



CENTRE FOR QUALITY ASSESSMENT IN HIGHER EDUCATION

EVALUATION REPORT
STUDY FIELD of BUSINESS STUDIES
at “Panevėžio kolegija”

Expert panel:

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Study Field Data

Title of the study programme	<i>Logistics</i>	<i>International Business</i>
State code	6531LX063	6531LX096
Type of studies	College studies	College studies
Cycle of studies	First cycle	First cycle
Mode of study and duration (in years)	Full-time (3 years), part-time (4 years)	Full-time (3 years), part-time (4 years)
Credit volume	180	180
Qualification degree and (or) professional qualification	Professional Bachelor of Business and Public Administration	Professional Bachelor of Business and Public Administration
Language of instruction	Lithuanian	Lithuanian, English
Minimum education required	Secondary education	Secondary education
Registration date of the study programme	14/09/2017	28/07/2017

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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 (SER) prepared by Higher Education Institution (HEI)*; 2) *site visit of the expert panel to the HEI*; 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 is evaluated as satisfactory (2 points).

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

1.2. EXPERT PANEL

The expert panel was assigned according to the Experts Selection 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 online on 28 April, 2022.

Prof. Dr. Eneken Titov (panel chairperson), *Professor of Management, Estonian Entrepreneurship University of Applied Sciences, Estonia;*

Prof. Dr. Joanna Ejdyś, *Head of International Department of Logistics and Service Engineering, Faculty of Engineering Management, Bialystok University of Technology, Poland;*

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Rasa Balvočiūtė, *Associate Professor at the Department of Management and Communication, Faculty of Business and Technology, Šiauliai State University of Applied Sciences, Lithuania;*

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Tomi Solakivi, *Associate Professor of Supply Chain Management and Maritime Business, Department of Marketing and International Business, Turku School of Economics at the University of Turku, Finland;*

Mr. Mantas Jonauskis (social partner), *CEO at “ProBaltic Consulting”, Lithuania;*

Mr. Simonas Radzevičius (student representative), *3rd year student of the first cycle study programme “Economics” at Vytautas Magnus University, Lithuania.*

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.	Procedure of recognition of competencies gained through prior formal and non-formal education (approved on 28 October 2020)
2.	Study subject descriptions (Electronic Business, International Business Image Formation, Market Research and Analysis, Transport and Cargo Logistics)

1.4. BACKGROUND OF BUSINESS FIELD STUDIES AT “PANEVĖŽIO KOLEGIJA”

“Panevėžio kolegija” (hereafter referred to as Panevėžys College, also the College) is a state owned public higher education institution established in 2002. The College provides first-cycle college study programmes (professional bachelor degree), non-formal education programmes (in full-time and part-time forms) and applied research and experimental development activities.

The College offers 23 study programmes, divided into 7 study field groups (*health sciences, social sciences, engineering sciences, informatics sciences, business and public management, law and education*). In 2021, 1324 students were studying (approx. 45% in state-funded places) and 181 staff members (incl. 116 teachers in 51.2 posts) were working at the College.

There are three faculties (Biomedical Sciences, Social Sciences and Technology Sciences) and necessary supportive departments (Centre for Studies, Career and Occupation, Practical Training Centre, Information Technology Centre, Science Development and Non-Formal Education Unit and the Library, and other College subdivisions) in the College. The Faculty of Social Sciences administrates Business field study programmes (*Logistics, since 2012 and International Business, since 2017*) among other programmes in the fields of educational sciences and law. In 2021, 597 students studied at the faculty, 170 of them – in the field of Business studies. There are 5 study field (s) programme committees at the faculty – the group of persons coordinating and supervising the study field programmes. Panevėžys College is a member of Transport Innovation Association and collaborates with many companies in the construction sector of the region.

Logistics study programme was accredited on 14/09/2017 and International Business study programme on 28/07/2017.

II. GENERAL ASSESSMENT

Business studies study field and *first cycle* at “Panevėžio kolegija” is given **positive** evaluation.

Study field and cycle assessment in points by evaluation areas

No.	Evaluation Area	Evaluation of an Area in points*
1.	Intended and achieved learning outcomes and curriculum	3
2.	Links between science (art) and studies	3
3.	Student admission and support	3
4.	Teaching and learning, student performance and graduate employment	3
5.	Teaching staff	3
6.	Learning facilities and resources	4
7.	Study quality management and public information	4
	Total:	23

*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

The aims and outcomes of both Business study field programmes - Logistics (state code 6531LX063) and International Business (state code 6531LX096) - correspond to the needs of society and the labour market. The Logistics study programme aims *to prepare business logistics specialists with the latest professional knowledge, practical skills and general abilities, who are able to organise logistics business, manage information, orders, warehousing and logistics product transportation technological processes.* The International Business study programme aims *to train business specialists who are able to work in organisations operating in a multicultural and multilingual business environment or their divisions, know the peculiarities of international business planning and organisation, communicate with foreign partners and clients, analyse and evaluate business processes.*

The trends and labour market demands are monitored, but could benefit with a more systemic environmental scanning approach, including different sources of information with newest technology trends, leading to study programmes' improvements. Based on the needs stemming from social partners, more real business cases and scenarios could be included into the learning process, also including the use of different specialised software and methods.

