



CENTRE FOR QUALITY ASSESSMENT IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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**EVALUATION REPORT**  
**STUDY FIELD of BUSINESS**  
at Vilnius University

**Expert panel:**

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4. Assoc. Prof. Dr. Malcolm Brady, *academic;*
5. Dr. Natalija Norvilė, *representative of social partners;*
6. Mg. Carla Harold, *students' representative.*

**Evaluation coordinator – Ms Natalija Bogdanova**

Report language – English

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Vilnius  
2021

## Study Field Data\*

I.

Title of the study programme	International Business
State code	6121LX011
Type of studies	University
Cycle of studies	First
Mode of study and duration (in years)	Full time, 3,5 years
Credit volume	210 ECTS
Qualification degree and (or) professional qualification	Bachelor in Business Management
Language of instruction	Lithuanian, English
Minimum education required	Secondary
Registration date of the study programme	14 June 2002

II.

Title of the study programme	Business and Law
State code	6121LX019
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 in Business Management
Language of instruction	Lithuanian
Minimum education required	Secondary
Registration date of the study programme	2 June 2016

III.

Title of the study programme	DeepTech Entrepreneurship
State code	6211LX013
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 in Business Management
Language of instruction	English
Minimum education required	Bachelor
Registration date of the study programme	14 April 2011 / 25 November 2020

IV.

Title of the study programme	MBA Entrepreneurship
State code	6215LX002
Type of studies	University
Cycle of studies	Second
Mode of study and duration (in years)	Full time, 1 years
Credit volume	60 ECTS
Qualification degree and (or) professional qualification	Master in Business Administration (MBA)
Language of instruction	English
Minimum education required	Bachelor
Registration date of the study programme	1 June 2018

## V.

Title of the study programme	Business Process Management
State code	6211LX015
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 in Business Management
Language of instruction	Lithuanian
Minimum education required	Bachelor
Registration date of the study programme	10 March 2016

## VI.

Title of the study programme	Business Development
State code	6211LX085
Type of studies	University
Cycle of studies	Second
Mode of study and duration (in years)	Full time, 2 years
Credit volume	120 ECTS
Qualification degree and (or) professional qualification	Master in Business Management
Language of instruction	Lithuanian
Minimum education required	Bachelor
Registration date of the study programme	19 July 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 10 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 ESU. 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.	University and faculty organisation charts
2.	Evidence of action taken in response to feedback from stakeholders
3.	Sample thesis for each programme in the first and second cycles
4.	Annual Reports on Research Activities
5.	List of Social Partners and internships
6.	Business Study Field Resources

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

Vilnius University, founded in 1579, is a long-established institution. It has a large staff of over 5,300 people of whom over 2,400 are academic staff, over 2,000 are administrative staff and over 800 are researchers. The university comprises 15 core academic units of which two, Faculty of Economics and Business Administration (FEBA) and the Business School (BS), conduct study programmes in the business field.

In 2022 the two core academic units in the business field employed a total of 203 lecturers and 22 researchers and delivered programmes to a total of 751 students. These figures are broken down for the two units as follows: FEBA employs 132 lecturers, 21 researchers and has 213 students in the business field; BS employs 71 lecturers, 1 researcher and has 538 students.

The two core academic units within the business field have different emphases. In the BS the emphasis is on marketing and entrepreneurship and to some extent on internationalisation. In FEBA the emphasis appears to be more on traditional disciplines of economics, accounting, finance and quantitative methods along with management. With regard to programmes each unit provides one first cycle programme and two second cycle programmes. The two first cycle programmes are as follows: Business & Law provided by FEBA and International Business provided by BS. The four second cycle programmes are as follows: Business Process Management and Business Development programmes provided by FEBA and MBA in Entrepreneurship and Deep Tech Entrepreneurship provided by BS. FEBA also provides a first cycle programme in the related study field of management.

## II. GENERAL ASSESSMENT

*Business* study field and **first cycle** at Vilnius 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	4
2.	Links between science (art) and studies	5
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:	29

\*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 Vilnius University is given **positive** evaluation.*

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

<b>No.</b>	<b>Evaluation Area</b>	<b>Evaluation of an Area in points*</b>
1.	Intended and achieved learning outcomes and curriculum	4
2.	Links between science (art) and studies	5
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
	<b>Total:</b>	<b>30</b>

\*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 'the labour market needs not only specialists of one field or one geographical area, but broad-minded professionals who are well-oriented, ready to work in global ecosystem and choose the right solutions for them' and that 'Lithuania has had and continues to have the highest rates of both business creation and collapse among EU countries'.

The social partners with whom the Expert Panel met, indicated that VU programmes 'are adapting to the needs of the market'. They stated that 'students have good analytical skills' and 'strong financial skills' and that the learning at VU opened 'more ways to work with different companies'. They also pointed out that students learn skills that are of practical use and that 'students have fundamental knowledge and that they can then grow their knowledge'.

As indicated in 3.7, the university is responsive to feedback from stakeholders and has implemented several changes to the structure and content of the programmes. This includes the relaunching of the DeepTech Entrepreneurship masters programme, and the upgrading of the entrepreneurial elements in the International Business bachelor's programme.

##### *(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

The first and second cycle programmes produce graduates who have good foundational knowledge, strong analytical skills and are capable of building on this knowledge and skill base. The VU programmes from the Economics and Business Administration department emphasise building synthetic skills in the Business and Law programme at first cycle level and specific business process and development skills at second level. The VU programmes from the Business School place emphasis on developing students' entrepreneurial skills at both first and second cycle levels, meeting a clear societal and labour market need. It is the opinion of the Expert Panel that VU business field programmes conform well to the needs of society and the labour market.

### *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 VU has the 'strategic goal of being an enhancing university in Lithuania and contributes to the development of the internationality of science and studies'. It goes on to state that '[w]e are aiming to nurture graduates able to create the society of the future, to facilitate student development based on in-depth knowledge of the field and initiated by a changed attitude towards oneself and the world. Therefore, in terms of the study process, emphasis shall be laid on pro-active, individual and interdisciplinary learning'.

The social partners panel stated that 'the Business School is a place for people to discover themselves...provide fundamental knowledge...open a lot of doors and opportunities' and 'the research skills that students gain are important...programmes such as Business Law are useful: they provide a variety of skills' and 'students learn skills that have practical use'.

#### *(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

As discussed under 3.1.1. graduates appear to have the knowledge, skills and attitude with which to build a society of the future. A considerable amount of interdisciplinary learning within the business realm is provided; the Business and Law (BL) and DeepTech Entrepreneurship (DT) programmes have additional in-built interdisciplinarity. Some level of internationality is provided by the China track and by the possibility for students to take up dual degrees programmes with partner institutions.

In the opinion of the Expert Panel the programmes of first and second cycle appear to conform well with the overall mission and strategy of Vilnius University.

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

#### *(1) Factual situation*

The SER provides a table which details compliance with legal requirements for the two first cycle programmes (International Business (IB) and Business and Law (BL)). A second table provides details of compliance with legal requirements for three of the second cycle programmes (Business Development (BD), Business Process Management (BP) and DeepTech Entrepreneurship (DT)). A third table provides details of compliance with legal requirements for one of the second cycle programmes (the Master in Business Administration (MBA)).

#### *(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

The International Business programme comprises a total of 210 ects which matches the legal requirement to have a total number of credits of either 180, 210 or 240 ects. The Business and Law programme comprises a total of 240 ects which matches the legal requirement to have a total number of credits equal to either 180, 210 or 240 ects. The International Business programme has 195 ects within the business field exceeding the minimum legal requirement of 120 ects. The Business and Law programme has 150 ects within the business field exceeding the minimum legal requirement of 120 ects. Final thesis on both programmes comprise 15 credits meeting the minimum legal requirement of 15 credits. Internships on both programmes comprise 15 credits meeting the minimum legal requirement of 15 credits. It is the opinion of the expert panel that the two first cycle programmes (Business and Law, and International Business) meet legal requirements.

The total number of credits for the Deep Tech and Business Processes second cycle programmes is 90 ects which falls within the legal requirement of not less than 90 and not more than 120 credits. The total number of credits for the Business Development programme is 120 credits which falls within the legal requirement of not less than 90 and not more than 120 credits. The number of credits within the business field is 68, 80 and 105 ects for the Deep Tech, Business Processes and Business Development programmes respectively, exceeding the minimum legal requirement of 60 ects. Final theses for all three programmes is 30 credits which matches the legal requirement that final theses should be of a minimum of 30 ects. It is the opinion of the expert panel that all three second cycle programmes (Deep Tech, Business Processes and Business Development) meet legal requirements.

The total number of credits for the year-long MBA programme is 60 ects which matches the total number of credits under legal requirements for an MBA of 60 ects (order V-1168, paragraph 10). All of these 60 ects represent courses that are within the business field which exceeds the legal requirement of a minimum of 45 ects for courses from within the field (order V-1168 paragraph 10.1). Students on the MBA programme are not required by Vilnius University to complete a final thesis which matches legal requirements which states that 'no final thesis (project) shall be obligatory' on an MBA programme (order V-1168 paragraph 10.2).

