

Title of the study programme	Business Administration
State code	6121LX029
Type of studies	University
Cycle of studies	First
Mode of study and duration (in years)	Full time, 4 years
Credit volume	240 ECTS
Qualification degree and (or) professional qualification	Bachelor of Business Management
Language of instruction	Lithuanian, English
Minimum education required	Secondary
Registration date of the study programme	19 May 1997

II.

Title of the study programme	Logistics and Commerce
State code	6121LX039
Type of studies	University
Cycle of studies	First
Mode of study and duration (in years)	Full time, 3,5 years; Part time, 5 years
Credit volume	210 ECTS
Qualification degree and (or) professional qualification	Bachelor of Business Management
Language of instruction	Lithuanian, English
Minimum education required	Secondary
Registration date of the study programme	15 June 2012

III.

Title of the study programme	Business Logistics
State code	6211LX055
Type of studies	University
Cycle of studies	Second
Mode of study and duration (in years)	Full time, 1,5 years; Part time, 2 years
Credit volume	90 ECTS
Qualification degree and (or) professional qualification	Master of Business Management
Language of instruction	Lithuanian, English
Minimum education required	Bachelor
Registration date of the study programme	1 August 2014

IV.

Title of the study programme	Business and Entrepreneurship
State code	6211LX049
Type of studies	University
Cycle of studies	Second
Mode of study and duration (in years)	Full time, 1,5 years
Credit volume	90 ECTS
Qualification degree and (or) professional qualification	Master of Business Management
Language of instruction	Lithuanian
Minimum education required	Bachelor
Registration date of the study programme	15 May 2015

V.

Title of the study programme	Sports Business Management
State code	6211LX001
Type of studies	University
Cycle of studies	Second
Mode of study and duration (in years)	Full time, 1,5 years
Credit volume	90 ECTS
Qualification degree and (or) professional qualification	Master of Business Management
Language of instruction	English
Minimum education required	Bachelor
Registration date of the study programme	1 March 2017

** if there are **joint** / **two-fields** / **interdisciplinary** study programmes in the study field, please designate it in the foot-note*

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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 3 May 2022.

Dr. Brenda Eade (panel chairperson) *an independent consultant in the field of education, a reviewer for the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA), U.K.;*

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Bohumil Stádník, *lecturer at Faculty of Finance and Accounting, University of Economics, Prague, Czech Republic;*

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Malcolm Brady, *associate professor at Business School, Dublin City University, Ireland;*

Prof. Dr. Pedro Pablo Cardoso Castro, *senior lecturer at Business School, Leeds Beckett University, U.K.;*

Dr. Natalija Norvilė, *expert consultant at ADDELSE consultancy agency, Lithuania;*

Mg. Carla Harold, *a recent student-graduate in English, Philosophy and Psychology, University of Vienna (2021) a student-expert of FSII Austria*

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, during and/or after the site visit:

No.	Name of the document
1.	Organisation charts for the management of quality in the Business Field FEM and FBD
2.	SPC minutes
3.	Annual Report on Research Activities FEM and FBD
4.	University Research Strategy

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

Vytautas Magnus University (VMU) established in 1922 and re-established in 1989, is a classical university based on the common beliefs and values of freedom, openness, and dialogue, and orientated towards humanistic culture. VMU is an international and multilingual institution with many international networks

The University has an Artes Liberales education profile and provides degree studies for all three cycles – bachelor, master and doctoral (PhD) studies - which cover a broad spectrum of fields ranging from humanities, social sciences and arts to the fundamental sciences, environmental sciences, and biotechnologies.

On 13 January 2018, the Parliament of the Republic of Lithuania approved reorganization of Aleksandras Stulginskis University (ASU) and the Lithuanian University of Educational Sciences (LEU) by merger with Vytautas Magnus University (VMU). The legal process of the merger of the three schools of higher education was completed on 1 January 2019, and the optimization of activities and organizational structures within the University is set to be completed by the year 2022.

VMU is managed by two collegial bodies, the Council and the Senate, and the separate managerial body of the Rector. The University is headed by the Rector, and the Rector's advisory institution is the Rector's Council.

There are five study programmes in the study field of Business at VMU: first cycle programmes of Business Administration and Logistics and Commerce; second cycle programmes of Business Logistics, Business and Entrepreneurship and Sports Business Management. They are delivered in two faculties of VMU: The Faculty of Economics and Management (FEM) and The Faculty of Bioeconomy Development (FBD). FEM has 858 students, 47 members of teaching staff and 7 members of non-academic staff. FBD has a total of 508 students, 48 members of teaching staff, and 5 members of non-academic staff.

FEM delivers the first cycle study programme of Business Administration which was registered in 1997. The programme received a positive evaluation in 2005 and 2013 and was accredited for 6 years on each occasion. FEM also delivers the second cycle programmes Sports Business Management, developed in 2017, in cooperation with Euroleague Basketball Institute (EBI), and Business and Entrepreneurship, introduced in 2015.

FBD has delivered the first cycle programme - Logistics and Commerce since 2012. The programme was evaluated in 2015 and accredited for a 3 year period. FBD has also delivered the second cycle Business Logistics programme since 2014. This programme was evaluated in 2017 and accredited for 6 years.

Cooperation between FEM and FBD researchers and lecturers takes place to address quality assurance issues.

II. GENERAL ASSESSMENT

Business study field and **first cycle** at Vytautas Magnus University is given **positive** evaluation.

Study field and first cycle assessment in points by evaluation areas

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

*1 (unsatisfactory) - the area does not meet the minimum requirements, there are fundamental shortcomings that prevent the implementation of the field studies.

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

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

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

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

Business study field and **second cycle** at Vytautas Magnus University is given **positive** evaluation.

Study field and second cycle assessment in points by evaluation areas

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

*1 (unsatisfactory) - the area does not meet the minimum requirements, there are fundamental shortcomings that prevent the implementation of the field studies.

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

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

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

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

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 (not applicable to HEIs operating in exile conditions)

(1) Factual situation

The SER states that '[t]he aim of the first cycle study programme Business Administration is to prepare a wide range of business management specialists who are able to critically, comprehensively and creatively assess and solve the challenges of managing various business organisations in a constantly changing Lithuanian and global business environment' (p. 15).

The SER states that '[t]he aim of the first cycle study programme of Logistics and Commerce is to prepare specialists in logistics and commerce who hold extensive expertise and who are able to apply the theoretical knowledge in business and management to the decision-making related to management and business organisation at the entities operating in logistics and commerce and who are able to develop competitive and socially responsible business in the domestic and international markets'.

The SER states that '[t]he aim of the second cycle study programme of Business Logistics is to prepare the specialists in business logistics to be able to creatively apply the findings of fundamental and applied research to innovative decision-making related to improvement and development of the bioeconomy sector and business logistics as well as the implementation thereof under the conditions of intensively changing business environment'.

The SER states that '[t]he aim of the second cycle study programme Business and Entrepreneurship is to provide professionals of business and management with entrepreneurial mindsets and skills for systemic management and development of modern organisations by integrating state-of-the-art functional business knowledge and creative solutions to complex problems in a dynamic business environment' .

The SER states that '[t]he aim of the second cycle study programme Sports Business Management is to prepare sports business management professionals for a wide scope of positions in sports organisations, ranging from management of professional clubs, businesses in sports-related industries to managing professional sports associations and other system-level bodies by providing advanced knowledge, systemic understanding and skills to initiate, form and implement strategies and decisions in different and major areas of contemporary sports business and management: marketing, finance, media and communication, law, strategy and economics' .

The students with whom the Expert Panel met, spoke well of the programmes in terms of the range of subjects undertaken and the access to lecturers.

Alumni and social partners spoke highly of the programmes and of the graduates. Several graduates, of both first and second cycles, spoke highly of the learning that they underwent on their programme. Employers were impressed by the readiness of students for the workplace.

The teaching staff strongly endorsed their workplace, their programmes and their students.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The strong endorsement by various stakeholders indicates that the aims and outcomes of the programmes at both first and second cycles conform well with the needs of industry and the labour market. Having moderated the content of the first and second cycle programmes, reviewed the aims and objectives and details of the programmes given in the SER document, and discussed the programmes with students, alumni and employers and other social partners, the view of the expert panel is that the first and second cycle programmes meet the needs of industry in particular and society more generally.

