



CENTRE FOR QUALITY ASSESSMENT IN HIGHER EDUCATION

EVALUATION REPORT
STUDY FIELD OF POLYMER AND TEXTILE TECHNOLOGY
AT VILNIAUS KOLEGIJA

Expert panel:

1. Prof. dr. Diana Gregor-Svetec, *(panel chairperson), member of academic community;*
2. Associate Professor dr. Muhammad Tausif, *member of academic community;*
3. Assistant Professor dr. Ewelina Pabjańczyk-Wlazło, *member of academic community;*
4. Ms. Agnė Biskytė, *representative of social partners;*
5. Ms. Greta Markūnaitė, *students' representative.*

Evaluation coordinator – *Dr. Ona Šakalienė*

Report language – English

© Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education

Vilnius
2022

Study Field Data*

Title of the study programme	<i>Fashion Technologies and Business</i>
State code	6531FX003
Type of studies	College studies
Cycle of studies	First cycle
Mode of study and duration (in years)	(3,5 years)
Credit volume	210
Qualification degree and (or) professional qualification	Professional Bachelor of Technology Sciences
Language of instruction	Lithuanian
Minimum education required	
Registration date of the study programme	26-01-2010

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

CONTENTS

I. INTRODUCTION	4
1.1. BACKGROUND OF THE EVALUATION PROCESS	4
1.2. EXPERT PANEL	4
1.3. GENERAL INFORMATION.....	5
1.4. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY FIELD/STUDY FIELD POSITION/STATUS AND SIGNIFICANCE IN THE HEI	5
II. GENERAL ASSESSMENT	7
III. STUDY FIELD ANALYSIS.....	8
3.1. INTENDED AND ACHIEVED LEARNING OUTCOMES AND CURRICULUM	8
3.2. LINKS BETWEEN SCIENCE (ART) AND STUDIES	13
3.3. STUDENT ADMISSION AND SUPPORT	16
3.4. TEACHING AND LEARNING, STUDENT PERFORMANCE AND GRADUATE EMPLOYMENT	19
3.5. TEACHING STAFF	23
3.6. LEARNING FACILITIES AND RESOURCES.....	26
3.7. STUDY QUALITY MANAGEMENT AND PUBLIC INFORMATION	27
IV. EXAMPLES OF EXCELLENCE	30
V. RECOMMENDATIONS*.....	31
VI. SUMMARY	33

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 remote visit to the HEI was organized on the 17th of May, 2022.

Expert panel:

6. Prof. dr. Diana Gregor-Svetec, *(panel chairperson), member of academic community;*
7. Associate Professor dr. Muhammad Tausif, *member of academic community;*
8. Assistant Professor dr. Ewelina Pabjańczyk-Wlazło, *member of academic community;*
9. Ms. Agnė Biskytė, *representative of social partners;*
10. Ms. Greta Markūnaitė, *students' representative.*

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.	Changes in students number
2.	
...	

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

The textile and clothing sector still plays an important role in the European manufacturing industry. It is a strong, flexible industry which has responded to the challenges of a globalised economy and turned from traditional labour-intensive industries for mass production towards specialty products, high value-added products, new applications and mass customization.

In Lithuania, higher education institutions (HEI) that perform textiles and clothing study programs in the group of technology fields are Vilnius Kolegija, Utenos Kolegija and Kaunas University of Technology.

Study programme *Fashion Technologies and Business* is part of the study area Technological Sciences in the study field Polymers and Textile Technology. It is performed at the Faculty of Arts and Creative Technologies, which is part of the Vilnius Kolegija (VK). Vilnius Kolegija is an accredited state higher education institution (HEI) of the Republic of Lithuania, established in 2000. It provides professional higher education, applied research and professional arts in biomedicine and natural, humanitarian, social and technological sciences and arts. The VK consists from 7 faculties: Electronics and Informatics, Economics, Business Management, Health Care, Pedagogy, Arts and Creative Technologies, Agrotechnologies and offers 44 study programs, with 6382 students and 460 lecturers. The VK ranks first in national rankings and is one of the leading HEI in Lithuania in terms of student and staff mobility. Besides national, several activities and co-operation in international organisations and associations are reported.

The Faculty of Arts and Creative Technologies founded in year 2013 is organized in 4 departments: Fashion Design, Scene Art, Cultural Management and Dance Pedagogy, Rhythmic Music and offers 7 study programs: Dance Education, Music Theatre, Popular Music, Cultural Activity Management, Fashion Design, Image Design, Fashion Technologies and Business. *Fashion Technologies and Business* study programme (SP), registered in 2010 is first cycle college study. The VK is a full member of Lithuanian Apparel and Textile Industry Association (LATIA) giving opportunity to faculty for close cooperation with Lithuanian clothing and textile companies in preparing professional specialists for this sector. LATIA is a member of The European Apparel and Textile Confederation EURATEX and participates in the activities of Textile European Technology Platform. Also some national and international

projects and exhibitions related with the study field were carried out at VK in the period from 2018 till 2021.

.....