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

The mission of the College is *"to conduct higher education studies based on scientific knowledge and practice, providing students with modern competencies of economic and social value in this smart society"* and the strategic activities of the College are *"to ensure an innovative study process, content and environment"* and to *"strengthen the partnership of the College with the business and public sector"*.

During the interview with the Faculty management, they expressed that the main strategic focus of the College is to be competitive internationally and especially in the local region. The aims of Logistics and International Business study programmes express this intention, whether the specialists graduating from those programmes are highly expected in the local and international companies. However, the wish to be internationally competitive does not reflect in the vision, mission and goals presented in the College website.

The College has a study programme monitoring system and has set KPIs (which are in coherence with the College goals) to assess the success of the study programmes. The indicators like a number of students' publications, employability of graduates, adaptability of the final works, employers' satisfaction, etc. are regularly measured and monitored. Based on

the recent results, both study programmes are successful and contribute to the achievement of College's goals.

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

Table No. 1. Logistics and International Business study programmes' compliance to general requirements for *first cycle study programmes of college level*

Criteria	Legal requirements	In the Programme (L/IB)
Scope of the programme in ECTS	180, 210 or 240 ECTS	180
ECTS for the study field	No less than 120 ECTS	153/159
ECTS for studies specified by College or optional studies	No more than 120 ECTS	30
ECTS for internship	No less than 30 ECTS	36/42
ECTS for final thesis (project)	No less than 9 ECTS	9
Practical training and other practice placements	No less than one third of the programme	35,7% / 37,6%
Contact hours	No less than 20% of learning	47,4% / 48,7%

Study programmes meet the requirements established by the Law on Higher Education and Research, the Description of Study Cycles, the Description of the Lithuanian Qualifications Framework, the Quality Assurance Regulations and Guidelines of the European Higher Education Area. The learning outcomes were formulated on the basis of the Description of the Study Field of Business studies.

Descriptions of modules (subjects) indicate the correlation between the learning outcomes of the module (subject) studies and the expected outcomes of the business study field programme studies. The description of the module (subject) meets the principles of the Description of the procedure for the management of study field programmes of Panevezys College.

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

The learning outcomes in the College webpage (<https://panko.lt/en/programa/logistikos-vadyba/> and <https://panko.lt/en/programa/tarptautinis-verslas/>) (see table) are slightly different than those provided for the experts in the SER annex, and are focused on the core speciality competences with the integration of transferable skills. Despite the requirement that the learning outcomes of the programme must be presented for the target group in consistent manner and must remain the same notwithstanding the communication channel, the learning outcomes in the webpage are giving better overview of the study programme, are

more understandable and clear than those “formal ones” presented in the SER, and focus on the speciality as required in professional bachelor level. Learning outcomes of the Logistics study programme need to be better integrated with the general competences.

LOs of the International Business programme (https://panko.lt/en/programa/tarptautinis-verslas/)	LOs of the Logistics programme (https://panko.lt/en/programa/logistikos-vadyba/)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Students know modern business management theories. ● They are able to identify and solve international business problems in human resources, finance, marketing, logistics, etc. areas. ● They are able to conduct quantitative and qualitative research into international business environment and market applying reliable research methods and tools. ● They are able to systematize information that allows identifying target markets, select communication strategy tailored to key target segments, and evaluate international business development scenarios. ● Masters the company’s process modeling standards in logistics, accounting, finance, marketing, applying technological, managerial and organizational business innovations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Students are able to evaluate the logistics business environment. ● They are able to manage information. ● They are able to manage orders. ● They are able to manage product storage. ● They are able to evaluate the performance of transport operations and the technology of the transportation process. ● Ensure the quality of execution of the logistic product.

Based on information in the College webpage, the International Business study programme “graduates will be able to start their own business”. This focus is not mentioned either in the learning outcomes or in the aim of the programme.

According to the feedback of the graduates and social partners of the International Business study programme, they do not get/didn’t get good practical and specific skills, but just basics from everything, which does not allow them to be competitive enough in the job market. Social partners from the Logistics area also raised the problem that graduates do not have enough practical skills, although they admit that the theoretical skills are gained.

The process to ensure the coherence between the study programme learning outcomes, subject level learning outcomes and teaching and assessment methods is clearly described and implemented into the study process. Applied study and assessment methods meet the requirements for the 6th level EQF and support the achievement of the learning outcomes.

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

The structure of the study programmes is divided into the four parts – general, core, alternative and elective subjects/modules. Study organisation follows the traditional development of the competences – start with the more general and introductory and then the specific topics will follow to deepen students competences.

Although the learning outcomes mentioned above do not highlight and integrate general/transferable competences, then in the SER two transferable skills are brought up -

decision making and critical thinking skills. According to the SER group's opinion expressed during the interview, those two are the most important skills, because the social partners have expressed the need for such competences in the labour market. The SER and interviewed stakeholders mentioned also the other transferable skills which are supported throughout the studies, but study field and the College seems to miss the mutually agreed directions to prioritise and strategically implement the transferable skills (which transferable skills, why and how must be focused on in the development of the business field study programmes).