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

(1) Factual situation

The SER states that 'Vytautas Magnus University ... is a classical university based on the common beliefs and values of freedom, openness, and dialogue, and orientated towards humanistic culture...The University's Artes Liberales education profile, with core emphasis on studying broadly themed courses, ensures that the studies offered at VMU are comprehensive, they are not restricted to specialised, pre-defined courses. VMU's liberal study policy lets students themselves plan their studies by choosing general study courses and part of the study field courses. They also have the possibility to move from one study programme to another and change the form of studies'.

The SER also states that 'the aims and learning outcomes of the programmes are in compliance with VMU's aims to raise personalities, strengthen interdisciplinary study organisation experience, create conditions for the students to develop various professional skills and put them in practice through internships'.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

In the spirit of Artes Liberales, first cycle programmes contain a number of courses from outside the business studies field. Students undertake internships as part of their studies. Social partners have said that graduates as a result of their studies are well prepared for work in industry and well motivated to continually learn and develop. In the opinion of the expert panel programmes largely match with the aims of the university.

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

(1) Factual situation

The correspondence between first cycle programmes and the legal requirements of the Lithuanian Higher Education system are set out and demonstrated in a table in the SER. Similarly the SER contains a table which provides the correspondence between the second cycle programmes and legal requirements.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The two first cycle programmes comprise in total 210 ects (Logistics and Commerce) and 240 ects (Business Administration) and meet the legal requirement of either 180, 210 or 240 ects total credits. The two first cycle programmes comprise 130 ects (Business Administration) and 162 ects (Logistics and Commerce) for the study field which meets the minimum legal requirement of 120 ects. The final thesis comprises 15 credits for the two first cycle programmes meeting the legal requirement. The internship comprises of 15 ects (Business Administration) and 17 ects (Logistics and Commerce) which meets the minimum legal requirement of 15 credits. The opinion of the expert panel is that the two first cycle programmes meet legal requirements.

The three second cycle programmes each comprise total credits of 90 ects which matches the legal requirement of 90 ects in total credits. The three second cycle programmes comprise 72 ects (Business and Logistics) and 90 ects (Business and Entrepreneurship; Sports Business Management) for the study field itself which meets the minimum legal requirement of 60 ects for the study field itself. The final thesis for each of the three second cycle programmes comprises 30 ects which meets the minimum legal requirement of 30 ects for the final thesis. The opinion of the expert panel is that the three second cycle programmes meet the legal requirements.

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

(1) Factual situation

The correspondence between learning outcomes and courses of study for each of the two first cycle programmes is set out in two tables in the SER. Similarly, the correspondence between learning outcomes and the courses of study for each of the three second cycle programmes is demonstrated by three tables in the SER. Annex 3, submitted with the SER provides the detailed correspondence between learning outcomes met by each individual course of study within each of the five programmes. An example of the correspondence between programme learning outcomes and study methods and assessments for one course of study is set out in another table in the SER.

Members of the teaching team with whom the Expert Panel met, confirmed that the study committees ensure consistency of courses at programme level. They also indicated that learning outcomes are met by specific pieces of work within a course of study.

The Senior Management Team recognised that more work needed to be done to fully integrate the two faculties that provide programmes in the field of business. The SER Team confirmed that the process of integrating the two faculties is ongoing and will continue in 2022.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

Several of the learning outcomes are unclear and could be simplified (e.g. the first learning outcome for the Logistics and Commerce Programme “Expand the expertise to be able to determine the issues of human historicity, secularity and individual’s societal context, geopolitical circumstances of development of the mindset, and the processes of individualization under the conditions of globalization.” This learning outcome contains many different elements and it will be difficult to ensure that each element of the learning outcome has been met by students.

Processes to ensure consistency of courses within a programme appear to be in place. It is less clear that processes to ensure consistency across the same subject, but delivered by two different academic units, are in place. For example, an introductory course in macroeconomics is delivered by each of the two academic departments but these two courses have different learning outcomes.

Detail does not appear to be provided on which element or piece of work within a course of study is used to assess whether or not a learning outcome has been achieved. This makes it difficult to follow an audit trail to ensure that each programme learning outcome has been met for each student.

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

(1) Factual situation

The SER document states that ‘students, in their first cycle studies, acquire the basic knowledge and skills required to study business administration courses. Later, there is a gradual transition to the courses of the main study field. The consistency of courses in the study programme is based on the logical sequence of the programme learning outcomes.’ In early years of study students are introduced to fundamentals of different fields of study. Later years deal with more specific subjects. Students also take an internship in their second year of study where they can apply knowledge learnt at that stage. The final year thesis integrates student learning from theoretical and industry perspectives.

The Social Partners emphasised the readiness of graduates for the labour market. Graduates confirmed that their studies had fulfilled all their expectations. Employers emphasised that graduates were well prepared for working in industry. Several employers who were also graduates emphasised that “graduates were among the right people” and had developed strong bonds with each other. They also pointed out that graduates were strongly motivated and had not just got a grade but were prepared for ongoing learning.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The programmes of study provide a structured system of learning that takes students through fundamental learning at the beginning to the more integrative learning experience of the final

thesis at the end of the programme. Graduates appear to have gained a rounded education and a range of competences. There appears to be a consistent development of competence of students over the course of their study programme. In the opinion of the Expert Panel that there is consistent development of student competences over the course of their programme of studies.

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

(1) Factual situation

The SER indicates that, in accord with Artes Liberales principles, students on first cycle programmes take courses outside of their disciplinary area; students take a number of mandatory courses from Group A and a number of optional courses from Group B. The SER states that, in accordance with Artes Liberales principles, some students may be selected for individual or minor studies.

Students on the Business and Administration programme can take a number of optional courses in the field of sports management during their third and fourth years, which helps to prepare them for further studies at masters level.

No choice of courses is offered to students in two of the second cycle programmes (Business and Entrepreneurship and Sports Business Management). Students following the second cycle programmes have some level of choice over topics for assignments, essays and theses.

Students with whom the Expert Panel met, stated that they take a wide variety of courses. One student suggested that the variety is too wide and that students should take fewer courses from non-business areas, replacing these with business courses.

The Artes Liberales principles were rarely mentioned in any of the discussions with students, graduates, and social partners.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

Students have relatively limited choice over the courses they may take. However, students do take a broad range of courses covering a range of discipline areas within and outside of the business field. Students do not appear to be concerned about the restricted choice they have over courses. Employers find graduates to be well-rounded. The opinion of the Expert Panel is that students have sufficient opportunity to personalise their studies.

Students have the opportunity to take sports management courses in the first cycle and this learning can be continued in the second cycle Sports Business Management programme.

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

(1) Factual situation

The SER states that the 'Final Thesis of each study programme of the Business study field is related with all learning outcomes of the particular study programme'.

The alumni and social partners stated that they are involved in the thesis process, both in the selection of projects and in the defence of the thesis by the student. Social partners pointed out that theses often cover interesting or new topic areas and that the analysis contained within them can be novel and interesting.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

All first cycle and second cycle students complete a substantial thesis or equivalent major project. Theses are well regarded by industry representatives. Final theses were written in Lithuanian or in English. The theses moderated appeared to be competently presented and contained the expected elements of academic research namely literature, methodology, data collection, data analysis and discussion. Second level theses were more substantial than first level cycle theses. It is the opinion of the expert panel that final theses comply with field and cycle requirements.

Strengths and weaknesses of this evaluation area:

(1) Strengths:

1. Programmes produce capable and rounded graduates.
2. Programmes are strongly endorsed by Social Partners, Students and Teaching Staff.

(2) Weaknesses:

1. Two different and largely independent academic units are responsible for programmes in the business studies field leading to inconsistencies in delivery and outcomes.
2. Learning outcomes are overly complex and multifaceted i.e. contain multiple items and aspects (see example given in 3.1.4.(2) above). This makes it difficult to be sure that a learning outcome has been fully met, i.e. to make sure that all elements of an outcome are met. Simplifying the learning outcomes will make it easier to ensure that a learning outcome has been met as fewer elements need to be considered.

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

(1) Factual situation

The SER provides information about Scores of R&D. However, these scores need to be updated, given that the last figure reported was for 2019.

The meeting with the administrative staff revealed that through study programmes and faculty committees, and University board meetings, reports from departments, faculties and academic staff provide updated metrics and indicators of R&D activity on a monthly basis. The meeting with teaching staff confirmed the existence of a digital platform to report in real time their R&D activity and outputs.