### *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 SER states that '[t]he structure and content of the first and second cycle study programmes are focused on the consistent nurture and development of the indicated competencies, distributed over the study semesters and study subjects'.

It further states that '[t]he main difference between the study cycles is that in the first cycle the major focus is laid on the accumulation of knowledge and its practical application skills,

while in the second cycle the acquisition of additional competencies is inseparable from the development of critical thinking and the abilities gained for their creative application and the development of research skills’.

The SER also states that ‘[t]he knowledge and skills acquired by bachelor’s degree graduates allow them to become attractive labour market participants, be involved in self-employment or be employed by the lower or middle level business and public sector. Master’s studies focus on a significantly higher level of knowledge and skills, which allows eligibility to managerial positions and positions of high-level specialists. This cycle also develops the skills necessary to carry out research activities.

Annex 1, submitted with the SER, provides details of the program aims and learning outcomes for each of the six programmes. Annex 2 provides details of study plans for each of the six programmes and Annex 3 shows the correspondence between learning outcomes and assessments.

## *(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

The two first cycle programmes are provided by two different academic units with one focusing on a mix of business and legal skills (Business and Law) and the other focusing on international and entrepreneurial skills (International Business). Of the four second cycle programmes, two are provided by each of the two academic units: Economics and Business Administration Department and the Business School. Each of the four second cycle programmes has a distinct ethos and is targeted at specific candidate students. The second cycle programmes provided by the Economics and Business Administration department focus on executive students with one programme emphasising business processes and the other emphasising business development. The two second cycle programmes provided by the Business School emphasise entrepreneurship and target executive students; one focuses on technology, while the other is an MBA programme and is broader in nature.

The aims of the two first cycle programmes are clearly stated in Annex 1 of the SER document and a set of learning outcomes for both programmes are provided in that same Annex. Learning outcomes are concisely and clearly written; they are specific and not overly general or multifaceted. For each of the programmes, annex 3 provides a clear correspondence between learning outcomes, courses of study, study method, and form of assessment. This is a rigorously prepared and extensive document with learning outcomes detailed for each course of study on each programme. It is the opinion of the expert panel that the learning outcomes are clear, have been carefully developed, are consistent with the aims of the relevant programme and have been carefully and clearly associated with a relevant and appropriate assessment method.

A minor matter is that some inconsistencies in the naming of high level categories of competences exist between the two first cycle programmes e.g. in Annex 1 core competence categories for the International Business programme are listed as 1. Social skills and 2.

Personal and learning skills whereas for the Business and Law programme core competencies categories are listed as 1. Analytical and Critical thinking, 2. Independence and Learning, 3. Communication skills and 4. Interpersonal skills.

While there are six programmes provided in total, at the time of writing of this report each appears to have a clear and distinct ethos and is targeted at specific candidate students. The set of programmes may need to be monitored as time goes on to ensure that each programme continues to be distinctive.

### *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*

A very detailed explanation of the consistency of development of student competencies across the study years, for each of the six programmes, is set out in the SER document. The detailed explanation comprises six full pages of text. A broad summary of the approach of Vilnius University is that in earlier semesters the concentration is on foundational subjects, with the concentration moving on to development of more analytical skills in middle semesters, and in later semesters the concentration moves on to develop skills in synthesis and integration with the aim of drawing together the students' learning experience.

#### *(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

It is the opinion of the Expert Panel that each of the two undergraduate programmes has a clear and distinct ethos and is targeted at different candidate students with the aim of providing distinct skill sets to each of these cohorts of students. It is the opinion of the expert panel that the approach of Vilnius University i.e. concentrating on foundational subjects in earlier semesters, on analytical material in middle semesters, and on synthesis in later years is a sound approach to the development of student learning over the evolution of their studies. Similarly the four postgraduate (second cycle programmes) cater for different groups of students and offer opportunities for both full and part-time study and for students to develop skills in and understanding of specialist areas of business and management.

### *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*

From the information contained in the SER opportunities for students to personalise the structure of the field of study programmes are as follows:

For the International Business and Business and Law first cycle programmes, a total of 40 credits are elective. These electives are spread throughout the semesters of the programme, although a slightly different spread applies to each of the two programmes..

For the Deep Tech Entrepreneurship programme, one course in each of the first two semesters is an elective.

For the full-time Masters in Business Process Management, one course in each of the first two semesters is an elective.

For the part-time Masters in Business Process Management, one course in each of semesters one and three is an elective.

In respect of the Masters programme in Business Development, it is not clear from the narrative as to how many courses are elective. However the table contained in the SER indicates that 10 credits in semester two and 5 credits in semester three are elective.

The modules for the MBA Entrepreneurship are all compulsory, but students are able to personalise their studies through their choice of thesis topic.

A further table provides a summary of compulsory and elective credits for all six programmes.

## *(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

The Expert Panel found that the first and second cycle programmes, apart from the MBA Entrepreneurship, provide a considerable number of elective courses. The students, social partners and teachers with whom the Expert Panel met did not express concerns about the lack of opportunity for students to personalise their studies in the MBA programme through the selection of electives. It can be concluded, therefore, that the majority of programmes in the first and second cycles provide opportunities for students to personalise the structure of field study programmes according to their personal learning objectives and intended learning outcomes, and this is possible for the MBA through the choice of topic for the thesis

### *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 must be related to the problems of business and the business environment and combine the theoretical and practical aspects of the problem' and '[t]he Master's Thesis can in no way be of a purely descriptive, reviewing nature; it must be analytical' and '[t]he Final Thesis Defence Commission involves the participation of social partners'.

Social partners with whom the Expert Panel met, indicated that they have suggested research topics for theses. They also pointed out that students have good analytical skills and also a fundamental knowledge of subject matter.

*(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

Final theses cover a range of business topics and the theses moderated appear to be competently prepared and presented. Theses moderated were written in the English language and in the Lithuanian language. Theses written in the English language contained the expected elements of literature, methodology, results and discussion. It is not possible for the expert panel to comment in detail on the theses written in the Lithuanian language except to say that theses were well prepared and were presented to a high standard. The Expert Panel concludes that final theses comply with field and cycle requirements and provide students with the opportunity to develop a particular aspect of their studies in detail.

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

***(1) Strengths:***

1. The graduates of VU business field programmes have a solid base of knowledge and a set of analytical skills with which to support industry and on which to build their future careers.
2. The programmes each have a distinctive ethos and direction, providing a clear choice for prospective students.

***(2) Weaknesses:***

1. Although two different academic units are involved in delivery of business field programmes, currently each programme has a clear ethos and focus. However vigilance may be needed as time goes on to ensure that unwanted overlap of programmes does not arise and that opportunity for ongoing synergies between the two academic units is achieved.
2. There is a limited amount of international opportunities and an increase in the level of international study opportunities may be of benefit to future students.

### **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 evidence of annual reports in accordance with the procedure to allocate state budget funds for research. The additional information provided for the Expert Panel (Business field additional information) includes detailed documents that confirm a rigorous and systematic monitoring and control of the R&D activity. The meeting with the SER group confirmed the existence of multiple levels of reporting of R&D – from individual meetings to those at departmental and University level – that are conducted annually, with links to well-defined KPIs.

The SER also offers well documented R&D activities, their connection with the fields of study, and how these were integrated in the studies. Examples of this activity are the participation in international projects like Euro4Europe, Lead4Skills and Reg4future.

With regards to the development of cooperation with external partners for R&D activities, the document presents a detailed list of collaboration with other HEIs and non-academic partners in different projects. From this list, the research agreement between the Business School and the University of Lancaster, is noticeable for its impact on the development of research capability in the Business School. In this regard, the meeting with social partners confirmed their active participation in R&D activities through different levels of involvement. For instance, by suggesting research topics to research students, or through joint applications with faculty for R&D grants.

The projection of R&D activity is well documented in the Research Strategic Plan 2020-2025 (Additional information, p.16-21). And its financial viability is supported by multiple sources of funding as confirmed in the meetings with the SER team and the Administrative Staff and Senior Management. The sources of funding reported were listed as: State funds – allocated according to R&D performance; application to R&D grants; enterprise; and budget from own resources. This information is presented in more detail in the annual reports publicly available (e.g. 2020: <https://www.vu.lt/en/scientific-report-2020/contents/research-at-vilnius-university>).

## *(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

The programmes evaluated satisfy the requirements for R&D activities implemented in the study fields. The existence of an R&D management system that monitors and evaluates and documents the performance of the research activity, its impact on the academic content, and the development of a research culture in the University that involves students, academics and external partners is evident. This is evident in the sustained and increased number of R&D outputs like the number of peer reviewed articles, books, and their presence in the statistics in the web of science. The R&D developments are at the frontier of scientific advance, many in partnership with top ranked international HEI, and with high impact in the transference of knowledge to society and academic practice through the introduction of novel emergent technologies with immediate practical application (e.g. 5G, Blockchain, AI and Game design/gamification of learning).