II. GENERAL ASSESSMENT

Polymer and Textile Technology field study and **first cycle** at **Vilnius Kolegija (VK)** 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	4
6.	Learning facilities and resources	4
7.	Study quality management and public information	4
	Total:	24

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

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

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

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

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

III. STUDY FIELD ANALYSIS

3.1. INTENDED AND ACHIEVED LEARNING OUTCOMES AND CURRICULUM

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

3.1.1. Evaluation of the conformity of the aims and outcomes of the field and cycle study programmes to the needs of the society and/or the labour market (not applicable to HEIs operating in exile conditions)

(1) Factual situation

The textiles and clothing sector is still an important part of the EU economy, and with new direction toward inventions, digitalization, sustainability and circular economy aims to strengthen industrial competitiveness. Also in Lithuania, textile, clothing and leather industry have a long time tradition. In 2019, this sector accounted for about 1,5% national GDP. The sector in the EU is based on small businesses, in Lithuania 98% companies are small and medium-sized. In spite of the large job losses in Europe, they still employ 1.5 million people. In Lithuania, the clothing industry is still an important source of employment, and accounts for about 2,5% of total employees. In Europe, the textiles and clothing sector generally require a more skilled workforce. In order to follow new development guidelines of the textiles and clothing manufacturing industry, and to maintain a lead in fashion, image and creativity, medium and above all highly skilled professionals are needed.

As stated in the SER the biggest strength of the Lithuanian textiles and clothing sector is the professional knowledge needed during the product preparation and production stages (p.6). According to LATIA companies lack clothing constructors, technologists in cutting, clothing, chemical finishing and material innovation. As stated in SER the *Fashion Technologies and Business SP* is focused on meeting the needs of the Lithuanian fashion industry, i.e. preparing more fashion designers capable of working in today's fashion industry under transformation and digitalisation conditions (p.14).

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The aims and outcomes of the *Fashion Technologies and Business SP* are in conformity with the needs of the Lithuanian labour market. Information gathered during the meetings with employees of VK and social partners has revealed good cooperation of VK with social partners from the clothing sector. They are involved in all forms of the study programme (provide recommendations for the improvement of the SP, practical students training in real working conditions, the evaluation of the final projects).

The activities aimed at the general public are present, though there should be more different activities included. It is not clear if the involvement of SP and VK in its professional, scientific and artistic production is fulfilling a social role of promoting values of sustainable production, addressing environmental issues and promoting standards that help in the development of a modern, advanced society. Responsible technology transfer and more tight involvement with the general public is important and should be more present.

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 VK has prepared a strategy for the period 2021-2025, which is accessible on the website also in English language.

Vision of the VK is to be an innovative and international higher education institution, actively involved in building a socially responsible society. Mission of the VK is to provide modern higher education studies in line with European standards, to ensure the development of nationally and internationally recognized applied research and professional art. The objective is also to offer lifelong learning/teaching that meet the needs of the Lithuanian and international labour market and to build up an organisational culture focused on the collaboration of community members and social responsibility within the community.

According to the VK, the objective of the *Fashion Technologies and Business SP* is to prepare specialists capable of researching the needs of the fashion market, developing demandable and sustainable clothing collections, modelling clothes from various materials for various figures in traditional and digital ways, selecting optimal clothing production technologies, analysing the results of production activities and planning the development of activities as well as creating one's own business.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The main aim of *Fashion Technologies and Business SP* is well defined, and is in line with the VK strategy and mission. The aims and learning outcomes of *Fashion Technologies and Business SP* are on the level of studies in the field of textiles and clothing technologies in other European countries. *Fashion Technologies and Business SP* follows one of the objectives of VK to meet the needs of the Lithuanian labour market, where specialists in the clothing sector are needed. SP has 87% of credits that are field study connected and 25% of credits located for the internship. From 27 learning outcomes, 18 of them are mainly specific skills which result in gaining professional competences. General competences gained correspond to some extent to the VK strategy, to be a socially responsible and creative community. As the credit volume of SP is 210 credits, there is a possibility to offer more subjects that give general competence and enable life-long learning. Also, greater emphasis should be placed on conducting applied research, professional art and project activities which is one of the VK missions. Emerging themes, such as digitalisation, innovation, circular economy and sustainability should be more emphasised in SP.

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

(1) Factual situation

The first cycle study programme is performed in compliance with the Descriptor of the study fields of Technology (Order No V-922 of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania of 27 July 2015), Description of Study Cycles (Order No. V-1012 of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania, 2015) and the Description of General Requirements for the Provision of Studies (Order No. V-1168 of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania, 2016).

Table 1. Compliance of the program with the general requirements for College first cycle study programmes.