The SER provides sufficient evidence that confirms R&D activities and outputs related to the fields of study analysed (e.g. overview of the key business researchers by their general area of expertise, their research activities and relationship to the content of the study programmes. This information was by the meeting with teaching staff, where it was explained that via the academic committees the academic staff make sure the research informs the content of their modules. Additionally, the internal policy of “you teach what you research” was mentioned by different members of the administrative and academic staff – as a guiding principle to ensure relevance and links between the content of the study programmes and the latest developments in science.

With respect to cooperation for the development of R&D with other HEI and external partners, the SER reports R&D activities including academic mobility (e.g. University of Trento; University of Extremadura) and related results in scientific publication.

Despite reference to joint ventures in R&D with another HEI and the report of participation in different international programmes and initiatives, it is not clear when these actions of R&D occurred as few of them are referenced with dates indicating the beginning and end of such R&D alliances, and there are few reports of tangible output (e.g. academic exchange/year; papers published/year).

The SER makes reference to the VMU research strategy for 2021–2027, making mention of the allocation of financial resources to research clusters at the University level on an annual basis. The meetings with the teaching staff and the administrative staff confirmed and developed the description of the financial viability of R&D activities, identifying four different sources of funding: State budget – via Ministry of Education; university budget; Faculty, and external grants and enterprise. Access to these resources is made through the R&D clusters.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

Mechanisms to report R&D activity and the generation of indicators and metrics to monitor and to provide insights of research activity are evident. However, better documentation and presentation of updated figures is necessary. R&D reports should have a critical analysis of results with reference to the R&D strategic plan – to monitor the achievement of R&D goals and improvements.

The SER and the different interviews provided abundant evidence of relevant scholarship, impact on society and industry with R&D activity that informs teaching. The R&D comprises both scientific and applied research, and such activity has been sustained in the period analysed across

the programs. Some of the areas in which the R&D activity reports impact are Logistics, Marketing, and Finance.

The R&D clusters also provide evidence of agility to engage in emerging trends and needs, also providing adaptability and opportunities for interdisciplinary R&D projects as evidenced by R&D initiatives like INTERREG, BIOEASTsUP.

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

(1) Factual situation

The SER makes reference to initiatives focused on practical knowledge and applied research (e.g., The Business Practice Centre). Also set out in the SER is a list of examples of contributions of R&D to academic programmes, with reference to publications made within the context of the existing link of research and teaching.

The meetings with students, and with teaching staff confirmed that a link between research and teaching is being promoted by tutors in the delivery of their modules, for instance advertising the results of their research in class, or inviting students to participate in their research activity related to the content of the module.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

Evidence of the link between research and the content of studies is presented in the SER and was confirmed during the interviews with different groups (students and teaching staff). This conclusion is supported by a sufficient and well documented number of examples of specific contributions of R&D to academic programs in the SER. Notable examples of Knowledge Transference (KT) from research to academia are the outputs of R&D projects like SELFORG, INNOSTRAT, and Smart Development of the Organisational Knowledge Ecosystem to modules on entrepreneurship and innovation. Also, advances in neuromarketing, destructive technologies, and search engine performance have informed and supported the development of unique and distinctive content on models related to marketing, just to mention some of the many and well documented R&D with impact on the study programs evaluated. More detail can be found in the SER, p.62-68.

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

(1) Factual situation

The SER describes the research requirements that students need to satisfy for their graduation. These requirements involve the production of research papers and dissertation, in some cases also including professional practice – with differences depending on the study programme. The SER also describes the involvement of students in other research activities like participating in conferences or in projects related to industry.

This was confirmed in the meeting with students who indicated that lecturers involved in research invite them to participate in their projects. Students also described the process to select the topic of their dissertations. In general, they made evident the existence of an “open door policy” to join R&D projects linking them also to professional practice. Despite the evidence of involvement of students in research and socialisation of research activities, no information about the percentage of students involved each year in these activities, trends, or relation with goals was given in the R&D strategic plan.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

Both the SER and the information collected in the interviews confirm compliance with the standards and practices for student involvement in R&D activities. However, the data is not reported giving account of the percentage of students participating in such activities on a yearly basis. A critical view of results would be desirable – perhaps making links with the R&D strategic plan.

Strengths and weaknesses of this evaluation area:

(1) Strengths:

1. Evident leadership for each research area
2. Good organisation (organic and adaptable) around R&D clusters.

(2) Weaknesses:

1. Inconsistent and incomplete documented control (records, metrics, indicators) of the participation of Students in R&D activities
2. Lack of documentation of evidence of the incidence of research in the content of academic programmes.
3. Documentation of the activity of research clusters is inconsistent and not consolidated/centralised.

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

(1) Factual situation

Information on the admission procedures is provided on the university's and the faculty's websites. Printed booklets, university fairs, “University Open Doors”, “University Day of Schoolchildren”, “Days of Faculty of Economics and Management” or visits to secondary schools in Lithuania and other media are also listed as potential sources of information for prospective

students. Students can also obtain information from the Marketing and Communication Department and the relevant departments at VMU. Information about the second cycle study programmes is disseminated among target groups by informing alumni of the BA programmes and communication with colleges and social partners. In the SER, it is also noted that in the Business Logistics programme, more than 50% of students come from colleges and continue with the MA programme.

There are different admission procedures in place for first cycle and second cycle studies. Admission to first cycle programmes is centralised in Lithuania and therefore carried out by the Association of Higher Education Institutions of Lithuania for the Organization of Centralized Admission (LAMA BPO). Furthermore, the admission procedure differs for Lithuanian and international students. Applications for all international students are centralised at VMU and carried out by the International Cooperation Department.

Further criteria for VMU students in the first cycle programmes are outlined in the “Rules for Admission to VMU Undergraduate and Integrated Studies in 2021“. In order to select eligible students, a score is calculated, which takes into account the applicants’ school grades (Mathematics, Lithuanian language and literature, History or Informational technologies or Geography or a Foreign language and any other subject) and the evaluation of national and school exams into consideration.

For second cycle applicants, requirements are set in the “Rules for Admission of Students to VMU Full-time and Part-time Master's Studies in 2021“. The application procedure and the calculation of applicants’ scores differs depending on the study programme, on the first cycle degrees of applicants.

Second cycle applicants with degrees from different universities or different fields may be required to complete additional studies.

For Business Logistics, additional studies are published and offered every year. According to the SER, an average of 50.7% of second cycle applicants in Business Logistics are VMU graduates, which leaves just less than 50% of applicants who may be required to complete additional studies. Applicants may be exempted if they have completed a bachelor’s degree and have at least one year of practical experience in the field of business.

For Business and Entrepreneurship and Sports Business Management, additional studies are not required for applicants who hold a bachelor’s degree in Business, Management, Marketing, Economics, Finance, Accounting, Communication, Political Science, Psychology, Sociology, Public Administration and Journalism. Applicants from other fields may be required to complete additional studies, but can be admitted prior to completing the required courses. The additional courses need to be completed within the first semester of the master’s programme.

The number of applicants in the first and second cycle study programmes appear to be fairly stable, although it is noted in the SER that there is a general trend, caused by external factors, that has led to a decrease in applicants.

(2) *Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

Information about the first and second cycle programmes and the admission criteria appears to be readily available for potential applicants and VMU effectively distributes information on its business programmes to the relevant target groups. The selection procedure appears to be rather complex in the second cycle programme, as it greatly differs, depending on the applicants' previous education, but VMU provided a detailed outline explaining the differences. The Expert Panel confirms the student selection and admission criteria and process are suitable for the admission of students.

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

(1) Factual situation

VMU was granted the right to carry out its own recognition procedures for foreign qualifications by the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport of the Republic of Lithuania in 2017. The recognition of foreign qualifications are conducted centrally by the International Cooperation Department, which adheres to national regulations.

The Description of the Procedure for Recognition of Learning Outcomes regulates the recognition of partial learning outcomes. These procedures are decentralised and initially assessed by the International Cooperation Department or organised by the Faculty of Economics and Management. Partial learning outcomes are transferred into ECTS points according to pre-agreed equivalents in order to be recognised by VMU. Recognition procedures for partial studies can be carried out for prospective students, as well as currently enrolled students at VMU.

Credits earned via an academic mobility programme are recognised in correspondence with a learning agreement.