### *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 provides a description of the inclusion of recent R&D outputs to the content of the programme/modules. These examples come mostly from researchers from law and economics. The verification of this information in the meeting with students confirmed that academics update the content of their programmes regularly with the most recent developments in knowledge/science. Academics inform their modules making it evident to students that their research activities feed into the development of their modules. However, these comments were made just by students from the Business and Law Programme. The meeting with the teaching staff confirmed that the university supports academics in updating their knowledge; and the existence of internal mechanisms (e.g. study programme committees) makes sure that the content of the modules is updated with the most recent development in science/knowledge in the field of studies. This procedure was also confirmed by the meeting with the administrative staff and senior management who indicated that such review is conducted annually.

#### *(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

Both, the SER and the various meetings conducted during the visit provided evidence of inclusion of the latest developments in science into the content of the studies. In particular, new R&D developments with practical implications like pension accumulation and its impact on financial markets; the statistical analysis of online purchase and consumer behaviour; or the results of the research project Hidden Champions to teach entrepreneurship. However, special attention should be given to the research made in the Business School and its impact on the academic content, as it is a relatively new activity (2020-2024). Its development involves an international partner (University of Lancaster) whose terms of involvement may constitute a limitation for the autonomy in the definition, implementation and maintenance of good practices in the transference of knowledge from R&D to teaching.

### *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 provides evidence of active participation of students from various levels of academic development in R&D activity (e.g. Undergraduate, Master, Doctoral and Postdoctoral thesis/research projects). The list of activities that involve students in R&D includes - but is not limited to - the development of research projects, participation in research enterprise projects, participation in conferences and the co-writing of papers with academic staff

involved in R&D. Also, the document consolidating additional information confirms the involvement of students in R&D activities different to the thesis as a graduation requirement.

The SER highlights the outputs from the initiative to co-author papers with academic staff. This initiative is recognized as a successful strategy to involve students in research activities by both academics and students, as confirmed in the meetings with these two groups.

#### *(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

The Expert Panel confirms that the involvement of students in R&D is supported by different mechanisms at all levels of study. Students are offered different routes to get involved in Research - making research an important component of their student experience. These practices are well documented and incorporated in the research strategy of the university.

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

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

1. Transparency in the reporting of R&D activity (Public records of Research Budgets, R&D outputs, KPIs).
2. Effective involvement of Students (and academics) in R&D activities.
3. Successful strategy to involve students in R&S with tangible outputs and impact (co-writing papers with academic staff).
4. All the components for a R&D system are present.

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

1. Although the impact of R&D on the curriculum could be demonstrated during the meetings with faculty and social partners, it is not documented systematically.

## **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***

The admission criteria differ depending on the cycle of studies. The first cycle studies admission adheres to procedures approved by the Association of Lithuanian Higher Education Institutions for Organising General Admission (LAMA BPO), authorised by the Ministry of Education, Science and Sports of the Republic of Lithuania. Students are admitted according to a competitive score, which is calculated with the applicants' scores for competitive subjects in their secondary school graduation, which includes Mathematics (0.4), Lithuanian language

and literature (or other first language) (0.2), History or information technology, or geography, or foreign language (0.2), a fourth additional subject and maturity examinations (0.2). During the period of evaluation, the minimum score was increased to raise the bar for applicants. For VU, a minimum score of 5.4 was set as a requirement in 2020.

Admission of international students adheres to the Description of the Procedure for Admission of Foreign Nationals to the First and Second Cycle and Integrated Study Programmes of Vilnius University. International applicants are assessed based on their high school diploma. The procedure of transferring the students' marks into the Lithuanian assessment system is carried out in accordance with procedures defined by the LAMA PBO. Applicants with high school diplomas from outside Lithuania must first contact SKVC regarding the recognition, which finds the equivalent for the obtained scores, which are then to be included on the applicants' competitive score.

The calculation of the competitive score for first cycle programmes differs for state-funded and non-funded places.

Admission for second cycle programmes is carried out in accordance with the rules of admission to the second cycle study programmes of VU, which are approved by the Senate of VU. The specific admission criteria differ depending on the specific program. For Business Process Management, the score is calculated via the Diploma Supplement (0.3) and the Arithmetic average of study programme subjects (0.7) and additional points. Applicants may receive an additional point for a Cum Laude diploma, for scientific publications in peer-reviewed publications or for work experience according to the study programme to be entered. Applicants working in managerial positions in national and international business organisations and public administration institutions may receive an extra point for the Business Process Management and the Business Development programme.

For the MBA entrepreneurship programme, applicants need to have completed bachelor's studies and need to have at least three years of managerial experience. The competitive score for applicants is calculated by looking at the average of marks provided in the Diploma supplement (0.3), - the grade for the final thesis and/or the final examination grade (0.2) and the assessment of the motivational interview (0.5).

The competitive score for applicants who are graduates of professional bachelor's studies and minor studies at the VU Business School are calculated by looking at the average of marks provided in the Diploma supplement (0.3), the mark for the final thesis and/or final examination, the weighted average of grades of minor study subjects (these two scores are added together and then multiplied by 0.2) and the assessment of the motivational interview.

For the DeepTech programme, applicants need to have completed first cycle studies in the field of Business and Public Management or in the field of Economics. Applicants with a bachelor's degree or an equivalent diploma in another field must provide at least 20 ECTS points in business and/or economics. If applicants have a bachelor's degree or equivalent

diploma, they must have at least one year's work experience in a field relevant to the programme. The competitive score is calculated as follows: the average of grades provided in the Diploma supplement (0.3) the grade of the final thesis and/or final exam/s (0.2) and the assessment for the motivational interview (0.5). If the motivation score is less than 5, applicants are not accepted to the competition.

Applicants for the second cycle programmes with higher non-university education and minor studies at other universities are eligible to apply if the completed minor studies meet the requirements of VU's Business School.

Applicants for the SP MBA Entrepreneurship and DeepTech Entrepreneurship can send their CVs and cover letter before the interview. In the interview, students' motivation and preparedness for the study programme, their expectations and their ability to plan time are assessed. English language proficiency is a requirement for the programmes.

For both, first and second cycle programmes, information about admission and study programmes can be obtained online, via VU's website and social media, as well as via printed publications, at study fairs, open days and visits to schools. Each unit in the business school manages communication and outreach individually, to reach different target groups. The VU communication and marketing department and the different departments communicate with each other target and reach international students, via social media and by providing information on its websites in English.

In the SER it is also noted that the first cycle study programme International Business has been among the most popular elective study programmes in Lithuania for several years and was included in the top 10 study programmes in Lithuania in 2019/20 and 21, according to LAMA BPO.

## *(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

The Expert Panel confirms that the admission requirements and selection procedures for the different study programmes are transparent and clearly outlined. The large number of applicants, especially for the first cycle programme International Business, suggests sufficient publicity of the programmes and application procedures.

For all programmes, applicants with degrees or qualifications from different institutions need to have completed minor studies that meet the requirements of the VU Business School or are comparable to those. VU consequently appears to mainly cater its' second cycle requirements to the qualifications of bachelor's degree graduates from the VU business school.

### *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*

VU carries out academic recognition of education and qualifications related to higher education and acquired in accordance with education programmes in foreign countries and organisations independently. VU is authorised to do so by the Ministry of Education, Science and Sports of the Republic of Lithuania. VU thereby also follows the Lisbon Recognition Convention.

Foreign qualifications can be recognized as secondary or higher education if no significant differences between general requirements of the country where the qualification was obtained, and the Republic of Lithuania can be identified. Foreign qualifications are assessed individually based on the available information and previous practices of assessment and recognition, to ensure consistency.

Students in the first and second cycle programmes can seek recognition of credits for formal and non-formal or self-education mode. This allows for the recognition of competences which can be acquired through working performance, voluntary work or internships, short-term or long-term internships, training courses, seminars, projects or learning independently. Not more than 50% of the study programme can be credited for learning outcomes acquired via self-study. Final examinations, final thesis and academic papers cannot be included. The decisions on crediting such learning outcomes are made by Study Programme Committee.

The recognition of partial studies is also possible for business programmes at VU. Students who have studied at another Lithuanian or a foreign higher education institution and seek to continue their studies in business programs at VU may be admitted, after the formal requirements have been assessed. However, not more than 75% of the study programme in the first or second cycle can be credited.

Students studying abroad in part-time exchange study programmes agree on a study plan before their departure and consequently have their learning outcomes automatically credited if they follow the outlined study plan.

### *(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

VU has different procedures for the recognition of foreign qualifications, partial studies and non-formal and informal learning in place. These procedures are clearly set out in the SER. However, it was noted that no recognitions of non-formal or informal learning competencies have been carried out between 2018-20. It would therefore be advisable to ensure that students receive sufficient information about the recognition of non-formal and informal learning to ensure they are able to take advantage of the opportunities available to them.

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

#### *(1) Factual situation*

Studying abroad and international cooperation is managed by the International Relations Department at VU. Additionally, each unit has employees that are responsible for studying abroad and international cooperation.