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

Students have the opportunity to personalise their studies by choosing part of their study modules (subjects). Two study subjects are selected by students from the list of the free elective study subjects which is updated annually by order of the College Director. The choice and teaching of subjects is organised by the Centre for Studies, Career and Occupation of the College in accordance with the procedure for the organisation of freely chosen subjects of Panevezys College (2017), which is published publicly on the website of the College. Students select three alternative study subjects (including second foreign language) from the study subjects' list provided in the study plan. The study subjects selected in the Logistics study programme account for 8,3% of all the subjects (modules) in the study programme, and 16,7% of all subjects of the International Business programme.

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

The aim of the final thesis of both study programmes is to demonstrate the achievement of all the competences provided in the study programme. Social partners can recommend the topics for the final theses and also emphasise the importance of the internship and practical skills as well as the final work. Based on their experiences in supervising the final works and internships and participating in the defences, they would like to see the students having more practical skills next to the theoretical ones, and the final works being more practical and useful for the companies.

Out of 65 final works in the Logistics study programme during the last 3 years, one teacher supervises almost $\frac{1}{3}$ of the papers (20), the supervisor role is divided mainly just between several people (e.g. one teacher supervising 14 works, another one 13 works). The same trend seems to start also in the IB programme, where out of 5 works defended in 2021, 4 are supervised by one person. Such an approach may decrease the quality of the final papers and variety of the topics. More teachers should be motivated and competent to supervise the students' final works.

Strengths and weaknesses of this evaluation area:

(1) Strengths:

1. The chosen KPIs show clearly how the College is moving toward targeted results and show the achievement of set strategic aims.

(2) Weaknesses:

1. The trends and labour market demands are monitored, but could benefit with a more systemic environmental scanning approach, including different sources of information with newest technology trends, leading to study programmes' improvements.
2. Both study programmes focus too much on theoretical studies and students do not get good practical and specific skills, which does not allow them to be competitive enough in the job market.
3. There is a lack of mutual understanding among the study field developers about the prioritisation and necessity of transferable skills and its' implementation and integration into the studies.
4. The final thesis supervision is divided between several teachers, and this diminishes the variety and quality of final works.

3.2. LINKS BETWEEN SCIENCE (ART) AND STUDIES

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

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

The staff of the College is engaged in various research and development activities, including scientific research and publications, custom project activities and other commissioned project activities, seminars, etc. As part of the scientific activities of the Business studies field programmes, the staff members were participating in the organising committee of the 5th, 6th and 7th international scientific conferences "Science and study tendencies in the conditions of globalisation", organised by the College.

There are some focus areas of research activities, as a group of business and public management and legal researchers has been formed to carry out applied research and experimental development in the Business study field. The topics of the research group include research on the efficiency of sustainable management of transport and logistics processes, the potential for creating high added value in the context of sustainable development, governance of organisations and their competitiveness, legislation, collective labour relations, accounting and financial management. Outside the established research group, it would seem that the research efforts lack strategic focus both concerning focus areas as well as target setting.

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

Description of the link between the content of studies and the latest developments in science, art and technology included in the SER (p. 16) is very general and weak. One of the forms of linking the content of study programme Logistics with the latest developments in science and technology are study visits to enterprises (e.g., private limited liability company "ADAX", "Amilina", "Schmitz Cargobull Baltic LT", "DEVOLD", "IOCO Packaging", etc.).

During the site visit, teachers indicated just a few references to the latest developments in science and technology. Examples included updating software, an IT tool for booking and transport systems, which is constantly being updated. Other examples included references to

the concepts of sustainability and the green economy in the curricula and the legal aspects of mobbing included in the research area.

During the interview with the panel, social partners highlighted the lack of practical competences of students and graduates, indicated poor knowledge of IT softwares and tools, lack of links between theoretical knowledge and conducting business in real conditions.

Also, the link between the study subjects taught in the study programmes and the research carried out by the lecturers should be closer, especially concerning the Logistics study programme.

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

The students are engaged in scientific activities through (research) projects and final works. They also have a possibility to participate in annual conferences organised by the College. However, according to the self-evaluation report, only 5% of students were involved in applied research during the assessed period. This aspect could be reinforced by making student participation in scientific research (outside the final works) a more integral part of the study process.

Strengths and weaknesses of this evaluation area:

(1) Strengths:

1. Established research group is a step towards a more aligned research policy.
2. Teaching staff are active in research efforts, contributing to the quality of the study programme.

(2) Weaknesses:

1. Relatively weak links between developments in science and technology and curriculum content, indicated by the teachers and the social partners.
2. Students' participation in applied research activities is limited.
3. The relationship between the study subjects taught in the study programmes and the research carried out by the lecturers is small.

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

Student selection and admission criteria and process are suitable and public, and meet the formal requirements established by the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport of the Republic of Lithuania.