Criteria	Legal requirements	In the Programme
Scope of the programme in ECTS	180, 210 or 240 ECTS	210
ECTS for the study field	No less than 120 ECTS	183
ECTS for studies specified by College or optional studies	No more than 120 ECTS	27 (15+12)
ECTS for internship	No less than 30 ECTS	51
ECTS for final thesis (project)	No less than 9 ECTS	15
Contact hours (including distance contact hours)	No less than 20 % of learning (unless otherwise stated in the descriptor of study field)	50-56.8%

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

In the SER the study plan of *Fashion Technologies and Business SP* for the academic year 2020-21 is given, from which the distribution of subjects by semesters, distribution of students workload within the study subjects and credits allocated are evident. From what is shown in the document the compliance of the curriculum design with the legal requirements for College first cycle study programmes is substantiated. Other two documents in the SER show general and professional competences, special and general learning outcomes of SP in the study field Polymers and Textile Technology, specifically Clothing technology, and the link between study subjects and competences. From these documents the sufficiency of the *Fashion Technologies and Business SP* to ensure learning outcomes and conformity with the requirements of the legislation for college studies is evident. The principles of composition of study credits based on student workload are described. Credits are defined on the level of each study subject and they correspond to students' activity and workload. It can be confirmed that the *Fashion Technologies and Business SP* is relevant and adequate for the qualification degree Professional Bachelor of Technology Science.

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

In SP different teaching/learning methods are used. The study subject outline contains a description of which methods are included in each study subject. In the SER different teaching/learning methods are listed, such as lecture, inclusive lecture, problem-based teaching, interpretation, narration, group discussion and debate, mutual learning, preparation

and reading of notices, film review, demonstration, key terms, brainstorming, concept map, independent analytical writing works, group work, observation-fixing, testing, interviews, modelling, project, performance self-assessment, etc. (p.10). Forms of the independent work planned are tests, homeworks and term papers, reviews, reports, colloquiums, preparation for the knowledge check, etc.. Each subject ends with an exam or project evaluation.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The aim of *Fashion Technologies and Business* SP is explicit and the intended learning outcomes (27) are set quite realistically and can be reached. Coherence of the aims and intended learning outcomes of the SP with the learning outcomes of the study subjects is evident. Most study subjects give 4 or 5 learning outcomes, practices mostly 7 or 8, only few of them give 2 or 3 learning outcomes. More than 50% of learning outcomes are connected to specific skills, nearly 20% to social skills. Students acquire twice as many professional competencies as general ones. Learning outcomes that would lead to developing sustainable clothing collections, which is one of the aims of SP are missing. The VK should include more study subjects with learning outcomes in emerging themes, such as digitalization, innovation, circular economy and above all sustainability.

The VK provides students with various teaching/learning methods. Most of them are student-centred teaching techniques. Such diversity of methods suggest a good probability that intended learning outcomes can be reached. Also different forms of independent work are applied, depending on the subject. From the SER it is not evident which teaching/learning methods are used at each subject, and how diverse they are within each subject. The student achievement assessment methods used are examinations and assessment of projects. In this way the assessment of intended student knowledge and skills is difficult. For the assessment of student knowledge and skills diverse methods of assessment are recommended and should be applied.

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

(1) Factual situation

The *Fashion Technologies and Business* SP is conducted as a full-time mode of study in 7 semesters. The study load is 30 credits each semester, where one credit averages 26.7 hours of student's work. SP is composed from general (15 credits), optional (12 credits) and study field subjects (183 credits), the latter being compulsory study field subjects (117 credits), practices (51 credits) and final project (15 credits). One subject from the group practices is included each semester, whereas the optional subjects picked from the List of optional subjects are included in SP in the 4, 5 and 6th semester. In the last semester final project is carried out.

Based on the adoption of the Smart Specialisation Programme within the framework of the state strategy, a change in the study program was carried out in 2014-2017 with introducing two new subjects. During 2018-2021 the updating of the SP was done, with changing the content of some subjects and introducing new software to practical work.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

According to the SER the content of study subjects is regularly reviewed and updated, though it is not clear if this is done annually or over a longer period. No new subjects were introduced

in the last period (2018-2021), only two in the previous one (2014-2017), and one optional subject is planned to be included in future. The continuity of the program is maintained with only minor changes. The modification of the SP is limited to the changes in the content of study subjects. It is commendable that new software is being introduced, resulting in upgrading the practical work. In the future, only minor changes limited to updating the content of subjects are planned. It would be recommendable to also include major changes with introducing new subjects addressing emerging themes (sustainability, innovative technologies, digitalisation, circular economy).

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

Specialisation is not part of the SP. According to the SER the personalization of student work is done with choosing 3 optional subjects (9 credits) and at the final project, where students can choose a topic within three fields: Fashion product design, Fashion product technologies or Fashion product business.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

Specialization is not included in the structure of the SP itself, however, the program allows a certain degree of personalization. Students can choose 3 elective subjects from the list of optional subjects, which is constantly updated. Students have the opportunity to study one foreign language (English, German or French) as a compulsory subject in the first semester. Personalization of study is made possible through the selection of the final project, where students choose a topic from three areas of clothing technology. It is clear that students have only limited opportunities to personalize their study. With redistribution of credits in favor of more elective subjects, students could personalize the structure of SP according to their personal learning objectives and gain broader competences.

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

(1) Factual situation

The final project is prepared following the “General Requirements for Written Papers” given by the order and the whole procedure is regulated by the order on the “Approval of the Procedure for the Preparation and Defence of Professional Bachelor's Final Projects in Technology Sciences”. Students of the *Fashion Technologies and Business* SP use the methodological recommendations for the preparation of the final project that are prepared by the Fashion Technologies and Business Studies Committee. The final project (15 credits) is prepared independently by students.