Students of all fields and study cycles have the opportunity to spend a semester or a year abroad. VU also provides opportunities to complete compulsory internships, additional internships and internships after graduation abroad, through programmes like Erasmus+, ISEP, Nordplus programmes and bilateral cooperation agreements. The Student Service and Career Unit organizes and administers international internships for students in the business field. In total, students can spend up to half of their time in a study programme as part of a mobility programme.

The business units have 191 Erasmus and other agreements with international universities. As the United Kingdom has withdrawn from the Erasmus programme as a result of Brexit, VU is working towards providing other ways to promote student mobility in the UK, by reaching out to universities in the UK. The VU business school signed a bilateral agreement with the University of Lancaster in 2021. Students in the field are also presented with the opportunities provided by the University Alliance ARQUS, which includes 7 European universities, for partial studies, short-term exchange or participation in international conferences. As part of the COIMBRA network of the oldest classic universities in Europe, students in the field have access to 17 of the 38 universities in Europe. Before studying abroad, students must complete at least one first cycle year of studies, or one semester of studies for second cycle programmes.

Bilateral agreements in the field of business have been made with universities in Thailand, Singapore, Russia, South Korea, Colombia, China, Canada, Kazakhstan, USA, Japan, United Kingdom, India, Hong Kong, Sakartwell, Czech Republic, Brazil, Australia, Armenia and the United Kingdom. Students in the MBA Entrepreneurship programme go abroad for a study visit (Amsterdam and Tel Aviv in the past) and students in the Deep Tech programme create start-ups and visit CERN in Switzerland.

In the SER, it is noted that the number of incoming students is much higher than that of outgoing students, which is generally low. The number of outgoing students between 2018/19-2020/21 ranged from 9-19 in the first cycle and 1-3 in the second cycle programmes. Employment and familial responsibilities are listed as the main reasons for non participation in mobility programmes. It is noted, however, that business students are active participants of the exchange through Erasmus+ and programmes such as voluntary graduate internships.

## *(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

VU provides students with several opportunities for international mobility, including Erasmus exchanges as well as Non-EU exchange programmes. VU further provides opportunities for

international internships and study visits. However, the number of students participating in study abroad programmes is relatively small. VU might therefore be advised to provide more opportunities for short-term stays abroad for students and provide students with more detailed information and support on different opportunities for stays abroad.

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

##### *(1) Factual situation*

Most services provided by VU are offered anonymously, to ensure that students feel safe when seeking help.

The Student Service and Career Department is the central provider for academic support for students, which also includes international and exchange students. Each academic unit also offers academic consulting through an academic consultant, who consults with students on issues related to the study process and its organisation and through programme managers, who consult with students on issues related to academic study, the choice of electives, the choice of master's thesis topics and supervisors or the development of individual study plans.

The core academic unit also provides support for students with disabilities. VU has a Disability Affairs Coordinator, who defines students' needs and provides recommendations to the academic units on the adaptation of the study process accordingly. The person in charge of the unit at VU has to communicate with the student throughout the semester, to ensure that the individual study plan is and can be followed. If necessary, adjustments can be made according to the students' needs. Students also have the opportunity to speak with their programme managers at least twice per semester. In these meetings, issues of the respective study programmes are discussed.

Since 2019, VU has had a mentoring programme, which currently holds 14 academic units and which also holds representatives of the business study field. The programme includes volunteers and alumni, who share personal experience, which students and their academic and personal development can benefit from.

The Career Centre of VU offers individual career consultations, which should support students in self-evaluating their interests and strengths. Students are also offered additional training, which includes training on stress management and effective learning.

Incentive scholarships are awarded for the best learning outcomes and a one-time scholarship is awarded to a student who faces the death of a relative or other dramatic situations. Financial benefits are provided for students with disabilities and VU supports state loans. Students involved in research activities can apply for nominal scholarships. For students who are not originally residents of Vilnius, a tax discount can be applied for students with disabilities and socially disadvantaged students to reduce the cost of living at the VU



dormitories. VU offers scholarships for students from Belarus and Ukraine. VU awards scholarships for the most talented international students. International students can also apply for state scholarships, which will exempt them from tuition fees.

The VU Health and Sports Centre has a health support program, which provides opportunities to engage in sports for academic staff and students. There is a counselling and training centre, at which students can seek professional counselling on personal issues, family, study and personal interaction. The Cultural centre holds 10 different art groups, which includes choirs, orchestras, theatres and ensembles. In addition, VU's student representatives can support students with various issues.

### *(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

The Expert Panel confirms that the different forms of support offered to students is suitable, adequate and effective. Students in the business programmes at VU have a wide range of opportunities through which they can receive academic counselling. Different forms of financial support are available, although mainly for those, who have high achievements academically. Extending support focusing more on socially vulnerable groups would be beneficial to expand opportunities for students from different groups. Psychological support is provided through the availability of professional counsellors.

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

#### *(1) Factual situation*

For the first week of studies in September, a VU Integration Week is held to welcome new students. This week includes meetings with members of the study programme committee to familiarise students with the aims, learning outcomes, methods and individual study opportunities in VU's programmes. Students also receive information on the study process and on support and leisure activities. Students also receive first-year memos and Student Life Guides, which contain the most important information about their studies and are provided by VU's student representatives.

General information is provided by the Student Service and Career centre, information on the different programmes is provided by the departmental study units and through individual meetings with academic consultants or lecturers. Student representatives also provide information for students. At the beginning of the academic year, all students have a meeting with the head of the study programme and the academic consultant and/or coordinator responsible for the study programme. In the meeting, the most important information on the relevant study programme is presented and that information is then sent out to all students in the study programme.

Students are also informed about the programme's learning outcomes, subject content and career opportunities by members of the department face-to-face or via EMail. According to

the SER, for the consultations, carried out by the Student Service and Career Department, 51% are via EMail, 26% by phone, 14% via the website, 5% through social networks, 4% in face-to-face meetings and 1% in discussion forums.

*(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

From the details provided in the SER, the methods by which students at the University obtain information on their study programmes appear to be sufficient. However, it is not entirely clear what the specific situation for business looks like and how it compares to that of other students at the university. From the information provided in the SER, students in the VU business programmes appear to have sufficient means to seek counselling on study related issues.

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

***(1) Strengths:***

1. Detailed systems for assessing students' suitability for entry to the first and second cycle programmes.
2. Effective systems for supporting students with disabilities.

***(2) Weaknesses:***

1. The small number of students participating in mobility programs.
2. No cases relating to the recognition of non-formal learning have been approved so far and this may mean that opportunities to widen access to students who have completed this form of learning may have been lost.

### **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***

As stated in the SER, the form of implementation of study programmes of the field of Business is full-time, except for the master's study programme *Business Process Management*, which is implemented in both full-time and part-time form. As it is presented in Annex 3 of the SER, teaching/learning methods include interactive lectures, case studies, video analysis, simulation games, discussions, seminars, problem-based assignments, group work, modelled role-playing games, activity reflection, feedback, decision-making, independent work (reading

literature and subject material, and presenting the topic to the audience), brainstorming, mind maps, situation modelling, projects, group discussion, subject-specific dialogues, SWOT analysis, etc.

During the masters' studies and in the final bachelors' years of study, students are involved in the research carried out by the lecturers of the field. The programme management team expects that the accumulation of this type of experience will be even more intensive with the establishment of a joint research and innovation centre RED by Vilnius University and the University of Lancaster at BS together with a student research union at BS.

Assessment methods are usually selected by teaching staff (except for the final project). These methods include tests, colloquia, assessment of individual and group projects and presentations, essays, evaluation of reports and case studies, evaluation of e-learning tasks, evaluation of practical task solutions, evaluation of completed professional internship in a company and research institution, public defence of a course project, etc. All study programmes in the field usually use a cumulative score system, which consists of individual assessments of the learning outcomes, and the overall assessment is calculated according to the proportions provided in the subject description.

Students of the first cycle study programmes Business and Law and International Business perform professional internships in the last semester. The purpose of these internships is to consolidate and improve the knowledge and skills acquired during the studies, in order to integrate theoretical knowledge to practice and reflect on knowledge gained. During the visit, social partners confirmed that internships help to link the theoretical knowledge acquired during studies with practical activities and to apply all this in solving practical business problems.

This was confirmed by all groups during the visit, social partners are actively participating in the delivery and development of courses and programmes. They are invited to propose their recommendations into study programmes, to teach and to participate in the defence of the final theses.

## *(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

From the information contained in the SER and from discussions with students, staff, management and social partners during site visit, the Expert Panel confirms that the learning process takes into account the students' needs and enables students to achieve learning outcomes. Teaching and learning methods are advanced, in line with the nature of studies and provide reciprocal feedback to students, and are flexible to adapt to the changing conditions (e.g. COVID situation).