To strengthen the digitization of academic processes, in 2021 newly admitted students began signing contracts electronically. But the decreasing number of students in the evaluation period raises the alarm. In the International Business study programme, the number of

submitted applications shrank more than 4 times (in Logistics study programme - 2.44 times) during the last 3 years. Number of signed study agreements shrank from 33 to 0 (the International Business programme did not collect the required number of students). To raise the interest of potential students, the College established MIFA (Academy of Mathematics, Computer Science and Physics) in 2020, in which secondary school students of the Panevėžys region are offered additional Mathematics, Informatics, Physics classes in the College classrooms and laboratories with the intention to help pupils to prepare for their exams and get ready for studying in the College.

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

The College has procedures for recognition of prior non-formal and informal learning. Those are implemented according to the *Description of the procedure for crediting partial study outcomes and recognizing competences acquired through formal education at Panevezys College* and the *Description of the procedure for assessment and recognition of non-formal and self-education learning competencies at Panevezys College*.

Prior non-formal studies, which can be recognized if the content is suitable, include passed non-formal education programs and in-service training events, internships done in Lithuania or abroad, individual learning, work and volunteering experiences.

College webpage does not give any hints about the procedure, but teachers explained that the process of recognition of the non-formal former education is the responsibility of the head of the department, the teachers are consulted when there are applications to recognize former formal education. According to the procedure, the assessment and recognition of competencies is carried out by the committee for the assessment and recognition of non-formal and informal learning competencies, formed by the order of the Dean of the Faculty. Unfortunately, the procedure does not clarify who are the members of this committee, and it is not possible to assess the expertise of the committee members to assess the achievement of the intended learning outcomes.

During the interview, the students confirmed that they are informed about the recognition of prior learning possibilities and, if possible (i.e. if they have formerly gained competences), they use them.

3.3.3. Evaluation of conditions for ensuring academic mobility of students

Students are well informed about the possibilities to participate in mobility programs. Unfortunately, during the evaluation period, students of Business study field did not study at foreign higher education institutions under the Erasmus+ due to insufficient financial opportunities (47% of respondents), low foreign language knowledge (44%), lack of self-confidence (32%) and reluctance to leave their jobs (36%). As an optional subject, students are offered the subject of Intercultural Communication aimed at providing knowledge and skills to overcome the fear of a foreign culture and an unknown teaching system, but the College should look for more ways to improve students' mobility.

On the other hand, 17 students of the Business study field have completed internships abroad within the last 3 years. This is 10% of all students studying in the field, which is sufficient. During the analysed period, College managed to attract foreign students under the Erasmus+ program, and to full-time studies. 7 students from Turkey came to the Logistics study programme under the Erasmus+, and 11 students from Turkey, Greece and Spain came to the International Business programme. Also, 6 foreign nationals started their studies in English in the International Business study programme in 2021.

To ensure students' mobility, the College has a good number of agreements with foreign higher education institutions to offer for the potential exchange students. Application of the ECTS credit transfer system is enabled, dissemination of information on the Erasmus program is systematic, financial support (scholarships for learning outcomes and one-off incentive grants) is enabled, as well as uninterrupted communication with the Erasmus coordinator, distance lectures and communication between teachers in a virtual learning environment. College students are also encouraged to communicate with foreign students who have arrived, listen to lectures of foreign teachers, and participate in organised meetings with College students who have returned from partial studies 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

Academic, financial, social and personal support provided to students in the Business study field is appropriate, adequate and effective. All academic information is published on the College website (in the section "For students"). Each student receives relevant information personally in an email account administered by the College. Each academic group is appointed a group tutor and also student-mentors - this mentorship program should be continued and improved. For students combining work and studies, the dean's decree allows lectures to be attended on an individual schedule.

The students with high study results receive a scholarship. Students who were actively involved in College activities are encouraged by one-off scholarships.

The Centre for Studies, Career and Occupation ensures that each student (who meets established criteria) receives financial support from the State Studies Foundation (social scholarships, loans, tuition fee reimbursement, etc.). All students are provided with the opportunity to live in the College dormitory.

However, despite the fact that the College was staffed by a professional psychologist to which students could seek psychological support, there is no such specialist at the moment.

3.3.5 Evaluation of the sufficiency of study information and student counselling

Study information and student counselling are timely and sufficient. Students get personal emails with explanations about their assignments and this information can also be found on the Moodle system. If there are some additional questions or something which is not clear to them, students can always discuss it with the lecturers. Upon signing the study agreement, each student receives the student memo, issued by the College, which briefly provides all the

information relevant to students (addresses of the faculties, contacts, campus map, scheduling principles, services provided to students, etc.). The Chairman of the study programme committee provides more detailed information on the content of the programme and advises students of the study programme on topical issues. Information on studies is publicly available on the College website (<https://panko.lt/category/studijos/>).

Strengths and weaknesses of this evaluation area:

(1) Strengths:

1. The College initiated and runs MIFA (Academy of Mathematics, Computer Science and Physics) to prepare and attract more students.
2. The College enables internships abroad, and the number of students using this opportunity is good.
3. Peer-to-peer tutor and mentorship program.