Students can also request the recognition of non-formal and informal learning experiences and competences. This includes voluntary work, internships, courses, seminars, projects, etc. These procedures are regulated via the VMU Study Regulations, Description of the Procedure for Assessment and Recognition of Competences Acquired through Non-Formal and Informal Education. These learning experiences can be determined as corresponding with the learning outcomes for a study course in the study programme and can consequently be recognized. In the Entrepreneurship programme, practical experience was recognized for 22 applicants in 2019 and for 6 applicants in 2020. Due to the *Artes Liberales* approach at VMU, students from other universities can only transfer to the first cycle programme up to the 2nd year of studies.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The Expert Panel confirms that the different types of recognition of foreign qualifications, partial studies and non-formal or informal learning are clearly outlined and appear sufficient. This is demonstrated by successful application of the procedures for various students who have been awarded credit for prior learning..

3.3.3. Evaluation of conditions for ensuring academic mobility of students

(1) Factual situation

VMU is part of the Erasmus network, has non-European partner institutions and provides opportunities through the Erasmus+ programme. The university has 487 partner institutions within the European Union and EEA/candidate countries and 115 partner institutions outside the European Union for one semester or one year, of which 150 VMU students and graduates take advantage each year. However, no specific information on the field of business was provided. In Business Administration, 57, 40 and 20 international students were approved for programmes in 2019/20, 2020/2021 and 2021/22, respectively. In Logistics and Commerce, 17 candidates were approved in 2019/20 and 10 in 2020/21, while no students were approved in 2021/22, despite 18 applications. In the second cycle programme, 15, 27 and 9 candidates were approved in 2019/20, 2020/21 and 2021/22 for Business and Logistics and 16, 17 and 14 in Sports and Business Management. Only 10-45% of all approved applicants started their studies abroad. VMU has rejected candidates, because of poor English skills, "low motivation and unsuitable prior education". However, the main reason for not attending study-abroad programmes after having been accepted were due to rejected visa applications.

VMU also offers short-term mobility programmes from 1-3 months for internships via mobility scholarships at different companies, and 2-6 months long internships in Lithuanian education schools, Lithuanian communities and Lithuanian studies centres abroad. According to the SER, the number of students taking advantage of the possibilities to study or work abroad, are the highest in the Business Administration programme. In the second cycle programmes, the number of students participating in mobility programmes is much lower, which is most likely related to a higher number being already employed. According to the SER, students in the business programmes are especially interested in Erasmus+ programmes, providing students with international job opportunities.

VMU provides students with information on mobility programmes through various channels, including the International Cooperation Department and the Faculty international coordinator, VMU Erasmus days and social media.

At the virtual site-visit, students stated that they were aware of the possibilities to study abroad but noted that many students were employed and that it was difficult to combine employment and participating in a study abroad programme. The SER team noted that they were aware of the issue but are working towards encouraging students to take on possibilities to study abroad for shorter periods of time, such as the internship programmes.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

VMU provides several opportunities for its own students to study abroad and also has a considerable number of international students in its programmes. Due to several students in the business field already being employed, however, not too many students are able to utilise the opportunities for academic mobility.

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

(1) Factual situation

For academic and study organisation support and counselling, the staff of the faculty and academic administration are available on a daily basis for students. According to VMU study regulations, every teaching staff member has to spend 20 academic hours per semester consulting students on course related issues, such as homework or individual or group work assignments. Individual counselling on study choices and their continuation. Consulting can occur in person or virtually.

The dean, vice-deans, the head of study departments and members of SPCs meet with students periodically, to discuss issues that are related to study and career opportunities.

Financial support for students at VMU is regulated by the “Description of Procedure for Tax Exemption and Compensation” and the “Description of Procedure for Compensation for Tuition Fees”. Students have the opportunity to request a delayed payment of their tuition fees or accommodation fees with a sufficiently reasoned request to the rector. Students can also receive partial support or full reimbursement through the “Description of Procedures for Tax Exemption and Compensation” for attending scientific conferences, seminars or other events related to their studies, in which they represent the university or if the event is in another way related to the university.

Students can receive financial support through the “VMU Student Affairs Department”, and through social and motivational scholarships, for accommodation fees and a release from tuition fees.

There are different types of scholarships. Social scholarships are rewarded based on the social and financial status of students, while motivational scholarships are awarded for academic achievements. VMU also has other scholarships, such as patronage scholarships, honour scholarships, Rector’s nominal scholarships, J. Smilgevičius scholarships and scholarships by various programmes. For psychological support, students can visit VMU Psychology Clinics, for free-of-charge counselling with a psychologist. Counselling can also be organised virtually.

Since 2019, VMU offers extracurricular activities for students’ personal development, which includes different types of social activities. The VMU Student Representative Council also provides social support for students, by representing students and interests and by organising social and cultural events.

Further support is provided through the VMU Career Centre, which provides consultations and seminars on career planning, organises meetings with alumni of the business field and informs students on job openings.

At the site visit, senior management assured the review panel of the adequacy of facilities and resources for students with different types of disabilities. VMU has special social scholarships and adequate facilities for students with physical disabilities, also for those who are unable to read. They stated that faculty were ready for students with disabilities and that current students were truly integrated at VMU.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

VMU provides a wide range of different forms of academic, financial, social, psychological and personal support for students, as well as support for students with disabilities. The different types of support were outlined in detail and appear to be adequate and effective.

3.3.5 Evaluation of the sufficiency of study information and student counselling

(1) Factual situation

VMU has three main strategies to inform new students in the first cycle programme. They can receive general information through the university-wide event “Introduction to Studies”. There is also an introductory week for new students, which includes staff presentations, opportunities to learn foreign languages and to study abroad, Student Council and academic clubs’ presentations, information on the use of library resources and campus facilities. At a Faculty Day, first-year students in first cycle programmes are provided with the opportunity to receive information on their specific programmes in more detail, such as aims, learning outcomes, links to the labour market and job opportunities. The events are joined by the deans, vice-deans, heads of departments, heads of SPCs and administrators to provide consulting opportunities for students.

For potential second cycle students, an “Information week” is organised to provide information on opportunities to apply for second cycle programmes at VMU. For the past two years, second cycle students have been able to attend introductory information meetings on the first day of their studies, at which general information on VMU and on the relevant programmes is provided.

The SER states that the most valuable support for students in the business field comes from administrators and faculty in the business programme. The support offered to students has received good evaluations, which have reached 4 out of 5 and 3.5 out of 4 points in the past. A survey conducted with graduates of first and second cycle programmes between 2020-21 showed similar results, although information on internship opportunities was rated slightly lower at 3.28 points out of 4 for first cycle graduates, compared to 3.71 points for second cycle graduates.

Another important resource is the VMU website, which has become more important since the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The SER indicates that the administrators for the business programmes hold meetings with first cycle students and the coordinator of administration of the studies, the head of SPC, and the dean twice per semester. The meetings with part-time students and remote students are held online. The meetings discuss key issues with students and assess their opinions.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

VMU has several different means and strategies to provide information to students in the business field. There are some differences in communicating with full-time and part-time students and those on the first cycle and second cycle programmes. More information on the

differences between full-time and part-time programmes would be useful to enable students to assess the programmes better and to evaluate the delivery of programmes in full and part-time mode to establish which best suits their interests and needs.

Strengths and weaknesses of this evaluation area:

(1) Strengths:

1. The close support provided by academic staff in terms of guidance on the subject areas and assessments together with effective personal support and guidance.

(2) Weaknesses:

1. The opportunities for academic mobility could be increased by focusing on short-term opportunities that allow for students who are already employed to spend time abroad.
2. The delivery of programmes in full and part-time mode could be further evaluated to establish which best suits the interests and needs of students.

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

(1) Factual situation

Study programmes in the Business field are organised in full-time and part-time study modes. Studies can be organised face-to-face, blended or by distance learning. The teaching and learning process includes theoretical, practical, and independent work.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, lectures were given remotely, and both teachers and students confirmed that the process was organised smoothly. Information gained during the Expert Panel's online site visit confirmed that the classes are efficiently provided in the virtual learning environment by using Office 365 Teams, Adobe Connect and BigBlueButton video conference tools, as well as Moodle. Teachers confirmed that they received support and methodological recommendations on how to adapt their courses to distant learning mode, prepare for online learning, etc. A distance learning environment user guide has been prepared for students, based on their requests.

Teachers organise lectures and seminars using various study methods: case studies, problem-oriented cases, practical tasks, discussions. As presented in the SER, problem-based learning is used in many courses - students participate in hackathons, and business organisations provide

real cases for students to solve. This is good practice and facilitates achievement of the learning outcomes of the programmes both on first and second cycle.