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

### *(1) Factual situation*

On 18 February 2020 Vilnius University adopted “A five-year strategy for diversity and equal opportunities” by setting out key directions for the performance by 2025. The study process of the field is organised to meet the needs of socially vulnerable groups and students with special needs by investing in the adaptation of the university environment, providing access to compensatory techniques, organising seminars and other events on disability for the university community, advising students and lecturers on accessibility issues and providing the opportunity to study by taking into account individual needs.

Information about support for students with disabilities is published on the VU website. Students can receive psychological professional counselling on the issues of personal life, family, studies, social integration. A student with a disability can contact the administration of the University’s core unit for information, assistance or a solution. Students can receive incentive, social, nominal, one-time social and one-time targeted scholarships at the same time.

VU offers individualised academic support, as well as technical support and other services, based on the needs of students. Faculty of Economics and Business Administration provides many physical accessibility and compensatory technical measures, such as software programme JAWS 14 For Windows that analyses information on the display and passes it to a speech synthesiser that converts text to audio; software programme WintalkerVoice v. 1.6 that transmits all the information on the computer display to the user in an audio format in the Lithuanian language; 1 high contrast keyboard for the visually impaired; 1 specialised height and angle adjustable desk; 3 height and angle adjustable rolling desks, 2 specialised ergonomic chairs BIZZIR15/STEEL (adjustable armrest and seat height, adjustable vertical tilt angle and adjustable backrest angle). When assessing the learning achievements of students with special needs (visual, hearing, mobility or other disabilities), flexible forms of assessment are applied by adapting to the possibilities of these persons (e.g. by increasing the font size of examination tasks, extending the time for assessment, adapting the physical environment for the assessment of study achievements).

Over the analysed period, there was one student with a disability or individual needs involved in the business field of studies.

### *(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

Based on the information provided in the SER and the evidence obtained during discussion with the faculty management about the adaptation of the study process to socially vulnerable groups and students with special needs, the Expert Panel believes that the conditions ensuring access to study for students with special needs and socially vulnerable groups are sufficient. VU provides flexible examination conditions and individualisation of the study process to meet the needs arising from a disability, seeks to improve the physical accessibility of the University campus; provides various assistive technologies and equipment, allowing to

adjust the study process to individual needs; counsels students and lecturers on study accessibility matters.

### *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*

As is stated in the SER, the study progress of students in the field is monitored at several levels - subject, year of study, study programme. The assessment system applied for the subject is specified in the subject description as well as being presented by the teacher during the first lecture. The lecturer provides feedback on the completed assignments, evaluates the student's progress, and advises what to pay attention to.

The progress of students at the study year level is monitored by the Department of Study Administration of VU and the study administration of the units where the study programmes are implemented. VU Student Services and Career Department monitor student dropout rates and implement the action plan to prevent dropouts. At the end of the examination session, data on students' final semester's learning outcomes is analysed. Students who do not pass at least one examination during an examination session will receive specially prepared letters with information about retake options.

At the level of the study programme of the field, the progress of students is monitored by the Study Programme Committee (SPC). The Committee evaluates the final learning outcomes: the results of the defence of the final theses, proportion of students who defended the final theses on time; evaluates the distribution of the final learning outcomes of the study subjects included in the study plan, determines the level of students' progress in the study subjects, evaluates the number of students who suspended or terminated their studies, and the reasons for this decision.

Feedback on the progress of studies is provided to students at several levels. At the subject level, student progress is assessed and feedback provided by the academic staff. Feedback on the completed assignments and the student's progress is provided during the delivery of the course, and at the end of the course, with the lecturer detailing and explaining the composition of the grade. Feedback is also provided to students after defending their term papers, bachelor's and master's theses.

At the second level, student feedback is provided to the Chair of the SPC by organising meetings with students to discuss the progress and results of the course, as well as changes in the student's curriculum based on feedback from students, social partners, alumni, the latest research trends and best practices.

#### *(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

From the information provided in the SER, meetings with students, teachers and administrators, the Expert Panel confirms that the monitoring of student study progress and feedback to students to promote self-assessment and subsequent planning of study progress is systemic and sufficient and includes a range of methods at various points in the study programme. The system of assessment of students' achievements is clear and transparent.

Feedback is provided to students on the level of lecturers and SPC, it covers the issues of studying individual subjects, as well as more general issues related to satisfaction with studies. Information about students' opinions is obtained by communicating directly with students during surveys conducted in core academic units and during surveys conducted at the VU level.

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

##### *(1) Factual situation*

Graduates' careers are monitored using tools in the Career Management Information System. Two types of indicators are used in career monitoring: 1) objective indicators of state information systems, state or departmental registers; 2) social survey indicators - the subjective opinion of graduates on various career issues. Subjective indicators are collected three times - by interviewing graduates after 1, 3 and 5 years following their graduation. The aim of the first survey is to assess the employability of graduates, the second survey assesses the ability of graduates to successfully establish themselves in employment, and the third survey focuses on the assessment of graduates' satisfaction with their career and current job.

Graduates confirmed that regular close contact is maintained with them by holding informal meetings during which they share their achievements in the professional field and success stories. Graduates expressed their satisfaction with achieved knowledge and skills, however during the meeting with current students, they mentioned that career paths for each programme could be more clearly identified, especially in respect to the "Business and Law" study programme.

VU obtains employers' feedback on the professional preparation of graduates from internship managers in companies after the students' internship by holding informal discussions with them. They also hold discussions with the social partners who participate in the SPC or other study-related activities. However, systematic and formalised surveys of employers about graduates of the field have not been carried out yet, so a more detailed quantitative or qualitative analysis of the feedback currently is not available. Information is obtained in less formal ways (through alumni, social partners, invited business representatives).

##### *(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

During the Expert Panel's 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 to have successful careers in various working areas in the business field.

There are two areas for improvement in this area: 1) career paths for each programme should be clearly identified, especially in respect of the Business and Law study programme; 2) there should be organised systematic and formalised surveys of employers about graduates of the field.

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

#### *(1) Factual situation*

A wide range of measures are applied at VU to ensure the integrity of studies. VU lecturers and students must follow the Code of Academic Ethics of Vilnius University, which defines the general norms of ethics for academic community, teaching, study and research activities. The VU Study Regulations stipulate that students who violate academic ethics may be reprimanded and expelled from the University.

During the examination session, at the invitation of the academic staff, the delegated representatives of the Student Representation are present during the examinations. They monitor the process and help the lecturers ensure honest participation in the examination. VU has implemented an electronic plagiarism recognition system for final and written academic works, which allows checking the coincidence of a specific author's work with the works stored in the database. The final theses of the study programmes of the field are additionally checked by the anti-plagiarism system iThenticate, and the faculty administration is informed about the current cases of plagiarism.

Cases of violation of the principles of academic integrity, tolerance and non-discrimination are investigated at the University in accordance with the regulations. VU also has a special hotline which can be addressed by any member of the community for breaches of the principles of academic ethics, tolerance and non-discrimination.

As stated in SER, over the period under analysis, 21 cases of plagiarism/copying or other violations of academic ethics were identified in the International Business study programme. In all, 8 students were reprimanded, 5 for a recognised violation of academic ethics, and the agreement with the University was terminated. Over the evaluation period, 2 students (1 from the study programme *Business Process Management* and 1 from the study programme *Business and Law*) were reprimanded for plagiarism, and the study agreement with one of them was terminated. No such cases were identified in the remaining study programmes under evaluation during this period.

#### *(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

In the opinion of the Expert Panel, there are sufficient policies to ensure academic integrity, tolerance and non-discrimination. VU 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. There is clear evidence that academic dishonesty is not tolerated in VU.

#### *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*

The procedure for submitting appeals is defined by the Regulations of the Dispute Resolution Commission of the Core Academic Unit. Students who do not agree with the final assessment of the subject (module) have the right to file an appeal with the Faculty Dispute Resolution Commission, which operates in accordance with the regulations approved by the VU Senate.

Appeals against the final assessment of final examinations or final theses may not be submitted solely for procedural violations in the defence of these theses. The student may apply to the Dispute Resolution Commission of the main academic unit regarding the interim reports, the assessment of the final subject (module) learning outcomes, the final examination or procedural violations of the final thesis defence, the date of the assessment of achievements, the final examination or the defence of the final thesis.

The decision of the Dispute Resolution Commission of the main academic unit regarding the final assessment of the subject is final, and decisions on procedural violations may be appealed to the VU Central Dispute Resolution Commission no later than within 5 working days from the day of their submission.

##### *(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. They are clearly defined and effectively communicated to students.

The SPC and, if necessary, lecturers also play an active role in responding appropriately and promptly to student complaints and the results of quality assessment.

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

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

1. Effective monitoring of graduates to assess their level of employment and the skills needed in the workplace.
2. Involvement of social partners in the delivery and development of courses and programmes.



3. Students receive effective individual counselling and their academic progress is well monitored.

**(2) Weaknesses:**

1. Career paths for each programme should be identified more clearly, especially in respect of the Business and Law study programme.
2. Interactions with social partners throughout the academic year should be strengthened to ensure the latest thinking in business is integrated into all courses and programmes.