(2) Weaknesses:

1. No students studying abroad by exchange programs during the evaluation period.
2. There are no professional psychologist services available for the students at the moment.

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

Business field study programs use appropriate teaching and learning methods to achieve learning outcomes, and students' independent work is properly organised. However, the possibility of achieving the learning outcome "Ability to conduct quantitative and qualitative research in the international business environment, market and applying reliable research methods and tools" is questionable. While students in both Business field study programmes prepare course works, final theses and have study subjects such as Market research (International Business students also have study subject Research of Alternatives), at least basic knowledge of research methodology is required for the study of these subjects. But there is no such course in the study programmes that would enable students to acquire knowledge and skills in conducting scientific (applied) research, data processing, interpretation and presentation of results, otherwise, research methodology. Paragraph 1.7 of the SER states that "During the studies of the Market Research subject, students are introduced to the stages of the research organisation, research methodology ...". However, when looking at the students' final works of the Logistics programme, we can see that there are very few such works that include market research. Most of them carry out evaluation of logistics processes. Therefore, it would be appropriate to include a course that would provide

students with more knowledge not only about market research but also other methodological research strategies, especially research on logistics processes.

Students have the opportunity to attend lectures by business representatives and / or foreign lecturers in order to acquire a wider range of knowledge and skills while working in international businesses, but there is no feedback from students on the usefulness of such activities for their studies.

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

The College provides appropriate technical, informational, financial and other study support measures for socially vulnerable groups and students with special needs. The students with special needs are supported by different consultants in the areas of the studies, career, study organisation and social questions. Students have the possibility to study according to the individual study plan which considers their needs and abilities. The College's environment is also adapted for the people with special needs (e.g. specific equipment and accessibility). The College has purchased software for disabled students, which include Dolphin SuperNova (screen magnification program); JAWS for Windows (a program that analyses screen text for people with disabilities); WinTalker Voice v.1.6 (Lithuanian synthesiser); GoodFeel v3 (Braille translation software).

During the evaluation period, seven students with special needs have successfully studied in the Business study field, which also shows that the College's efforts and contributions to this area have been appropriate and relevant.

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

As stated in SER (p. 25), *“after completion of the module (subject) a mandatory survey of students about satisfaction with studies in general, about satisfaction with the subject studied, and about problems they encountered is conducted every time. Students in the first year participate in the survey on adaptation in higher education after the end of the autumn semester”*. However, neither the report nor the interviews with teachers and students revealed how the results of these surveys are used to provide feedback to students and subsequent planning of study progress, except for the outcomes of the semester which are discussed at the dean's office meetings two times a year.

The College has formal procedures and tools in place to monitor student learning progress and provide feedback, but students make little use of them. In particular, feedback to students should be strengthened in order to promote their self-assessment and subsequent planning of study progress.

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

The College has a monitoring system in tact to track employability and career of the study programme graduates. It regularly collects necessary data for analysis and further improvement of the study programmes, while using Career Management Information System

(CMIS) as one of the major instruments. The system is mainly used for local employment, therefore, it is advisable to continue efforts to follow international careers as they can enhance the standing of the College, while promoting the programmes to potential students. The data indicates good employment rates (e.g., 78% of graduates of Logistics programme of 2020 work in the field of studies) and value of the Logistics study programme. The data for the International Business study programme is not yet available, as the first graduates appeared only in 2021. During the online site visit, the graduates positively assessed the value of both study programmes in this regard.

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

The main attitudes on ethical subject matter (academic) behaviour are regulated by the Code of Academic Ethics of Panevėžys College (2018) ([Akademines-etikos-kodeksas-2021.pdf \(panko.lt\)](#)). The College implemented a procedure to protect against plagiarism of student work. Policy of equal opportunities is based on the document Description of the Measures for Implementing and Monitoring the Principles of the Implementation and Enforcement of the Equal Opportunities Policy (2018). Examples of implementing academic integrity, tolerance and non-discrimination roles include integration of the principles into other strategic documents of the College, an obligation for teachers to inform students of the consequences of dishonest behaviour, formal system for monitoring integrity by setting up an Ethics Board responsible for conducting investigations. Students entering the College are required to sign an agreement containing the paragraph at which the student undertakes to study in good faith, and also the graduate has to declare that the final project has been prepared in good faith.

To ensure academic values like equality, justice, non-discrimination, the [College's rules on the prevention of harassment, sexual harassment or victimization](#) were approved in 2018, which stipulate that each member of the College community communicates politely and respectfully, ensures an environment in which the other member does not suffer hostile, unethical, degrading, aggressive or offensive actions. All members of the College community must abide by these rules and actively participate in creating a friendly, dignified, equal opportunities and non-discriminatory environment.

It would be advisable to make the main documents relating to ethics and equal opportunities policy public in English.

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

The procedure for submitting and examining appeals is governed by the Regulations of Appeals of Panevėžys College (2017). The procedure involves the submission of complaints to the Dean who appoints a special board to decide what to do about the complaint and appeals. The complaints procedure is known to everyone and is publicly available on the website. Students confirmed that they are familiar with the complaints procedure, for example, if they disagree with the results of an examination.