Students and alumni expressed their satisfaction with guest speakers (business representatives) coming to classes, visits to the companies, presentations of industry experts in-house, as they get acquainted with the latest achievements in science, and can connect theoretical knowledge with market practices and learn how to apply them in practice. Social partners were also involved in the development of the study programme Sports Management. Although the visits at the companies were suspended due to the transition to distance study mode as a result of COVID-19, communication with the social partners has been developed remotely.

As stated in SER, at the beginning of the semester, students of each study course are introduced in detail to the course tasks and their assessment criteria for each level of achievement. For this purpose, every semester, teachers prepare a study course guide, which provides much more detailed information than the description of the study course.

Assessment methods are usually selected by teaching staff. These methods include midterm, exams, tests, homework and teamwork assignments, research projects, oral presentations and defence, and examination.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The information obtained from the SER and received during the site visit demonstrates that the learning process takes into account the students' needs and enables students to achieve the learning outcomes. Studies can be organised in a face to face, blended or distant way. Active implementation of problem-based learning and other practice oriented study methods into the study process allow to better facilitate achievement of learning outcomes of the programmes and to meet market expectations for graduates' knowledge, skills and abilities in the labour market.

Social partners are actively involved in the development of VMU programmes, they participate in guest lectures, invite students to visit their companies, provide business cases for analysis, etc.

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

(1) Factual situation

As presented in the SER, the VMU disability policy – University of Inclusive Opportunities – is focused on increasing the accessibility of studies and work by properly adapting study and working conditions for VMU community members with disabilities. The VMU Disability Coordinator is responsible for the preparation, planning, implementation, monitoring and publicity of the Policy on Inclusive Opportunities pursued by the University. The Coordinator is also responsible for providing consultations for all the members of the University community with disabilities and for planning and organising the inclusion programme at the University.

Socially vulnerable groups (orphans, people with disabilities, students from large families, from families receiving social benefits and from low-income families) and students with special needs

are given the opportunity to study according to an individual study schedule. These studies are regulated by VMU Description of the Procedure for Providing the Individual Study Schedule. Socially vulnerable groups receive different discounts for tuition or dormitory fees; scholarships are provided for these students.

The VMU buildings, as well as other facilities, are fully adapted to the needs of students with disabilities. The study process is organised according to individual needs of students, individual counselling is provided, when necessary.

During the self-assessment period there are two students with disabilities in study programme Business Administration and two more in the study programme Logistics and Commerce and study programme Business Logistics. As mentioned in SER, these students are successfully studying together with other students.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

Based on the information provided in the SER and the evidence obtained during discussion with the faculty management, the Expert Panel believes that the conditions ensuring access to study for students with special needs and socially vulnerable groups are sufficient and effectively support them during their studies. Students can study according to an individual study schedule, and are advised on a variety of issues by a disability coordinator.

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

(1) Factual situation

The monitoring of student learning progress is regulated by VMU Study Regulations and the Description of Procedure for Student Learning Achievement Monitoring and Assistance. In the programmes in the Business field, monitoring of students' progress and achievements is the responsibility of teachers, administrators for graduate and undergraduate studies, Heads of Departments and the Vice-dean for Studies. Student progress is systematically monitored within each semester for the purpose of identifying problems and seeking to resolve them.

Students can self-monitor their progress in their studies and follow the processes of studies: register for studies, amend their study plans, observe evaluations of their own learning and make improvements, mark the mastered topics in Moodle course pages, get acquainted with results of surveys for quality improvements, use Moodle tools (i.e., Progress bar, Digital badges), etc.

Students confirm that the feedback on their progress is provided immediately (e.g. after the presentation in class), or in Moodle (feedback on homeworks, assignments, etc.), after midterm and final exams (consultation with a teacher). Other ways of providing feedback to students include different online forms: MS Teams meetings, Moodle chat, Facebook messenger, email, discussion forums, and other communication environments that are convenient for students. Both students and teachers emphasise the friendly and open style of communication.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The Expert Panel confirms that the monitoring of the students' study progress and feedback to students to promote self-assessment and subsequent planning of study progress is systemic and sufficient.

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

(1) Factual situation

As stated in the SER, the main sources to evaluate the employability of graduates and graduate career tracking are external and internal data. External data covers statistics provided by the magazine "Rankings", Government Strategic Analysis Centre (STRATA), career portal karjera.lt, and the Employment Service. However, karjera.lt does not provide data about employment of second cycle of study programmes Business and Entrepreneurship and Sports Business Management.

Each year the VMU Career Centre performs an online survey for alumni, one year after their graduation. The focus of attention is their current work situation. Graduates are requested to give their opinion on how satisfied they are with their current career situation and what has been most useful at the University for preparing for their career. Alumni are also asked to evaluate VMU's contribution to their preparation for the labour market. It should be noted that there is no data about employment of graduates of study programmes Business and Entrepreneurship and Sports Business Management due to passivity of filling the questionnaires.

The results of the EXIT survey, conducted by VMU Career Centre, show that in 2020 40% of the first cycle graduates stated that their work is directly related to studies and 44% specified it as partially related, in 2021 respectively, 33% as directly related and 45% as partially related. 43% of the second cycle graduates in 2020 specified that their work is directly related to studies and 30% named it as partially related, in 2021 respectively, 47% as directly related and 29% as partially related.

Alumni confirmed that at least once a year meetings are organised, where graduates introduce their work experience, relevance of acquired knowledge and skills to current students. VMU has signed cooperation agreements with different social partners, including commitments to inform about job positions. Social partners are actively involved in the development of specific programmes, they can suggest topics for the final theses, participate in the thesis defence procedure, they are also invited as guest lecturers or may be asked to provide real business cases for students to study.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

During the experts' site visit, graduates confirmed that they are satisfied with the knowledge they have obtained and that their studies have ensured high employability. Former students confirmed that they feel happy and have enough practical skills, knowledge and have successful careers for various working areas in the business sector. Annual and direct contacts with

graduates and social partners help to ensure the study programmes are up-to-date for labour market needs.

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

(1) Factual situation

The principles of integrity are defined in the VMU Statute, the Code of Ethics of VMU, The Plagiarism Prevention Procedures of VMU and VMU Study Regulations.

All students and teachers of first and second cycle study programmes in Business are provided with access to specialised plagiarism detection software (through the VMU library) to enable them to check written papers before submission/evaluation. All Final Thesis of first and second cycle students are checked for plagiarism using iThenticate or Oxsico software before their public defence. In cases when plagiarism detection software shows more than 10% of similarities, each case is analysed individually, and the final decision is made by the Faculty Plagiarism Prevention Commission.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The Expert Panel confirms that there are sufficient policies to ensure academic integrity, tolerance and non-discrimination. VMU focuses attention on the issues and consequences of plagiarism, fraud, and academic dishonesty. Students are informed about disciplinary measures, tools for detection of plagiarism, and accepted practices.

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

(1) Factual situation

Procedures for appeals and complaints of the study process are regulated by VMU Description of Procedure for Appeal Investigation, The Plagiarism Prevention Procedures of VMU, and VMU Study Regulations.

Students have the right to make appeals regarding the assessment of learning achievements or assessment procedures when they disagree with the teacher's assessment and/or identify the violation of assessment procedures. The appeal commission is assigned, and it analyses the information related to the appeal. It makes a decision within 5 days of the appeal receipt. As Thesis are defended in public and evaluated by a Defence Committee, a student is eligible to appeal regarding the defence procedure but not the evaluation.

During the analysed period no appeals regarding evaluation of exam, other assignments or thesis defence procedure were submitted in either first or second cycle study programmes in Business field, except for Business Logistics programme where a student appealed Final Master Thesis grade in 2020.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The Expert Panel confirms that the procedures for the submission and examination of appeals and complaints regarding the study process are in place and appropriate.

Strengths and weaknesses of this evaluation area:

(1) Strengths:

1. High employment rate of graduates.
2. The evidence of social partners involvement in the development of specific programmes (e.g. sports management).
3. Annual and direct contacts with graduates and social partners make the study programmes up to date for labour market needs.

(2) Weaknesses:

1. Participation rate in surveys in respect of graduates and employment could be increased.
2. The participation of social partners in the supervision of the final thesis could be further increased.

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

(1) Factual situation

Based on the materials supplied by VMU, there are 56 teachers at the university who teach courses in business. 50 of them (representing 89%) are permanent teachers according to established criteria that require them to work at VMU for at least 3 years and have more than 0.5 FTE (full-time equivalent) workload.