### **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***

The Self Evaluation Report, indicates that most of the staff in the business studies field have been with the University for several years and that staff turnover is low, consequently the programmes have a stable teaching faculty. The normal term of office of a lecturer is five years, but an indefinite employment agreement is given to a lecturer or researcher who has won a competition for the same position at the University for the second time in succession. Approximately 37% of all teaching staff are under 55 years of age.

For the Business and Law programme, there are 35 teachers, 22 of whom have more than 3 years of experience and 16 are full time equivalent. For International Business (taught in Lithuanian and English) there are 44 teachers and 19 are full time equivalent. For Business Development there are a total of 19 teachers with more than 3 years of experience and of these, 16 are full time equivalent. For the Business Process Management programme there are 12 teachers with more than 3 years of experience and 7 are full time equivalent. For the MBA Entrepreneurship programme there are 16 teachers with more than 3 years of experience and 2 are full time equivalent. For Deep Tech Entrepreneurship there are 16 teachers, 10 of whom have more than 3 years experience and 3 are full time equivalent. The remainder of the faculty are either less than full time equivalent or have less than 3 years experience.

Full time lectures dominate the programmes in FEBA whilst the BS has relied in the past on part time lecturers who are practitioners in the field. The BS is gradually accumulating a core of full time lecturers.

Of the 44 full time faculty, 13 (30%) are Professors; 21 (49%) are Associate professors 3(7%) are Assistants; 2 (5% ) are Junior Assistants; 3 (7%) are Lecturers (7); 1(2%) is a Partnership Associate Professor.

There are 86 lecturers in the field, 88% of whom have a doctoral degree.

For the first cycle programmes – “Business and Law” - 33 out of 39 (85%) subjects are taught by researchers with a degree and – International Business – 26 out of 43 (60.5%) subjects are taught by lecturers holding a doctoral degree (the legal requirement is 50%).

For the second cycle programmes – “Business Development” - 20 out of 21 (95%) subjects are taught by researchers with a scientific degree; “Business Process Management” – 12 out of 14 (86%) subjects are taught by researchers with a scientific degree; Business Development” – 20 out of 21 (95%) subjects are taught by researchers with a scientific degree; MBA Entrepreneurship is focused on practical activities – all 11 modules of the programme involve lecturers with a doctoral degree (100%), they cover almost 70% of the programme content; DeepTech Entrepreneurship – 11 out of 12 (92%) modules are delivered by lecturers with a doctoral degree (the legal requirement is 80% of faculty must have a degree).

Business Development” – 5 out of 21 (24%) are taught by professors; Business Process Management” – 5 out of 14 (36%) are taught by professors; for the MBA Entrepreneurship – 3 out of 11 (27%) are taught by professors; and for DeepTech Entrepreneurship – as planned – 3 out of 7 (43%) will cover over 30% of the content of the business field (The legal requirement is that 20% of the units must be taught by a professor).

Staff Student ratios are low ranging from 7.8 in 2019 to 9.3 in 2021 for first cycle programmes and from 6.5 to 7.9 for second cycle programmes. Staff turnover during the period under review has also been low.

The majority of lecturers working in business programmes at VU have a high standard of English. Full-time first-cycle International Business lecturers have an English language proficiency of minimum B2 level. 61% of academic staff have a level of English at C2; 22% C1 and 17% B2. A total of 68% of full-time lecturers in the Business and Law program have an English language level of B2 or higher. The language level of the remaining lectures is not lower than B1 and they also speak other foreign languages professionally. All second-cycle lecturers of the MBA Entrepreneurship program speak English at a minimum C1 level. Overall, a B2 or higher level of English is demonstrated by 84% of the full-time academic staff of the Business Management program and 86% of full-time lecturers in the Business Process Management degree program. This knowledge of the English language allows active participation in research internships related to teaching or mobility training, as well as publication in international scientific journals and participation in international conferences and other activities.

In addition, the faculty in the business field has significant relationships with local practice.

*(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

From the documentation provided for the Review, and through meetings with faculty, administration and management, The Expert Panel can confirm that the composition of the academic staff in the study programmes of the business field complies with the formal requirements established by legal acts. The distribution and composition of subjects and teachers provides a good prerequisite for high-quality pedagogical and research activities. However, the effectiveness of research activities is unevenly distributed but there are employees who have a number of publications in English and articles in peer-reviewed scientific journals.

### *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*

Lecturers of the field improve their research, pedagogical and professional competencies by participating in exchange programs and various seminars and training sessions organised by partner universities. In the period from 2018 to 2022, business lecturers from Vilnius University underwent many teaching and study visits to universities of Austria, Finland, Poland, Hungary, France, Spain, Bulgaria, Germany, Cyprus, United Kingdom, Kosovo, Sakartvelo, South Korea, Italy, Portugal, Iceland, China, Vietnam, Armenia, Netherlands. Lecturers went to foreign universities on Erasmus + teaching mobility visits, Erasmus + training visits, to partner countries through the Erasmus + International Credit Mobility (Erasmus + ICM) programme.

In 2020-2021, due to the pandemic, lecturers did not take advantage of mobility opportunities. In 2020, one researcher/associate professor went on an Erasmus teaching visit to Széchenyi István University, Hungary. The low level of mobility was due to the pandemic situation, which significantly restricted any movement in Europe and beyond.

#### *(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

The Expert Panel, confirms that there are suitable conditions for ensuring teaching staff's academic mobility. However during the period under review this was greatly reduced by the pandemic which restricted exchanges both to and from other European Higher Education Institutions.

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

#### *(1) Factual situation*

During the period of the review the university has run an extensive range of courses to improve pedagogy and research skills. These have included: "Ways to Increase Students Activity during the Lecture"; Use of English for Lectures/Meetings/Conferences"; Academic writing"; "I Am a Mentor: a Practical Training of an Inspiring Leader"; "Application of Distant Learning Approach in University Studies"; "Study Subject (module) Description: Coherence

among Competencies, Studies and Evaluation Methods". Training is carried out by both VU specialists and experts from other countries.

VU lectures developed pedagogical training sessions in 16 different curricula, which lasted from 3 to 40 hours. The most popular of these are "Methods of Active Learning", "Student Work in Groups", "Writing Leadership", "Communication Skills", "Integration of Information and Communication Technologies into the Teaching Process", "Application of Mixed Learning in Higher Education Studies". Visiting lecturers from foreign universities also led educational workshops on innovative teaching and learning methods and assessment.

Up to 12 lecturers in the field of business have successfully obtained a certificate of completion for a training course on the internationalization of curricula which was led by Dutch colleagues.

So-called "Talk Evenings" are popular in the Business School, during which lecturers share their methodological or theoretical experience. Usually for one "afternoon" they have one topic and one main facilitator/lecturer. Highly rated "evenings" include, for example: "Integration of technology into the study process", "Provocations motivating to learn", "Working with people with disabilities", "Experiential education".

Lecturers have also been encouraged to use the opportunities offered by the VLE Moodle and MS Teams in the virtual learning environment. Staff have been supported with regular assistance, training and consultations. In the spring of 2020, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, lecturers took an active part in remote training, used their records, consulted with ITPC specialists and shared their experiences in the MS Teams environments.

Lecturers who have participated in training sessions on the development of educational or information communication technology competencies emphasize the benefits and importance of communication and cooperation between lecturers and the opportunity to reflect on their learning experience together. Lecturers especially appreciate the opportunity to get to know each other, study together and share experiences with colleagues from other fields of study and other departments of Vilnius University. The SPCs of the study programmes are responding to this by organising experience-sharing meetings between the staff members who are involved in implementing the programmes.

### *(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

From the documentary evidence and through meetings with staff, administrators and managers, the Expert Panel can confirm that the conditions for improving the competences of teaching staff are wide ranging, effective and fit for purpose.

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

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

1. All provided materials demonstrate the high quality of pedagogical activity and scientific research.

2. Highly proficient English language teachers.

**(2) Weaknesses:**

1. Research activities are unevenly distributed: there are employees who have a number of publications in English and articles in peer-reviewed scientific journals, but some have far fewer publications.

### **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**

The Business Field operates across two units of the University which are located on two separate sites. The Faculty of Economics and Business Administration (FEBA), is responsible for delivering the first cycle programme – Business and Law and two second cycle programmes - Business Process Management and Business Development. The Business School is responsible for delivering the first cycle programme - International Business, and the two second cycle programmes - MBA Entrepreneurship and Deep Tech Entrepreneurship. Students from both units can use the central facilities provided by the University which include the main Library (and other faculty libraries) and a high performance computing open access centre. The library has an extensive range of over 70 databases to support students in the business field.

The FEBA building has 36 auditoriums, including 5 computer rooms and a Bloomberg Laboratory with 12 workstations. Auditoriums have multimedia equipment, smart boards and overhead projectors. The Business School accommodates students in 14 classrooms seating up to 760 students and including one computer room. Masters students use the first floor purpose built accommodation which has 4 auditoriums and a recreation room. They also use the third floor which includes an “Ideas Room” for individual work or consultations. Teaching rooms are equipped with conference boards and data projectors.