There were no appeals in the Business field study programmes during the period under analysis (SER, p. 27). However, not always the lack of appeals and complaints confirms the effectiveness of the study process, and the College should consider whether the students have enough possibilities for the appeals and complaints when there is an issue which needs to be solved or at least reacted to.

It should be added that the students can express their dissatisfaction and indicate areas for improvement using open questions included in the survey conducted at the end of each course/semester.

Strengths and weaknesses of this evaluation area:

(1) Strengths:

1. Well established and clearly described (on the College webpage) professional ethics issues, and a system ensuring equal opportunities and respectful communication.
2. Students' awareness of the complaints procedure.
3. Regular monitoring of the employment data and implementation of the gathered feedback.

(2) Weaknesses:

1. There is no such course in the study programmes that would enable students to acquire sufficient knowledge and skills in conducting scientific (applied) research, data processing, interpretation and presentation of results (otherwise, research methodology).
2. Lack of available English versions of the main documents regarding ethical and equal opportunities issues.
3. Although student learning progress is monitored, feedback to students to encourage self-assessment and subsequent planning of learning progress is not always provided.

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

The qualifications of the teaching staff are in line with the requirements of the Law on Higher Education and Research of the Republic of Lithuania and the Description of General Requirements for the Provision of Studies (2021). All teachers in the Business study field have a qualification degree equivalent to a master's degree. About 40% of the volume of modules (subjects) in the field of study is taught by lecturers with a scientific degree, of which almost 70% have at least 3 years of practical work experience in the field of the taught subject. Although the SER (p. 28) says that there are 27 teachers in the IB study programme, Annex 4 (List of the teachers in the study fields subjects) names just 6 full-time teachers, offering 12 subjects (there are 25 mandatory subjects + more than 20 alternative and optional subjects in the IB programme). Based on Annex 4, there are 13 teachers teaching in the Logistics programme, covering 22 subjects (out of 26 + alternatives). If the remaining subjects are

taught by the visiting lecturers, then how and based on which criteria they are hired and involved is unclear and is not reflected in the available documentation/procedures.

Annex 4 does not reflect correctly the teachers workload and participation in particular study programmes, because some of the listed subjects are not taught in this particular study programme (Annex 2) (e.g., subjects Online Business and Business Management should be the parts of IB programme, but are not listed in the programme (Annex 2)) – and not all the teachers and subjects are listed. According to Annex 4, the number of the teachers is not sufficient, especially for the IB study programme.

For the teachers who do not have practical work experience or who have previously acquired it, the College offers the opportunity to update or acquire practical skills by participating in practical internships. Although this possibility is not popular among the academic staff, the College contributes to the practical approach of the studies and involves practitioners in the study process (e.g., guest lecturers from the companies, company visits, practical study assignments for the students, etc.). The new pedagogical personnel are recruited taking into account the requirements for the execution of the study field programme. Every five years, the performance of the teachers is evaluated.

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

The College acknowledges the importance of academic mobility for the development of the competence of the academic staff. Therefore, teachers of the College are encouraged to participate in academic mobility to develop their teaching, exchange ideas with international colleagues as well as to identify international project possibilities. The College supports international mobility with an international relations coordinator whose responsibility is to inform the Dean and the Chairs of the study programme committees about different possibilities for international mobility.

The College does have a well-functioning system for the staff to participate in academic mobility. The teachers are responsible for including their aim for internships etc. to their annual activity plan, whereas the College administration is the decision maker in prioritising the requests based on predefined criteria.

It would seem that the procedure and resources for academic mobility are sufficient, as according to the self-evaluation report, none of the requests have been declined, and 14 teachers (58% of the teaching staff) have participated in academic mobility during the assessed period. However, academic mobility concerns mainly full-time teachers. Even though this might be a rational choice from the perspective of resources, the College could consider whether expanding the possibilities to part-time teachers would reap benefits.

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

The College considers the competence development of teachers as a strategic priority. The teachers are recommended to develop their knowledge through international mobility, practical internships, seminars, courses and other qualification events. The College has reserved funds for financing these development activities, but relies also on outside project funding. The teachers are obliged to annually report their plans on the improvement of

qualifications which can be considered a systematic way of ensuring the competence development of the entire staff.

As the teachers are required to report their plan for competence development in their annual activity plan, this also means that competence development is allocated part of their working time. This can also be considered a good way of incentivizing the teachers to develop themselves. Further, the teachers are also obliged to report their improvement of the past year. The outcomes of the improvement of qualifications of teachers are assessed every five years in the context of the certification of teachers and researchers of the College.

Also, it should be noted that special emphasis has been put on the language skills of the teachers, as almost 60% of all the lecturers of the Business study field have participated in academic English courses during the evaluation period. This will most likely have a positive impact also on the overall competence development of the staff.

Strengths and weaknesses of this evaluation area:

(1) Strengths:

1. Competence development of the teaching staff is a strategic priority.
2. International mobility of the teaching staff is well-planned.
3. Language proficiency of teaching staff is well-considered.

(2) Weaknesses:

1. Academic mobility concerns mainly full-time teachers, with little or no involvement of part-time teachers.
2. The study programmes are not covered by a sufficient number of the teachers.