The topic of the final project can be focused on the design of fashion products, fashion product technologies and organisation of fashion production or fashion product business prospects. According to SER final projects are prepared considering the need of the social partners. In the last period 13 final projects have been prepared based on the orders of companies and institutions as well on the business orders to address current problems. (p.11,12)

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The VK has developed a procedure for preparation and defence of the final project and the whole procedure is regulated by the order. The final project is defended at a public meeting of the Final Theses Defence Commission, consisting of 3-5 members, where two-thirds are representatives of the employers/social partners.

Students can choose a topic for the final project that is in the area of their interest. The final project is prepared independently by students in some cases in cooperation with the social partner. 20% of final projects were done in this way in the period 2018-2022. Involvement of social partners provides the necessary industrial relevance to the projects. The VK should encourage further such cooperation and strive to increase the number of final projects done in real working conditions and situations.

The final projects are well structured, focused on practical applications and are in compliance with the field study and cycle requirements. From the final projects presented it is evident that students are able to combine knowledge from different areas and apply the acquired knowledge in practice. The majority of final theses are targeted to the engineering design activities. However, the word design in the titles could be slightly misleading, a misunderstanding with “fashion design” can arise. In the future the titles of the final thesis should be defined more precisely.

Strengths and weaknesses of this evaluation area:

(1) Strengths:

1. SP is on the level of studies for a Professional Bachelor degree in the textiles and clothing sector on national and international level.
2. Students gain good professional competences needed for the textile and clothing sector and meet the current needs of the Lithuanian labour market.
3. Cooperation with social partners is well developed.
4. High employability and high market demand of the graduates of the SP is present in the country.

(2) Weaknesses:

1. SP is mostly in line with the VK strategy, though the emerging themes are not sufficiently included in the learning outcomes of SP.
2. Students have only limited opportunities to personalize their study.
3. Insufficient involvement of social partners at revisions of SP and implementation of final projects.
4. Opportunities to develop life-long learning are present, though the activities to develop soft skills are not incorporated enough in SP and activities of VK.

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

According to the SER, the research and experimental development of teaching staff and students of the SP in the valuated period were carried out in the following fields:

- Digitalisation and 3D virtualisation of fashion product design and production processes;
- Smart textile materials; smart, protective and specialised clothing;
- Traditional and innovative technologies of fashion products and modern and historical design solutions;
- Socially responsible fashion business and the introduction of fashion products into the market;
- Solutions for the sustainable development of sustainable fashion and products.

The list of concrete development activities include participation in many conferences and business or scientific events, projects directed towards the development of student skills (two projects of the Research Council of Lithuania for students' research practice: "3D Scanning and Custom Clothing Spatial Design Integration Study" in 2017-2018 and "Modeling, Virtualisation and Optimisation of Fashion Industry Processes Based on FlexSim Program" in 2020-2021), international and national exhibitions and scientific publications (3 in the evaluated period). The teaching staff of the SP took part in international and national projects and outsourced works for business (in total 6). The teaching staff and students of the SP are also involved in educational activities, science festivals and other events. Students take part in different types of practice (cognitive, educational, industrial, creative, entrepreneurship, and final practice) which also are conducted with industrial partners and other HEIs.

The VK adopted plans for research (applied science and art) activities development which in the years 2021-22 also included the investment in upgrading the Clothing Materials Laboratory by adapting it to textile materials research, the results of which are used in innovative 3D virtual digital design applications of clothing.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The VK conducts many activities (research, applied science and art) that are directly related to the field studies. This includes, among others, conferences, seminars, projects, and expert activities of the teaching staff. The VK created well-established cooperation with external partners, who are involved in the SP creation and are actively participating in different assessment processes of the students' works. The VK also organises seminars and guest lectures provided by experts from the industry/business or by offering students' final projects realised on the order of the industry. These collaboration results are translated into strong connections and supporting ecosystems, as well as in commissioning work, which brings income for the VK. The SER mentioned 5 areas where research and experimental development were carried out. The VK also annually establishes research plans of activities with appropriate planning of finances for the execution of these activities, which involves e.g. the investment in the upgrade of the Clothing Materials Laboratory by adapting it to textile materials research, the results of which are used in innovative 3D virtual digital design applications of clothing. The research activities are adequate with regard to the profile of the unit and activities implemented by the VK for the field of research (art) related to the field of study are sufficient.

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

(1) Factual situation

In the SER many activities related to fashion business and design, events (festivals, conferences, Open days, other events) and cooperation with the industry and social partners are described, however insufficient information was provided on the participation of students in these undertakings (statistics, roles of students and its impact on their development). Very interesting project are students' scientific practice projects funded by the Research Council of Lithuania: 2017-2018 "Research of 3D Scanning and Integration of Customised Clothing Spatial Design" and 2020-2021 "Modelling, Virtualisation and Optimisation of Fashion Industry Processes on the Basis of FlexSim Software", however to little information was provided on the scope of the project and how it integrates the latest developments in science, art and technology.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

Strong connection to industry is visible, which is evidenced in the scopes of students' final projects and the involvement of teachers and students in many activities characteristic for the fashion sector, however the mentioned activities mainly include festivals, conferences, seminars. The course content included as many as 6 types of practice (educational, entrepreneurial, cognitive, final, industrial, creative) as an integral part of the SP which are strongly relevant to the content and study objectives of the studies and confirm the very practical dimension of education in this field. The VK teaching staff apply for funding and lead educational projects which allows students to develop skills linked with the latest developments like 3D scanning and visualisation and customised clothing spatial design. However, the development of the teachers in their research activity should be more emphasised and VK should provide opportunities and support for teachers to involve more in strictly understood research activities (e.g. scientific publications, application for projects, international cooperation etc.). The link between the content of studies and the latest developments in science, art and technology is present and indicates the potential for the development of SP in the field in the future.