Students can access the resources in both FEBA and the Business School, but the University recognises that it would further enhance the student learning experience if there was greater synergy between the two units in terms of student access.

Moodle is used to support both face to face and remote learning. According to the SER it contains descriptions of all study subjects, course materials, recommended reading and assessment tasks. It is used to communicate with groups of students and to provide feedback. The system can be accessed via the internet or through mobile devices. During the pandemic

specialist software was purchased to support remote learning and students and staff were able to access university software through VPN.

Staff have access to computers and workspaces. During the pandemic they were issued with laptops (if needed) to support the delivery of the programmes remotely.

Both the FEBA and Business School premises are adapted to accommodate students with special needs. This includes access for wheelchairs, contrasting keyboards for those with visual impairments and specialist software to support learning. The central VU facilities also support students with disabilities.

### *(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

From the information provided in the SER and the Business Field Study Resources document, the Expert Panel confirms that the physical resources for both the first and second cycle programmes are of a high standard and meet the requirements of the Field. The central library, the libraries of the two faculties and the computer laboratories enable students to access all the necessary informational resources to effectively support the learning process. This was confirmed by both staff and students with whom the Expert Panel met.

In addition, the Business Field has ensured access to both the physical and informational resources for students with disabilities, and has invested in equipment to support their learning. The Panel commends the specialist facilities for Masters students in the Business School which provides for the use of a dedicated suite of rooms and access to the third floor. The learning resources could be further enhanced by a greater synergy between the FEBA and the Business School. The Expert Panel recommends that the Business Field reviews the facilities and resources available to its students with a view to providing wider access to both units to further enhance the learning experience.

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

#### *(1) Factual situation*

VU has made significant investments in resources for both FEBA and the Business School during the period 2018-2020. This includes funding for the faculty libraries and the central library as well as investment in the physical infrastructure. The FEBA investment in refurbishment and renovation of premises amounted to Eu41,631 in 2018, Eu20,577 in 2019 and Eu28,908 in 2020. For the Business School this amounted to Eu19,700 in 2018, Eu58,418 in 2019 and Eu69,000 in 2020. In addition both units invested in the purchase of computer hardware and software. The SER states that there are plans for future improvement of the infrastructure.

Lecturers are responsible for recommending key texts and additional reading and for requesting the purchase of textbooks/ebooks as well as access to additional databases to keep the resources for their subject areas up to date. The library regularly circulates information about the latest literature and information sources for the Field.

The University is a member of the Lithuanian Association of Research Libraries (LARL) and uses the consortium to order and pay for databases. The ProQuest Ebook Central service was launched in 2019 to allow lecturers and students to purchase the e-books they need immediately for permanent access or to borrow them for a short period.

The Business Field is able to benefit from free access to software and data through its social partners. This includes UAB Creditinfo Lietuva which provides access to the data it collects and UAB Altacom which grants free of charge licences for the antivirus software – Bitdefender. In the autumn of 2021, the first business support contract of EUR 30,000 was signed with Western Union.

## *(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

From the evidence provided in the SER and from meetings with those responsible for the SER, members of senior management and administration and the teaching staff, the Expert Panel confirms that both units have effective plans in place for the upgrading of resources for the Business Field. The table presented in the SER in relation to planned investments states that FEBA has allocated Eu 640,000 to renovate and refurbish the auditoriums, Eu 153,500 for the purchase of computer equipment, Eu 188,400 for software licences and Eu 31,000 for updating library resources for the academic year 2021-2022. The Business school plans to invest Eu 260,000 to renovate and refurbish the auditoriums, Eu 18,000 for the purchase of computer equipment, Eu 3,200 for software licences and Eu 5,000 for updating library resources during 2021-2022 (these lower amounts reflect the significantly higher investment already made by the Business School during 2018-2020).

The University recognises that the adaptation of its premises, facilities and equipment so that they can be used for studies by individuals with special needs is an ongoing process, but the aim is to create equal study conditions for people with disabilities by adapting the physical environment to their needs. The Expert Panel acknowledges that this applies equally to FEBA and the Business School, and encourages the University to continue with its policy of enhancing the support provided for students with disabilities in all aspects of the learning resources.

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

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

1. High quality physical buildings which have recently been upgraded.
2. Well-resourced library with access to further databases and texts through the University's membership of international academic alliances.
3. Support for the development and upgrading of resources from social partners.

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

1. FEBA and BS have effective resources to support their programmes of study but at the present time students do not use the facilities of both units.

2. If the Business Field plans to continue with online delivery, or a hybrid version of delivery, further investment will need to be made to support the virtual learning environment and access to it.

### 3.7. STUDY QUALITY MANAGEMENT AND PUBLIC INFORMATION

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

*(1) Factual situation*

The Statute of the University sets out the roles and responsibilities of the committees and officers of the University. This includes the Study Programme Committees (SPCs) which are responsible for coordinating the study programmes and overseeing their implementation in accordance with the Study Regulations of the University. They are responsible for all aspects of monitoring the quality of the programmes. The Committees are accountable to the Core Academic Unit (CAU) for their activities.

Within the Business Field, there are two CAUs – the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration (FEBA) and the Business School (BS). There are six Study Programme Committees (SPCs) – one for each of the programmes in the first and second cycles. Their membership consists of faculty, social partners and a student representative. The SPCs submit activity reports to the Council of each CAU at least once a year analysing all aspects of the programme and providing plans for future improvement. In the Business School the SPC reports to the Director. In FEBA the SPC reports to the Dean.

The Committees are responsible for the quality of the learning experience. They analyse feedback from students and other stakeholders, monitor resources and consider plans for developing the programme and its courses. Major changes to programme content are overseen by the Department of Study Development at VU.

During the period of this review, the SPCs have implemented a number of changes and improvements to the structure and content of the programmes for which they are responsible. The Econometrics module has been removed from the Business and Law bachelor's programme as it was not selected by students for several years. The DeepTech Entrepreneurship masters programme was relaunched with a new structure and a more in-depth module for research methods. The contact hours and the structure of the Business Development programme have been changed in response to student feedback. The entrepreneurial elements have been upgraded in the International Business bachelor's programme to strengthen students' competencies in that area. A module in Chinese language, linked to a partnership agreement with a university in China, has been introduced to the bachelor's programme to enable students to study abroad in China and gain a better understanding of the business culture in that country. In response to student feedback,



“Entrepreneurship” replaced a macroeconomic module in the Business Process Management programme, and more practitioners have been invited to participate in the delivery of lectures.

Social partners, lecturers and students play a significant role in improving the quality of the programme through their feedback and input to the learning experience. Feedback from lectures is collected both informally through internal discussions and formally through the Study Programme Committee. Student feedback is discussed more fully in 3.7.2. The close relationships which FEBA and the BS have with their social partners enables programmes in the Business Field to be updated to meet the needs of industry in terms of graduate skills and competencies. These links also enable practitioners to play a role in the delivery and development of the curriculum. FEBA has numerous partners in Lithuanian business and public sector organisations and has links with international corporations such as Ernst & Young Baltic. The BS has close relationships with organisations such as the Lithuanian Confederation of Business as well as companies including Western Union, Moodys and Swedbank.

### *(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

The Expert Panel found that the internal quality assurance system for programmes in the Business Field is effective. This was confirmed by meetings with management, academic faculty and students who were able to identify several enhancements which had been made to the programmes and the student learning experience through the quality assurance processes.

However, the Expert Panel did have some concerns about the lack of coordination of the quality assurance processes across the two CAUs and would invite the university to consider greater harmonisation of the quality assurance processes to enable best practice to be shared and further enhancements to be made to the quality of the programmes in the Field.

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

#### *(1) Factual situation*

As indicated in 3.7.1 above, students are involved in internal quality assurance through their membership of Study Programme Committees, the completion of numerous surveys (see 3.7.3 below) and through both formal and informal meetings with their lecturers and study coordinator.

Lecturers are able to contribute to the quality assurance processes through their membership of the SPC and through their responses to feedback from students. They receive the outcomes of the student questionnaires relating to the quality of the delivery of their modules. The data collected, and action required is also discussed at annual meetings with faculty.

Social partners play a key role in the development and monitoring of the quality of programmes, ensuring that they are kept up-to-date with the latest developments in the Business Field. FEBA and BS have significant numbers of partnerships with both private and public sector business organisations. Representatives of these organisations deliver lectures and advise on the latest developments in the Field. Social partners are also represented on the SPC. Changes to programmes initiated by social partners include the inclusion of “Life sciences” in the MBA Entrepreneurship and a strengthening of the Digital Marketing content of International Business.

### *(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

From the evidence provided and through meetings with students, faculty, management and social partners the Expert Team concludes that stakeholders (students and other stakeholders) are effectively involved in the internal quality assurance processes of the Business Field. Membership of the SPC is one of the key methods of involving stakeholders in the quality assurance process. Moreover, social partners, lecturers and students indicated that they were able to initiate improvements to the quality of the programmes and the learning experience by providing feedback on all aspects of the curriculum, programme delivery and resources.