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

The material and methodological base of the Faculty of Social Sciences of Panevėžys College is sufficient and suitable to carry out the Business study field programmes.

The equipped facilities for the implementation of Logistics and International Business study programmes are located in four buildings of the College, at the address Klaipeda St. 1 and 3 and in the main building at Laisves sq. 23 in Panevėžys.

A recently equipped specialised logistics auditorium covers 4 areas: a specialised transport manager's workplace, a freight transport and route planning workplace, and a carrier's work and rest accounting workplace, a cargo vehicle (van, semi-trailer) loading and sealing training place, a specialised workplace for a warehouse worker.

All College buildings are accessible for disabled people. Electronic resources are freely available to all College students and teachers (e.g., subscription databases, university ebook platforms, etc.).

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

The College monitors the state and needs for the learning resources, and regularly invests into its renewal. It is advisable to continue modernisation of laboratory equipment with the latest warehouse management systems (WMS), transportation management systems (TMS), enterprise resource planning (ERP) software in order to improve students' practical competences required by the labour market.

Strengths and weaknesses of this evaluation area:

(1) Strengths:

1. The material and methodological base is sufficient and suitable to carry out the Business study field programmes.

(2) Weaknesses:

Not identified.

3.7. STUDY QUALITY MANAGEMENT AND PUBLIC INFORMATION

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

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

The Quality Management System of the College (QMS) has been certified in accordance with the requirements of ISO 9001:2008 and consists of: a) the Quality Manual, b) the Manual of Internal Quality Assurance Systems for Studies, c) 20 descriptions of the procedures (SER, p. 38). The quality assurance system for college studies is determined by the Manual of the Internal Study Quality Assurance System (2020). Documents are available on the College intranet.

The procedure for introducing changes and updating the study programmes and curriculum is familiar to teachers. The proposal of changes goes to the Study Program committee, which makes a decision. The College's QMS is well implemented and offers the possibility to monitor, assess and improve the implementation of the College's strategy. It is positive that the College regularly publishes up-to-date information about the College's performance, incl. activity reports and study programme reports.

Panevėžys College values both internal and external interested parties and their requirements for the QMS. College constantly monitors and analyses information about the stakeholders as well as their requirements (surveys, round tables, forums, meetings). Every year the Management Review is presented in the Directorate, where performance is analysed in detail.

In the last Risk Register (based on the audits and evaluations, the possible risks are described and collected in the risk register) version of 2020, there were 10 risks identified. Taking into

account risk occurring probability and risk impact on processes, risk control measures are foreseen. The audit program for 2020 was implemented. There were 5 internal audits oriented towards lecturers' working load calculation procedure, institutional self-assessment, and study subjects certification procedure, documents and record management control, and distant teaching organisation procedure.

The results of student surveys provide a basis for improvement activities. The highest rated teachers participate in the competition for the best college teacher. The College has approved a description for granting nominations for the Lecturer of the Year, Researcher of the Year, and Employee of the Year. The best ones are awarded. An important element of the internal quality assurance system is the dissemination of the achievements of the QMS.

The quality assurance system is clearly defined and designed. Responsibilities are clearly defined. An important and valuable element of the system is the systematic and publicly published reports, which present the results of the system's functioning and actions for its improvement.

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

There is a good and operational quality assurance system at the College. A formal stakeholders' representation system includes the students and social partners into decision making procedures regarding the study programmes' improvement, especially in the form of participation in the study programme committees. Surveys are extensively used to collect feedback from stakeholders, while publishing the results on the College website and planning of the corresponding steps to improve the content of the programmes or the study process. Social partners participate in the internship programmes, also in the process of the formulation and defence of the thesis. There is a good level of inclusion of the social partners in informal communication with the College, but it could be done on a more regular basis.

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

Panevėžys College publicly provides information about studies, their evaluation and improvement processes and outcomes. Each year published Activity reports include information regarding: cooperation with stakeholders and impact on the region, social responsibility; management; strategic plan implementation; strategic plan implementation according to different programs; problem areas; control of finances; human resources management; quality assurance and functionality and effectiveness of internal quality assurance systems. The information available to the public relates to study programmes, their objectives and expected learning outcomes, qualifications and career opportunities, admission requirements, the outcomes of student employment (presented in the College activity reports), outcomes of student surveys on the quality of studies, feedback to students (their observations and suggestions after the surveys are implemented).

Results of the feedback are discussed in the meetings of the directorate, dean's office and the Study Programme Committee. Students are informed on the College's website

(<https://panko.lt/2019/04/16/griztamasis-rysys-studentams/>) how, based on the results of the surveys, their suggestions have been taken into account and what corrective actions have been taken (p. 42, SER).

The information is collected systematically and is comprehensive.

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

The College involves students in the QMS and values their opinion about the study programmes and study quality. The results of the student survey are thoroughly analysed and improvement activities are planned and implemented.

Results of the students' feedback are discussed in the meetings of the directorate, dean's offices and study programme committees. The feedback received at the end of semester is discussed with the teachers. Based on the results of the surveys, the students' suggestions have been taken into account and corrective actions have been implemented.