The student to teacher ratio is slightly higher in first cycle studies compared to second cycle studies for two reasons cited by the university. Firstly there are more taught subjects and teachers in the programmes that are not from the field of business due to the specifics of first-cycle studies. Secondly, the scope and objectives of the programmes, as well as the applied study methods, make it possible to teach larger groups of students in the same class in first-cycle studies compared to second-cycle studies.

The ratios presented by VMU are: for first cycle programmes in 2019: 12,2; in 2020: 9,5 and in 2021: 8,2. For second cycle programmes the ratios are: 2019: 5,6; 2020: 5,2; 2019: 6,4 In some

programmes (the first-cycle Business Administration programme and all second-cycle programmes) the panel sees only minor fluctuations. In the first cycle of the Logistics and Business programme, the student-to-teacher ratio decreased more than in other programmes, mainly due to a decrease in the number of students. In the second cycle of study, the number of students increased from 2020 to 2021 in all three programmes, and therefore the average student-to-teacher ratio increased correspondingly from 5,2 to 6,4.

The teaching experience of academic staff in the field of business ranks from 2 to 40 years with an average value of 9.5 years.

The majority of permanent teachers work full-time at the university. 11 of them have administrative positions in the faculty and 7 have administrative positions in the University (these include the Marketing and Communication Department, Centre for Business Practice, Centre for Business and Social Partnerships). Most of them combine teaching and working in a professional field. Practical teaching practice prevails from 2 to 25 years with an average value of 7.5 years. Among the teachers are business consultants, senior specialists, project managers, sales directors, CEOs of companies which helps to ensure that the latest real-world knowledge and experience is transferred to the classroom. VMU believes this close relationship between teaching and practice is particularly important in the field of business, where innovation and new experiences are constantly evolving.

Teacher-practitioners in the field of business can be put into two more groups. There are teachers who are not scientists and do not conduct research. In the second group there are 8 teachers-practitioners who are full-time scientists or studying a PhD at VMU. In addition, they also carry out practical activities in business. All 8 teach only in first-cycle programmes.

The composition of the staff involved in teaching is regulated by the General Requirements for the Provision of Studies. First-cycle degree programmes have only one requirement: "at least 50 percent of first-cycle undergraduate degree programmes in the field should be delivered by a scientist." For the study of the second cycle, there are two requirements for teaching staff: "no less than 80 percent of the courses of the second cycle of university study subjects in the field should be supplied by scientists" and "in the fields of study there should be no less than 20% of professors". All programmes in the business field meet these requirements.

In the Sports Business Management degree programme, 47% of teachers have the position of professor, as this includes visiting, or guest professors, to support the changing environment of the programme and the specific proposals of students.

The hours of contact work with students are determined on the basis of normative workload (for 1 full-time position): in the fields of humanities, social sciences and arts, for a professor it is – 550 hours, for an associate professor – 600 hours, for a lecturer – 650 hours, and for an assistant – 700 contact working hours per year.

There are four degree programmes in Business that are taught in English – Business Administration, Logistics and Entrepreneurship (First Cycle), Business Logistics and Business Management (Second Cycle). One programme in business is also taught in Russian – Logistics and

Business (first cycle). All business teachers know one or more foreign languages (English, Russian, Polish). The main languages are English and Russian, and most teachers can lead courses in them. The English language standard of all teachers who work in the Business Field is at least B2. The Russian language of teachers working in the Logistics and Trade programme is also not lower than B2. From the faculty's point of view, in order to ensure good language skills of teachers in classes taught in English, we have different people in the same courses for the Lithuanian and English classes.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The extensive pedagogical and practical experience of teachers and the required competencies in the field of business, together with the expectation that faculty should have good language qualifications enables practical knowledge and experience to be integrated into the study process, together with research based data from the projects faculty are undertaking. The programmes are taught by staff whose professional qualifications are adequately distributed among professors, associate professors and assistant professors. The Expert Panel concludes that the number, qualifications and competence of the teaching staff within the field study programmes is appropriate and supports students to achieve the learning outcomes. The integration of theory and practice into the curriculum is ongoing.

3.5.2. Evaluation of conditions for ensuring teaching staffs' academic mobility (not applicable to studies carried out by HEIs operating under the conditions of exile)

(1) Factual situation

Every VMU teacher has the opportunity to take advantage of the Erasmus+ programme. They can undertake complete Erasmus+ teaching placements at VMU partner universities in the EU and EEA/candidate countries (487 partner institutions) or outside the EU (115 partner institutions). Under normal conditions (non-pandemic period), about 200 VMU teachers accept the possibility of teaching mobility per year.

Teaching staff can also undertake Erasmus+ (Skills Development) training by visiting any institution or organisation (including other higher education institutions) in the EU as well as in the EEA/candidate countries or any partner university outside the EU. Under normal conditions (non-pandemic period), approximately 180 VMU employees participate in employee mobility for training purposes per year.

In addition to teaching assignments, there are also mobility opportunities in relation to research interests: research internships, participation in conferences, seminars, workshops. There is an extensive list of partner institutions, which is reviewed and renewed annually. Teachers can also use this network for their research interests.

There are university and state funds where teachers can apply for funding for their mobility needs. Travel, attendance and accommodation costs may be covered in whole or in part.

The total number of foreign visits reached 68 in 2019, which amounts to 1.4 visits per permanent teacher in the field of Business Studies. International activities include teaching and training visits with Erasmus+ (52 contracts signed in the field of business, by VMU), international conferences, international project meetings or global faculty network events with partners (e.g. within the formats of the European University Foundation Campus Europae or Eduniversal). Due to the pandemic, the number of visits abroad was small in 2020 and 2021 (4-9 per year), but teachers were able to participate in distance learning programmes.

Over the past three years, about 54% of permanent teaching staff from business courses have participated in various academic mobility events. The average of 3 years is 19.6 visits per year or about 50% of teaching staff of business courses in a given year. This was mainly an Erasmus+ exchange, where teachers also developed contacts with colleagues teaching the same courses, discussed teaching methods, literary resources, participation in conferences and seminars for disseminating research results, etc. Some teaching staff also attended intensive Sports Business Management sessions abroad.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The Panel confirms that the conditions for ensuring teaching staff's mobility is sufficient and is supported financially by the University through various exchange programmes and agreements with EU and EEA Universities. This is evidenced by the level of international mobility of academic staff in the field of business (54%). However, fewer members of the teaching staff were able to take part in mobility opportunities during the pandemic, but did participate in distance learning opportunities. The Panel recommends that VMU continues to encourage staff to take up mobility opportunities and that those participating in scientific work present their scientific research at national and international conferences.

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

(1) Factual situation

The professional development of teachers is regulated by the Description of professional development progress at VMU (2018). A teacher's professional development activities and achievements are evaluated every five years

Teachers can undertake professional development in the following eight areas of competence: University didactic, digital, research, management, foreign language, intercultural, course related, personal. They can attend courses at VMU (which are free of charge) or participate in training organised by other Lithuanian or international institutions. Financial support from their departments or research clusters can be requested, or teachers can use Erasmus+.

About ninety percent of teachers in the business field were actively involved in courses run by the Institute of Innovative Studies of VMU during 2020 and 2021. These include all aspects of distance learning,

The requirements for staff development are assessed through feedback from course participants and through the VMU teachers' survey which includes requests for future professional development. The University administration may also initiate training programmes in response to feedback from students and other stakeholders.

In the last 3 years, there have been 8.4 training and competence development events per person which have included business events, training, seminars, webinars, conferences, workshops, etc. The topics covered include human resource management, e-commerce, digital marketing, logistics, time management, coaching, leadership, change management, business planning and entrepreneurship.

Although the pandemic has limited in-person training and participation, it has opened up opportunities to attend different events online and has allowed the use of different IT tools and software. During the pandemic, teachers have participated remotely in conferences, congresses, forums, schools, internships in Lithuania and abroad.

VMU offers all teachers the opportunity to study any foreign language they wish for free. The Institute of Foreign Languages also offers special training for teachers and scientists, which is usually held in January, when regular lectures for students are not organized. Business teachers visit them regularly. Most teachers are able to deliver their courses in Lithuanian and English

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The Expert Panel confirms that the conditions to improve the competences of teaching staff are effective and robust. Professional development of the teaching staff is considered essential by the University and in recent years a significant number of academic staff have improved their teaching qualifications. At the end of each year teachers submit a report on their professional development for the previous twelve months which enables VMU to oversee the development of their personal, practical, pedagogical, and subject based competences.