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 section provides descriptions of different activities in which students, as well as teachers, can take part and increase their skills and competencies. The VK creates different opportunities for students to take part in activities consistent with their study cycle, however these opportunities are mainly connected to the fashion and design sector, business opportunities and industry cooperation.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

As described in SER and evidenced through online visit some actions were undertaken to create conditions to enable students to be involved in scientific (applied science, art) activities. Based on the onsite visit, students and alumnis of the SP are satisfied with the level of skills and competencies students of SP receive. Also, graduates of the SP are very quickly employed after finishing studies or even during studies which indicates a high level of practical teaching received in the framework of the SP. Thus, the conditions for students to get involved in scientific activities consistent with their study cycle are provided.

Strengths and weaknesses of this evaluation area:

(1) Strengths:

1. Very strong connection to the socio-economic system and well-established cooperation with industrial partners
2. VK and teachers of SP organise many different activities characteristic to the fashion sector in which students can take part and gain different experience.
3. The scientific activities of the teachers represent the most current trends in the field (e.g. socially responsible fashion, sustainable fashion and harmonious development of products, digitalisation and 3D virtualisation) which allows us to assume that teachers include this knowledge in the educational process.

(2) Weaknesses:

1. Majority of final projects should be conducted in cooperation with the industry. The VK should take more focus on this type of cooperation with social and industrial partners.
2. The scientific publication activity (total number of publications in peer-reviewed scientific publications, number of citations) is rather low.
3. Evidence of successful transfer of knowledge (patents, documented innovations) is missing, suggesting that this activity is not well addressed.

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

Admission to the *Fashion Technologies and Business* SP is carried out during the general admission to Lithuanian higher education institutions organised by the LAMA BPO. All procedures meet the requirements of public laws. All information required for prospective candidates is available, procedures are in place and statistics concerning admission is presented. The VK provides a comprehensive information on its website.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

Student selection and admission criteria are in accordance with the public law and its requirements. All requirements, criteria and organisational information are provided - information about admission procedure and contact point is provided on the VK's website. The VK has a relatively big number of non-state-funded applications which can suggest a good reputation of the institution in terms of employability. The section does not provide the average admission scores and the analysis on how the tendencies to enrol in individual study programmes are reflected in the context of the field. However, based on site visit, actions are taken by the VK to increase the interest among possible candidates e.g. by school visits, open lectures, seminars and other events.

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

The VK has developed and adopted procedures for recognition of foreign qualifications, partial studies and prior non-formal and informal learning and its application. The VK provided the opportunity to become “listeners” of SPs which later can be merged into regular studies, to prepare and defend their final thesis.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The procedures for recognition of foreign qualifications, partial studies and prior non-formal and informal learning are in place, however it is unclear whether procedures are available on the website and in English. The SER does not provide information on data of the last 3 years on accredited and non-accredited cases of recognition of results and the reasons for non-accreditation. More attention to the procedures for recognition of non-formal and (or) informal learning should be clarified and efforts should be given to make it more accessible and transparent to the potential students.

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

(1) Factual situation

The VK students are able to participate in Erasmus+ exchange study and practice programme. Each academic year at the beginning of the autumn and spring semesters VK students are informed during “Information seminars” about opportunities to participate in the Erasmus+ exchange study and practice programme. After the programme students are encouraged to share their international experiences on VK social media accounts. During the period of this review 7 students participated in study academic mobility and 2 participated in graduate practise academic mobility.

The VK offers 30 ECTS one-semester studies in the field of polymers and textile technologies to foreign students in the English/Russian languages. During this analysis period 3 (1 from Belarus, 2 from India) international students used this opportunity.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

Based on provided data from the VK it is clear that the in-coming and out-coming student numbers in academic mobility are quite low. There is no data in SER and the VK did not provide information about the reason for that. During the meetings with SP representatives it was clear that students don't use these mobility possibilities mostly due to personal reasons. The reasons for non-attendance of the mobility seems to be rather private than institutional. During the meeting with SP representatives it was clear to see that all the information regarding academic mobility is accessible to the students. The VK has an Erasmus coordinator that provides information to the students, the faculty hosts multiple events per year and provides all the information via digital channels: Moodle, internal systems, emails and social media.

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

The VK provides financial support for the students by granting social scholarships, disability benefits, state-sponsored loans, and providing housing for the students. In the financial support distribution process Elders of the groups (elected representatives of the academic group) and members of the Faculty Students' Representation are involved.

The VK provides the opportunity for students to participate in sports clubs (basketball, volleyball, handball, football, table tennis, athletics) and participate in art collective activities. Students are encouraged with one-off bonuses to participate in various events, projects, artistic and sporting collectives of VK.