In general, students' opinion about the quality of their studies is positive. It is noteworthy that if students get the negative experience, they go to the administration and things usually are quickly solved.

Strengths and weaknesses of this evaluation area:

(1) Strengths:

1. High rate of student participation in the survey due to mandatory participation.
2. Attaching significant importance to student feedback based on the students' surveying process.
3. Collection, use and publication of information on studies, their evaluation and improvement processes and outcomes is comprehensive and well organised.
4. An important and valuable element of the quality assurance system is the systematic and publicly published reports, which present the results of the system's functioning and actions undertaken for its improvement.

(2) Weaknesses:

1. There is a good level of inclusion of the social partners in informal communication with the College, but regular surveys and/or interviews would be good and systematic bases to have and use the social partners' feedback in the best possible way.

IV. EXAMPLES OF EXCELLENCE

The expert panel is happy to appreciate the College for the systematic and publicly available reports, which present the results of the quality assurance system's functioning and actions undertaken for its improvement.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS

Evaluation Area	Recommendations for the Evaluation Area (study cycle)
Intended and achieved learning outcomes and curriculum	<p>The trends and labour market demands are monitored, but could benefit with a more systemic environmental scanning approach, including different sources of information with newest technology trends, leading to study programmes' improvements.</p> <p>Find possibilities to bring more practical approach into the studies to enable the graduates to be even more expected in the labour market.</p> <p>Analyse and agree on the most important transferable skills in the Business study field and integrate the development of those competences systematically into the studies (learning outcomes, content, study and assessment methods, etc.).</p> <p>Raise the number of competent teachers ready and motivated to supervise the final works.</p>
Links between science (art) and studies	<p>Links between developments in science and technology and curriculum content should be more emphasised.</p> <p>Encourage and involve more students into the research activities</p> <p>The relationship between the study subjects taught in the study programmes and the research carried out by the lecturers must be more direct and beneficial from the studies point of view.</p>
Student admission and support	<p>Find possibilities and support for the students' participation in the international study exchange (esp. outgoing mobility).</p> <p>Enable the professional psychologist services for the students.</p>
Teaching and learning, student performance and graduate employment	<p>It would be appropriate to include a separate course on research methodology that would provide students with more knowledge not only about market research but also other methodological research strategies, especially research on logistics processes.</p> <p>Ensure integrity, tolerance and non-discrimination policy existing at the College to be publicly available in language versions that enable all stakeholders to be aware of them.</p> <p>Find opportunities to encourage students' self-assessment and subsequent planning of learning progress.</p>
Teaching staff	<p>The College could consider expanding the academic mobility</p>

	<p>possibilities to part-time teachers.</p> <p>The College must have a clear understanding which subjects are taught by the full-time teachers and which by the visiting lecturers and how the competence and involvement of the visiting lecturers is assured.</p>
<p>Learning facilities and resources</p>	<p>It is advisable to continue modernisation of laboratory equipment with the latest warehouse management systems (WMS), transportation management systems (TMS), enterprise resource planning (ERP) software in order to improve students' practical competences required by the labour market.</p>
<p>Study quality management and public information</p>	<p>There is a good level of inclusion of the social partners in informal communication with the College, but regular surveys and/or interviews would be good and systematic bases to have and use the social partners' feedback in the best possible way.</p>

VI. SUMMARY

Panevėžys College (“Panevėžio kolegija”) is a higher education institution providing the necessary study fields especially in the region, following the local peculiarities and needs. The comprehensive quality management system based on the Deming circle, and systematic monitoring and implementation of the stakeholders' feedback and analysis results allows the College to be a trustworthy partner for the staff, students and employers. High quality systematic and publicly available reports, which present the results of the system's functioning and actions undertaken for its improvement, shows the commitment and good quality culture, where the parties are ready to accept problems and challenges and plan the improvements and implement those.

There are dedicated teachers teaching in the business study field who have plenty of possibilities to develop their competencies through different trainings, mobility and other support provided by the College. Having good teaching and learning skills, the teachers need to strengthen and update their practical knowledge and skills with the help of the social partners, to bring a more practical approach also to their study and assessment methods. The links between scientific and technological developments and the content of curricula should be more strongly emphasised in the knowledge transferred and the competences taught. More systematic approach to labour market and business field trends scanning and inclusion into the programme should be rooted into the everyday processes.

The study support system is well organised and offers a good study environment for the students. Students are well informed about the study processes and procedures – high use of recognition of prior learning and awareness about ethical principles as well as appeal process are just some evidences to confirm that. The material resources (access to databases, etc.) are sufficient to support the studies, and the College pays attention to the continuous and feedback based development of the infrastructure.

Although the College's main focus is on the local market, internationalisation must be prioritised as well – not just because of having the International Business study programme, but being competitive in our globalising environment also in the longer run. Higher numbers of student exchange, foreign lecturers, more and modern study materials reflecting the international environment and latest scientific trends and research results are highly expected.

Expert panel chairperson signature:

Prof. Dr. Eneken Titov