### *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, including admission requirements, the curriculum, learning outcomes, qualifications and possible careers is published on the University website and on the BS and FEBA websites. The outcomes of internal and external quality assurance reviews are also available on the websites. This includes the outcomes of surveys and other feedback about the quality of programmes in the Business Field.

Feedback from stakeholders is collected across the University via numerous surveys some of which are conducted electronically. The majority of surveys are implemented through the Student Representatives.

Students complete surveys to evaluate each module either at the end or during the teaching period. At the end of each semester they complete a survey on the overall quality of their studies during the semester. First year students are surveyed about the admission process and why they chose to study at the University. Final year students complete a survey on their overall experience during the programme. Both incoming and outgoing exchange students complete a survey on their period of study abroad. A survey to assess student satisfaction with their internships is conducted. Students who terminate their studies are asked to indicate their reasons for leaving the programme. Graduates are surveyed about their careers and how effectively their programme prepared them for their employment or further studies at intervals of 12, 36 and 60 months after completion of their programme.

The analysis and outcomes of these surveys are discussed in 3.7.4 below.

As indicated above, a summary of the results of the surveys is published on the university website, and on the websites of specific units (such as admissions) within the university. The analysis of the surveys is made available to managers, lecturers and students and is discussed at meetings of the SPC.

In addition to surveys, BS holds round table discussions to obtain immediate feedback from students at the end of each course. FEBA identified student satisfaction as one of the key performance indicators for its 2018-2020 strategy.

#### *(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

The Business Field publishes information about its programmes which is detailed and meets the needs of prospective students and other stakeholders. This was confirmed by students and the other stakeholders with whom the Expert Panel met. The collection of feedback from stakeholders to evaluate the quality of study programmes is systematic and effective. The outcomes of such feedback is effectively used for the improvement of the study process for all programmes. This is demonstrated through the changes made to programme delivery, curriculum content and assessment methods. (see examples of quality enhancement cited in 3.7.1)

#### *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*

The SER provides summaries of surveys implemented at both University and CAU level. For the Business Field overall satisfaction with the quality of the content of subjects studied in the semester is broken down into study programmes. Feedback is generally positive with an overall average for the period 2018-2021 ranging between 3.04 and 4.15. In respect of a question about the quality of teaching the overall average ranged from 2.95 to 4.01 for the same period. Some of the lower scores in this area are attributable to the sudden change to remote learning caused by the pandemic. The two CAUs have taken steps to further support their faculty in the delivery of courses online. A low average score was received for the second cycle programme, Business Process Management, in respect of both “overall satisfaction with quality of teaching” and “overall satisfaction with studies.” In response to this feedback the SPC took the decision to adjust the structure and content of the programme. Positive responses were received from three questions designed to address the development of students’ independence and critical thinking. The averages for these three questions ranged from 3.64 and 4.49.

In terms of overall satisfaction with the programme 86.6% of students on the Masters Business Development would recommend the programme to a friend compared with only 43.1% of respondents on the Masters in Business Process Management.

To supplement and provide further insights to quality improvement FEBA has conducted a number of surveys which collect qualitative as well as quantitative feedback.

The Field expresses some concerns about the procedure and outcomes of the centralised surveys which have variable response rates (between 43% and 64%). For this reason it supplements the central survey data with feedback collected by other methods such as discussions and qualitative research by the two units.

### *(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

From the data collected through surveys and via other methods of obtaining qualitative feedback, the Expert Panel concludes that 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 is positive and that effective action is taken to address any concerns raised through the various feedback mechanisms. In view of the fairly low response rates to central surveys, the Business Field may wish to consider implementing a more systematic approach, which involves both the CAUs in the business field, in the collection of feedback from students and other stakeholders.

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

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

1. Students and other stakeholders are provided with a range of means by which to provide feedback and enhance the quality of the learning experience.
2. The opinions of stakeholders expressed through surveys and other feedback mechanisms are generally positive.
3. There is evidence of timely and effective action being taken in response to feedback from stakeholders which enhances the quality of programmes in terms of their content and delivery.

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

1. The SPCs of the two CAUs do not currently harmonise their systems for managing and improving quality.
2. Relatively low response rates for the centralised surveys.

#### **IV. EXAMPLES OF EXCELLENCE**

1. Distinctive programmes, each with its own clear ethos, and strong learning processes that produce capable and analytically skillful business field graduates.
2. Effective, detailed and frequent monitoring of graduates to assess their level of employment and the skills needed in the workplace, which can be embedded in the curriculum.
3. The quality and detail of the documentation provided e.g. R&D strategic plan, and R&D annual reports.
4. A suite of specialist facilities for masters students in the Business School.

## V. RECOMMENDATIONS

Evaluation Area	Recommendations for the Evaluation Area (study cycle)
Intended and achieved learning outcomes and curriculum	Foster ongoing cooperation, collaboration and coordination between the two different core academic units in the business field in order to improve synergies, and reduce the possibility of duplication or unwanted overlap, in programmes and courses of study.
Links between science (art) and studies	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To further develop the R&amp;D activities founded on the co-writing of papers between students and academics, exploring other forms of Research activity. For instance, Participative Research Projects - that can be linked with the existing co-writing – to explore opportunities for Research and enterprise, support current research made by academics, and build connections with student progression.</li> <li>2. Make explicit the links between R&amp;D results and milestones from the R&amp;D strategic plan to provide clear guidance to R&amp;D efforts - and critical feedback to the R&amp;D strategic plan.</li> </ol>
Student admission and support	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Include more short-term mobility programmes in order to provide a greater number of students with the opportunity to join academic mobility programmes.</li> <li>2. Review recognition procedures for non-formal and informal learning to ensure they provide clear opportunities to widen access to potential students.</li> </ol>
Teaching and learning, student performance and graduate employment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identify career paths for each programme, especially in respect of Business and Law.</li> <li>2. Consider implementing more frequent interactions with social partners throughout the academic year to ensure the latest thinking in business is integrated into courses and programmes.</li> </ol>
Teaching staff	Further support contributions to quality academic journals and participation in the main events of the most respected international professional associations, and attempt to maintain a balance between research and teaching activities to ensure an effective transfer of knowledge into practice for both teachers and students.

Learning facilities and resources	Review student access to the facilities and resources of the two faculties.
Study quality management and public information	Consider greater harmonisation of the quality assurance processes to enable best practice to be shared and further enhancements to be made to the quality of the programmes in the Field.

## VI. SUMMARY

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

VU provides six high quality business field programmes – two in the first cycle and four in the second cycle. They are delivered by two distinct academic units: Faculty of Economics and Business Administration (FEBA) and the Business School (BS). Graduates are well regarded by social partners, particularly for their analytical skills. While the two academic units have a distinctive ethos and capabilities, it will be important in the future to ensure consistency of learning outcomes for similar courses of study across the two academic units. Ideally, consideration could also be given to the enhancement of programmes by drawing on the strengths of both academic units. Learning outcomes could be 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.

VU demonstrates transparency in the reporting of R&D activity (Public records of Research Budgets, R&D outputs, KPIs), and effectively involves students (and academics) in R&D activities through the co-writing of papers. All the components for an effective R&D system are present.

Overall, there is a high quality support structure for students which includes students with different types of disabilities. What remains to be improved is student participation in academic mobility programmes. The University may also want to re-evaluate the policies for the recognition of informal learning to widen access to its programmes.

Detailed systems for assessing students' suitability for entry to both the first and second cycle programmes are in place. Students receive effective individual counselling and their academic progress is well monitored.

Graduates are monitored to assess their level of employment and the skills needed in the workplace. Social partners are involved in the delivery and development of courses and programmes, but interactions with social partners throughout the academic year could be implemented more frequently to ensure the latest thinking in business is integrated into courses and programmes. Career paths for each programme could be more clearly identified, especially in respect of the Business and Law study programme.

Staff demonstrate high quality pedagogical activity and scientific research and many are proficient in English language. Research activities are unevenly distributed with some having a number of publications in English and articles in peer-reviewed scientific journals, whilst others have fewer publications.

The University's physical infrastructure consists of prestigious buildings which have recently been upgraded. The library is well resourced with access to further databases and texts through the University's membership of international academic alliances. Social partners



support the development and upgrading of resources. At the present time students do not benefit from the use of the facilities of both FEBA and BS. If the business field plans to continue with online delivery, or a hybrid version of delivery, further investment will need to be made to support the virtual learning environment and access to it.

Students and other stakeholders are provided with a range of means by which to give feedback and enhance the quality of the learning experience. The opinions of stakeholders expressed through surveys and other feedback mechanisms are generally positive and there is evidence of timely and effective action being taken in response to their feedback. This has improved the quality of programmes in terms of their content and delivery. However, there are relatively low response rates for the centralised surveys. The Study Programme Committees based in the two different Core Academic Units do not currently harmonise their systems for managing and improving quality.

**Expert panel chairperson signature:**

**Brenda Eade**