Student opinion is represented by their academic groups elected representative and all of the students opinion is represented by Students' Representation Body who also defends students interests and rights.

Students of VK can receive free psychological support.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

During onsite visit it was noticed that students can reach the teachers and administration easily in case students need any additional support with the study subjects or SP. It was also noticed that the administration, academic staff and students have a strong bond and mutual trust, students have no problem asking and receiving the needed information regarding study process, tasks or final thesis. Some of the administration staff are also academic staff of *Fashion Technologies and Business SP*, so the students can address their problems directly to them.

It is clear to see that students have a good relationship with the student representation association from the beginning of the study process. Students receive information via elected representatives of the group, the student representation association periodically provides surveys and feedback regarding the study process.

Students can live in the HEI provided dormitories. During the meetings with SP representatives it was ensured that the dormitory quality is good considering the price (double room is about 60 EUR per person, triple is 60 EUR per person - this price is normal in the capital of Lithuania). The process of getting a place in the dormitory was described as clear and easy: once a student is in the HEI system, he or she can apply for a place. It is possible to change the room if it is not suitable for the student.

3.3.5 Evaluation of the sufficiency of study information and student counselling

(1) Factual situation

First year students participate in an "information seminar" and get introduced to the programme during the "Introduction to studies" subject; services provided by the units; the values of the VK; documents governing studies; library resources, etc.

When starting a new study subject the objectives, learning outcomes, content and other criteria of the study subject are introduced to the students. The VK organises periodical meetings with the students to discuss their problems. Also a survey at the end of each semester, on the quality of teaching is organised in order to provide feedback.

The VK uses an electronic information system for students where all the academic staff and students can communicate via email.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

After the meetings with SP representatives it is clear that the faculty implements sufficient introductions for the first year students in the first year of SP. Students are properly introduced to the VK and their programme, and also get additional help and introductions from the Students' Representation Body and appointed tutors. During the meeting it was ensured that students have a strong bond with the Students' Representation Body and periodically receive information via the group elected representative. Students fill multiple surveys throughout the year from the administration and Students' Representation Body - all the results are published on the VK website. The survey results are also sent to each lecturer to the lecturer's email, so that they can self evaluate and make changes accordingly.

During the site visit it was evident that the students and the faculty administration have a close, strong bond. Students receive multiple consultations from the teachers and are able to get an appointed time for private consultations.

Strengths and weaknesses of this evaluation area:

(1) Strengths:

1. A strong bond in the community and mutual trust between students and academic staff.
2. Strong communication for academic mobility.

(2) Weaknesses:

1. The number of students going on an Erasmus+ studies and internships abroad is relatively low which might be also due to the COVID-19 pandemic and general weakening of the willingness to participate in mobility due to unpredictable development of circumstances. Although, the VK should provide as many as possible opportunities for students to take part in mixed types of mobility and internationalisation in-house (shorter study visits, visiting professors' lectures etc.).
2. Low completion rate of student surveys (about 50% total), which may not fully show all areas for improvement. The College, as well as the Student Representation, should take steps to encourage students to take part in the surveys.

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

Students are introduced to the study subject during the first lecture of each semester. The evaluation of examinations and projects is organised during the 4-week exam session. The evaluation of the achievement of studies is regulated by the Description of the Evaluation of Study Achievements. Subject studies are completed by examination or independent work (project, practice report). The tasks of independent work in the SP are carried out systematically and the knowledge is checked evenly during the semester according to the schedule drawn up by the subject lecturer.

The VK states that it takes into consideration the opinion of students and organises periodical meetings with the student groups.

All first-year students sign a Declaration of Integrity. The subject of the Introduction to Studies introduces the norms of academic ethics and the consequences of non-compliance with them. From 2021, the VK applies a check of study written papers, which aims to assess whether there are no cases of plagiarism in study written papers.

Graduates of the study programme have the right to study postgraduate studies in higher education institutions in Lithuania or abroad. Also all career management services provided by VK students are accessible to students of the programme: career information, cognition of career opportunities, career development and career counselling.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The VK maintains a diversity of teaching methods and forms of assessments and periodically interviews the students for improvements, students are provided with information about study processes from the beginning. The faculty takes actions to ensure the integrity of students by implementing a Declaration of Integrity and using plagiarism software. During the meetings with SP representatives it was confirmed that these actions to ensure academic integrity are working and the academic staff always informs the students about their work progress.

Participation in laboratory work and lectures is mandatory, but there is a possibility to study in a session methodology and individualise their lecture schedule.

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

(1) Factual situation

The infrastructure of the VK is developed enough for the students with special needs (lifts, sloping driveways at the entrance to the building and the hall, toilets for disabled people, all auditoriums are without door sills, ect.). The study process is also corrected if needed for students with special needs (translators of the Vilnius City Sign Language Centre, oral tests instead of online tests)

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The VK provides good conditions ensuring access to study for students with special needs. There is financial help and opportunities to individualise the study process and equipment is provided in the libraries and classrooms for students with special needs. During the analysed period the SP had two students with special needs. During site visit the academic staff ensured that the spaces are fully equipped to ensure safe and comfortable study space for students with special needs.