Strengths and weaknesses of this evaluation area:

(1) Strengths:

1. Teaching staff are generally well qualified and there is a link between what they teach and their research fields and/or practical experience in business.
2. The language skills of the teachers are at an above-average level.

(2) Weaknesses:

1. Although staff are increasing their visibility nationally and internationally in terms of presenting their research outputs, there is room for further expansion in this area to raise the profile of the University.

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

(1) Factual situation

VMU has a prestigious campus based in Kaunas. The University has 222 classrooms each of which can accommodate between 5 and 150 students. The Grand Hall can accommodate up to 725 students. The general courses for the programmes in the Business Field are delivered in the central buildings. There are 46 computer rooms which students can access for study purposes. Multimedia and presentation equipment is available in teaching rooms.

The resources for the business field are in two faculties – the Faculty of Economics and Management (FEM) and the Faculty of Bioeconomy Development (FBD). This includes specialist rooms such as the Idea Development and Design Laboratory and the Neuromarketing Laboratory in FEM. Administrative and academic support are available in both faculties.

The library is structured into faculties, but staff and students can use the resources in any faculty. The Bloomberg database has recently been added to the library's electronic resources which include Academic Search Complete and Business Source Complete. Access is provided to a range of relevant e-journals and e-text books. Training courses are available to assist students in accessing material relevant to their research. The library website provides information about all the library collections.

Facilities to support students with disabilities have been built into the classrooms and library. This includes lifts and ten adjustable workspaces in the library. Classes are timetabled to meet the needs of individual students in terms of access to the accommodation. VMU monitors the experience of students with disabilities.

The university provides staff and students with collaborative software to support both face-to-face learning and a virtual learning environment. This includes Microsoft Teams, Outlook, Adobe Connect and Moodle. The virtual learning environment was further developed during the pandemic to support both students and staff with online learning. It now supports a hybrid of distant learning and blended learning. During the pandemic staff and students were given access to cloud software which is particularly relevant to the business field. This included SPSS and Adobe Creative

The team examined three modules/courses on moodle and confirmed that the platform contains detailed and helpful information about each course. This includes a lecture schedule, key texts, lecture presentations, additional reading and videos of meetings with social partners. Students

indicated that they use moodle for all their courses and the information posted by their tutors effectively supports their learning and assessment.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The Expert Panel found that the physical, informational and financial resources for the Business Field support an effective learning process. Students and staff confirmed that the physical resources at the university are modern and up-to-date and support the learning process. They are particularly suitable and appropriate for problem based and interactive learning. Similarly the informational and financial resources effectively support learning.

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

(1) Factual situation

The University has recently renovated its buildings to ensure that they meet health and safety requirements and that they provide a pleasant environment in which to study. The resources have been upgraded and enable students to effectively work in teams. This includes the Magnus eSports space where masters students can work with social partners – applying what they have learned during their studies to real event planning. The expert team believes this is an area of good practice.

About 20% of computers are upgraded annually and multimedia equipment is purchased in accordance with plans submitted by faculties. Specialist equipment and software licences have been purchased for the Business Field with funding from the project “Extensive university development in the context of University transformation”.

The library faculty curators liaise with teaching staff, and faculty councils regarding the need for additional electronic and printed resources and these are ordered by the library. Teachers can use the interactive document ordering service on the library website to request additional resources for their courses and programmes.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

Students and staff confirmed that the physical resources are regularly renovated and provide a comfortable environment in which to learn. There are regular updates to the library stock of printed and electronic material. The ordering system is simple and faculty can request new text books which the library orders. The library is proactive in suggesting new texts and electronic resources to faculty. The Expert Panel confirms that the evaluation of the planning and upgrading of resources needed to carry out the field studies is effective and supportive.

Strengths and weaknesses of this evaluation area:

(1) Strengths:

2. Students are provided with a high quality physical environment in which to learn, and the facilities are fully supportive of those with disabilities.

3. The Magnus eSports space where students following the masters programme in Sports Management, can work with social partners – applying what they have learned to real event planning.
4. Students and staff have access to a wide range of relevant electronic databases and printed texts.
5. Specialist software is provided to support collaborative and problem-based learning

(2) Weaknesses:

1. It is not apparent that students are asked to give feedback on the resources available and this may be an enhancement to the role of stakeholders which VMU may wish to consider.

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

(1) Factual situation

The processes and procedures for managing quality and public information are set out in five VMU quality documents which are available on the VMU website. These have all recently been updated.

Two faculties are involved in the delivery of programmes in the Business Field (The Faculty of Economics and Management [FEM] and the Faculty of Business Development [FBD]) and the University is currently coordinating the processes for quality management across the two faculties to implement a consistent approach.

Overall responsibility for quality management lies with the Senate and Rector's Council. The deliberative committee structure of the two faculties provides for the Academic Councils to oversee quality matters and for the Study Programme Committees (SPC) to coordinate quality at the operation level.

In respect of the management structure – Deans of Faculty and Heads of Departments are responsible for ensuring that quality is effectively managed and monitored in line with the procedures and processes implemented by the Study Quality Unit.

Study programmes are ratified by the Senate. The Rector's Council is responsible for setting the norms of academic workload, drafting procedures and study regulations, allocating resources and considering tuition fees.

The SPCs meet monthly and are responsible for the development and evaluation of study programmes and for formulating quality improvement plans. Membership of the SPC includes the Head of the Programme, teachers, a social partner, a graduate and students. SPC members are represented on the Academic Councils of the two faculties.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The procedures and processes for the management of quality are defined and well documented in handbooks and manuals. Staff were able to describe the processes. However, the expert team found the processes and procedures to be overly complex, involving different structures within the two faculties. Although some work has been done to ensure there is consistency in the management of quality across the two faculties involved in the delivery of programmes, the processes are not yet fully aligned, and further harmonisation of the processes would be beneficial to all stakeholders. For example, two different Councils within the FBD consider various aspects of the quality of the programme, whilst in the FEM, it is the Academic Council which considers the recommendations made by the SPC. Furthermore, the Deans manage the process and there may be a need for other members of the faculty to be responsible for certain aspects of quality. The Expert Team recommends VMU continues to review the processes for managing quality across the two faculties to ensure they are consistent, collaborative and collegial.

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

(1) Factual situation

Students, Social Partners and Teachers are encouraged to contribute to the evaluation of programmes both informally and formally. Teachers invite students to give their views on the content and quality of teaching during the semester. Social partners review the curriculum and make suggestions for development of the programme through the SPC.

VMU is attempting to increase the involvement of its stakeholders through questionnaires, interviews, conversations and roundtable discussions.

A variety of surveys are used to gather feedback about the University, the programme, courses and teaching. At the end of each semester students are asked to complete a survey evaluating the teaching, feedback they have received about their assessments, and content of the courses. They are also asked to evaluate their own learning through the completion of various assessment tasks and their attendance. First year students are surveyed about their reasons for choosing their programme and whether or not it has met their expectations. An exit survey is completed by graduates regarding career preparation and the final thesis and alumni are asked about their role in the labour market. Employers are surveyed about internships and the suitability of graduates for the labour market. A survey for teachers enables them to make suggestions about teaching, professional development and working conditions. Other specialist surveys are implemented, as required, and may relate to specific programmes or to the physical resources of the university, or focus on distant learning.

The outcomes of these surveys are considered by the FEM Academic Council, together with other suggestions from stakeholders. The SPC creates a programme improvement plan. Progress with action required is discussed at subsequent SPC meetings where teachers, students, social partners and alumni are represented. The analysis of the data from surveys is available to all VMU employees and the 2020 results for teaching and learning are published on the website together with the results of the survey of first year undergraduates (2021-2022) which records their reasons for choosing a programme and their expectations in relation to their learning experience.

The FBD Council also considers the proposals of SPC on updates of the content of the study programme, reorganisation of the study plan, discusses the implementation of the programme and matters relating to final exams and the thesis as well emerging issues collected through feedback from stakeholders.

VMU has links with a large number of social partners who advise on quality matters relating to programme content, the skills required for the labour market and internships.

Students are represented on the SPC, the Faculty Councils and are invited to join the Dean's Office community meetings, where they can provide further feedback on the quality of their learning experience.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The feedback from stakeholders is generally favourable and contains positive comments as well as suggestions for improvement. Quality Improvement Plans, drawn up by the SPC in response to stakeholder feedback show action to be taken and have a timeline. As indicated in 3.7.1 there are different procedures for implementing the Plans in the two faculties.