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

(1) Factual situation

The evaluation of the achievement of studies is regulated by the Description of the Evaluation of Study Achievements. The teachers provide students with continuous feedback (written or oral) on learning outcomes and progress achieved. The evaluation of examinations and projects is organised during the 4-week exam session. The schedule of the examination session is approved by the Dean and it is published at least 2 weeks before the beginning of the session. For each study subject, the programme describes an evaluation formula with evaluation criteria and weighted factors based on the following principles: reasonableness, reliability, clarity, utility, impartiality. Students see their scores and weighted averages in the Academic Information System (AIS). The study programme committee takes into account the student input. At the suggestion of students, the Faculty was equipped with a leisure area, a black wall, and bean bag chairs.

Providing continuous feedback to students is one of the most important factors in encouraging students to take personal responsibility for learning progress. During this evaluation, the teacher provides students with continuous constructive feedback (in writing or orally) on learning outcomes that enable perspectives to be predicted, enhance progress made, and encourage students to analyse achievements or their gaps. After each practice, a questionnaire survey is carried out to find out the students' expectations and analyse the results achieved. At the end of each semester, a survey of students on the quality of teaching of subjects studied in the Semester is organised in order to provide feedback.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

There are HEI and department level systems in place to monitor the student progress. This includes the monitoring of learning outcomes. There are no reported details of monitoring student engagement within the programme. The student input into the committee is mentioned but this appears to be social in nature rather than an academic focus. The scaffolding of student assessments is detailed and mentioned student responsibility, but the concrete examples for student self-reflection have not been provided. It might be useful to use a combination of formative and summative assessment activities to further scaffold the student academic journey.

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

(1) Factual situation:

The employment indicators of the programme graduates presented show high employability rates of graduates. Career management services for VK students and graduates are provided directly and/or remotely by Career Centre, and include career information, cognition of career opportunities, career development and career counselling (SER p.26).

Employers are surveyed about professional practice, they are involved in the Commission for the Defence of Final Projects and have the opportunity to express their position about the need for a SP, study results and content.

Alumni and social partners are satisfied with the quality of study and the preparation of students for the labour market.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis:

The statistics of graduates' employability is excellent. The institution's close relationship with industry and social partners determines good student employment rates and prepares them for the needs of the labour market. Career management services of VK and career monitoring of graduates is well developed.

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

(1) Factual situation

All first-year students sign a Declaration of Integrity, the subject of the Introduction to Studies introduces the norms of academic ethics and the consequences of non-compliance with them. A strong focus on academic integrity is given in the final thesis. If the academic offence is established, the exclusion of the student from the study programme is considered. The Code of Academic Ethics of VK defines the main provisions of the ethical academic conduct of the members of the VK academic community. The Code maintains and upholds the most important academic values: justice, honesty, respect for the person, tolerance, professional, scientific and civic responsibility. The Code is supervised by the Academic Ethics Committee which comprises 9 members: 7 appointed by the Academic Council; 2 – Students' Representation Body. There have been no cases of violation of the principles of academic integrity in the *Fashion Technologies and Business* SP in the last 3 years of studies.

The infrastructure of the Faculty is developed enough for the studies of students with special needs. Students with disabilities are provided with information on access to financial and academic support during their studies, individual knowledge check schedules are prepared as needed. Alternative assessment formats are also offered. The library reading room is equipped with spaces for computers for disabled people with a wheelchair; there is a book magnifier for the weak-eyed.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The policies to ensure academic integrity are in place, and there are mechanisms to deal with these matters. We find it surprising that there were no reported cases of academic integrity. The staff and students provided a different view of the Academic Integrity process and the use of the similarity checking software through Moodle. It would have been useful to include details of the quality checks and any external examination of the programme assessments and teaching activities. The SER included details on additional measures in place for disabled students. In general, there are limited details provided on tolerance and non-discrimination part of the section.

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 examination of appeals and decision-making in VK are carried out in accordance with the provisions of appeals of VK. Upon receipt of the appeal, a Commission of Appeal of 5 members is set up. There were no appeals, complaints submitted by students in the evaluated field of study in the last 3 years.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The VK has a policy in place to handle any appeals but the details of the policy and composition of the members of the commission are not included. The details on the timeframe on the decision to appeal are not provided. We find it surprising that there were no complaints/appeals. Generally, during the pandemic, there have been higher instances of student complaints as the universities transitioned to online/blended learning.

Strengths and weaknesses of this evaluation area:

(1) Strengths:

1. The study environment is fully adapted for students or employees with special needs.
2. There are VK and department level systems in place to monitor the student progress, and student outcomes data appears to be good.
3. Student study progress is systematically monitored, and feedback is provided to students on their submitted work and/or examinations.

(2) Weaknesses:

1. The Academic Integrity process needs to be clearly defined. The students can be provided support and example access to the similarity at the start of cycle but this should not happen later on.
2. The drop-out rate is on the higher side. However, we understand this is impacted by the single entry system.
3. The College can consider conducting assessment mapping to assess the diversity of assessment and opportunities of self-reflection for students.
5. The student input into the SP committee needs to do more on the academic matters.