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

(1) Factual situation

Information about programmes of study in the Business Field is available on the University website under each of the two faculties. Details of the application and admission process are also published on the website together with useful information for students arriving at VMU

The outcomes of surveys are published on the website (although these were unavailable at the time of the review). The results of the surveys are disseminated to teachers. However, participation in VMU surveys is low, particularly the survey for graduating students in regard to employment. As a result, faculties are considering conducting their own internal surveys.

The University conducts an internal process of Annual Programme Analysis based on the outcomes of the surveys and feedback obtained through discussions with all stakeholders.

The External Evaluation Reports are published on the website and the faculties take account of the recommendations of the expert teams as well as the identified areas of good practice. External evaluation of programmes in the Business Field took place in 2013, 2014 and 2017.

Changes made in response to the external evaluation reports include the introduction of a course on Business Ethics and Social Responsibility.

Other developments in course content and structure which have been made in response to feedback from stakeholders include co-faculty courses in the Bachelor's degree in Business Administration and the setting of an additional paper to strengthen students' research skills. The introduction of four elective courses to the Business Administration Programme have enabled students to specialise in their undergraduate studies in preparation for their participation in second cycle programmes such as Sports Business Management.

The Logistics and Commerce programme was reviewed in 2019-2020 resulting in an updating of course content to meet developments in the field, the removal of overlapping content and an improved sequencing of courses. A further revision was made in 2020-2021 extending the duration of the internship and increasing its weighting to 15 ECTS.

A programme of improvement during the academic years 2019-2020 and 2021-2022 has also been implemented for the second cycle programme Business Logistics which includes the amendment of the programme content and the introduction of a course entitled "Logistics Innovation Internship". Information Technology, directly related to Logistics, has been integrated into courses. Teachers are encouraged to take internships and to invite practitioners to give guest lectures. Cooperation agreements are being concluded with software suppliers to enable courses to be delivered via blended learning.

Changes and improvements, in response to feedback from stakeholders, have also been made to the second cycle programmes Business and Entrepreneurship and to Sports Business Management.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

VMU collects, uses and publishes an extensive range of information about its programmes and the evaluations it undertakes. Examples of changes to programmes and improvements made in response to feedback collected from stakeholders through surveys and by other means demonstrate the University's desire to continually update and improve the quality of its programmes. The Expert Panel confirms that the students and other stakeholders are involved in internal quality assurance.

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

(1) Factual situation

As indicated in 3.7.3, the opinions of field students are collected via surveys and through their participation in the deliberative committees of the University. They are also able to give informal feedback to their teachers. For the second cycle programmes where student numbers are lower, more qualitative feedback is collected enabling students to highlight the positive features of their programme and identify areas for improvement.

In general the opinions of field students are positive. This is demonstrated by the analysis of feedback from the first year undergraduate survey, the exit survey and the course evaluations. Students indicated that their programme had effectively prepared them for the workplace.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The Expert Team met with staff who were able to give examples of changes they had made to their teaching in response to student feedback – demonstrating a clear desire for the continual improvement and updating of their programmes. The Expert Panel confirms that the opinion of field students about the quality of studies at the HEI is positive.

Strengths and weaknesses of this evaluation area:

(1) Strengths:

1. Well documented procedures for quality assurance.
2. Extensive use of surveys to obtain feedback from students and other stakeholders.

(2) Weaknesses:

1. Although the quality assurance policies are well documented, they appear to be overly complex, and the two faculties have differing processes for implementing the procedures.
2. Participation rates in some surveys (particularly the EXIT survey) are somewhat low.

IV. EXAMPLES OF EXCELLENCE

1. Programmes produce rounded and capable graduates and are strongly endorsed by students, graduates and social partners.
2. High employment rate of graduates.
3. Problem-based learning is used in many courses, e.g. students participate in hackathons, and business organisations provide real cases for students to solve.
4. The opportunity for students in the Sports Business Management Programme to use the Magnus eSports space to work with social partners and apply what they have learned during their studies to real event planning.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS

Evaluation Area	Recommendations for the Evaluation Area (study cycle)
Intended and achieved learning outcomes and curriculum	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Simplify and make clearer the learning outcomes and link each learning outcome to a specific piece of student work (including the Final Thesis). This will provide an audit trail to demonstrate that each student has achieved each learning outcome. 2. Continue the ongoing process of coordination, and possibly integration, between the two faculties with a view to enhancing programmes by reducing inconsistencies and improving synergies. (For example, there needs to be consistency in learning outcomes when the same course of study is delivered on different programmes (e.g. macroeconomics)).
Links between science (art) and studies	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Update and effectively document R&D activities with the use of metrics/indicators aligned with the requirements of information from the Ministry of Education and accreditation bodies. 2. Develop uniform/standard practices to monitor and control R&D activities across the different study programmes. 3. Effectively document the participation of social partners in the definition of projects for applied research. 4. Research activity (particularly in research clusters) should be mapped and assessed against the expectations of a research master plan (AKA R&D strategic plan).
Student admission and support	<p>Providing more information on the differences between full-time and part-time programmes would be useful to enable students to assess the programmes better and to evaluate the delivery of programmes in full and part-time mode to establish which best suits their interests and needs.</p>
Teaching and learning, student performance and graduate employment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review participation rates in surveys which are particularly low in respect of graduates and employment, with a view to increasing participation. 2. Involve social partners in the supervision of the final thesis (not necessarily as supervisors, but as advisors).
Teaching staff	<p>Continue to encourage staff to take up mobility opportunities and encourage those participating in scientific work to present their research output at national and international conferences.</p>

<p>Learning facilities and resources</p>	<p>Consider asking students and other stakeholders to provide general feedback on the resources available.</p>
<p>Study quality management and public information</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review the processes for implementing QA procedures across the two faculties to ensure they are consistent and appropriate. 2. Consider introducing incentives to increase the participation rates in surveys.

VI. SUMMARY

Main positive and negative quality aspects of each evaluation area of the study field *Business* at Vytautas Magnus University:

VMU provides five good quality business field programmes in both first and second cycles delivered by two distinct academic units – the Faculty of Economics and Management (FEM) and the Faculty of Bioeconomy Development (FBD). The knowledge, skills and attitudes of graduates are well regarded by social partners and employers. Teaching staff are very supportive and proud of the programmes that they deliver. For the future it will be important to continue to ensure consistency of learning outcomes across the two academic units and, ideally, to enhance programmes by drawing on the strengths of both units. Learning outcomes could be made clearer and more specific and tied more closely with specific pieces of student work to ensure that each student achieves each learning outcome and that a clear audit trail exists,

Research is effectively organised (organic and adaptable) around R&D clusters, and there is evident leadership for each research area. However the activity of the research clusters is not effectively monitored or reported. Students do participate in research activities but this is not well documented.

Students are generally enthusiastic about their programmes and the support provided by the university appears to be effective and sufficient. As many students are in employment it may be appropriate to assess whether full or part time modes of study better meet their needs. To enable more students to benefit from study abroad opportunities, mobility programmes could be adapted to fit in better with students' work and academic commitments

There is a high employment rate for graduates of the business field programmes. Social partners are involved in the development of specific programmes (e.g. sports management). Direct and continuing contact with graduates and social partners ensures the study programmes are up-to-date for labour market needs. However, there could be more involvement of social partners in the supervision of the final thesis.

Teaching staff are generally well qualified and there is a link between what they teach and their research fields and/or practical experience in business. The language skills of the teachers are at an above-average level. Although staff are increasing their visibility nationally and internationally in terms of presenting their research outputs, there is room for further expansion in this area to raise the profile of the University.

Students are provided with a high quality physical environment in which to learn, and the facilities are fully supportive of those with disabilities. The University provides specialist software to support collaborative and problem-based learning. It is not apparent that students and other stakeholders are asked to give feedback on the resources available and this could be an enhancement to the role of stakeholders which VMU may wish to consider.

The University has well documented procedures for quality assurance, although these do appear to be overly complex and there is a lack of alignment in the implementation of these procedures across the two faculties delivering programmes in the business field. VMU makes extensive use of surveys to obtain feedback from students and other stakeholders, but participation rates in some surveys (particularly the EXIT) survey are low.

Expert panel chairperson signature:

Brenda Eade