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 personnel of permanent teaching staff in the SP is stable, and the subjects taught between teaching staff are rarely changed. In the Polymer and Textile Technologies study field, the ratio between the number of students and teaching staff in lectures and practicums is optimal, with an average of 7 students per group per lecturer. During the period analysed, 16 lecturers worked in the study programme: 6 of them (55 %) have at least half of the full-time position. 5 lecturers recruited by competition and working half full-time or at a higher workload. Around

78 % lecturers working in the Programme have more than 8 years of pedagogical work experience.

Table 2.: Teachers meet the general requirements for the first cycle studies.

Requirement stated in Description of General Requirements for the Provision of Studies	In the study programme of the first cycle
No less than 10% of study field subjects must be taught by scientists or recognized artists.	11 lecturers teach subjects in the study field: 1 professor (9 %), 8 lecturers (73 %), one of whom holds a doctorate and 2 assistants (18 %).
More than half of all teachers of College level study fields must have at least 3 years of practical work experience in the subject of the field being/to be taught.	All teaching staff have at least three-year professional experience, of which 6 lecturers (55 %) have at least half a full-time position and are classified as full-time lecturers.

The VK employs its graduates and provides the novice teachers with the education in academic matters. The procedures for the admission of teaching staff are governed by different regulations describing the necessary conditions for employment and the modus operandi of the employment. The teaching staff submit a report by the end of each academic year, which shall report on the activities carried out during the academic year planned e.g. contact work with students; non-contact work; implementation of applied research and development; competence development and organisational activities etc.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The number, qualifications, competences, and practical experience of the teaching staff are adequate to ensure the aim and learning outcomes of the study field and comply with the requirements set in the other public laws. The College has developed and implemented procedures for hiring new teachers and selection criteria. The VK monitors the competence and activity of its teachers annually, based on teacher surveys about their activities in the last year. The employed teaching staff meets the ministerial requirements. The student-teacher ratio is on the average level, allowing for study-centred quality education.

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

The VK offers support for its teaching staff for participation in the mobility, which is expressed by many examples of completed mobility. During the period analysed, 3 programme teaching staff members left for teaching visits and internships: In 2018-2019, 1 lecturer left for a teaching visit and in 2019-2020, 2 teaching staff members under the ERASMUS+ exchange programme left for a teaching visit. In 2019-2020, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, one visit of the Programme's lecturer was postponed to the next academic year and

one visit was cancelled. The VK also introduced an internationalisation in-house, which is executed through, among others, visiting professors (as much as 5 professors arrived to teach) and arrivals of professionalists from foreign HEIs. Also, the VK undertakes efforts for marketing the mobility by organising different events like for example International Teaching Weeks every year, or creative workshops etc.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The VK offers good conditions for participation in mobility and encourages its teaching staff to participate in mobility. Teacher activity in this field seems to be quite high, even taking into account the pandemic situation falling within the evaluation period. In addition, the VK is actively addressing the pandemic problems by offering in-house internationalization opportunities and inviting specialists from other centres and countries to deliver lectures, conduct workshops, etc. The conditions for ensuring teaching staffs' academic mobility can be evaluated as very good and effective and there is a big potential for the increase in the number of mobilities in future years.

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

(1) Factual situation

The teaching staff of the program systematically improve their subjects, didactic and general competences in national and international professional development events in Lithuania and abroad (conferences, courses, seminars, etc.). The improvement of competences is included in the full-time workload of the teaching staff. In 2018, an action plan was prepared to improve competencies of academic and administrative staff, which included didactic, distance education and competence development of researchers which involves personally planning of the type of training by teacher him/herself. The ELAB system was introduced for increase in the didactic competencies of the academic staff.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The VK offers many opportunities to develop different competencies for its teachers. Noteworthy is the establishment of a separate unit dealing with the education and improvement of teaching and research competences of the scientific personnel - ELAB. The development of competences and training have been permanently included in the VK's policy and regulations. During the site visit, teachers declared that they have a wide range of full support in terms of competence development, flexible working hours and financial support for their development. Thus conditions to improve the competences of the teaching staff can be evaluated as very good.

Strengths and weaknesses of this evaluation area:

(1) Strengths:

1. A systemic and central approach to education of its teaching staff, including financial support and reorganisation of the workload.
2. Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, teachers seem to be interested in taking part in mobility which gives hopes for future increase of participation.

(2) Weaknesses:

No weaknesses.

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 VK has sufficient premises and technical equipment to organise studies, research and artistic activities. The Faculty is equipped with student independent work and recreation areas, as well as a dining area. The computer network has 132 computer workstations, 96 of which are designed for the execution of the study process. The library and reading room of the faculty are equipped with 12 computer workstations.

At the beginning of 2021, the library foundation of VK consisted of over 150 thousand copies of 45 thousand title documents. Every year, the library acquires an average of 2.5 thousand new documents (44 % in foreign languages) and subscribes to over 110 periodicals of titles (50 % in foreign languages, 15 in electronic form). About 120 thousand euro per year are allocated to the library's activities. All electronic resources are available to VK users remotely or on campus.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

It is evident that the physical infrastructure is sufficient to meet the needs of the students and staff. This includes classrooms, library resources and software access. The financial commitments and new projects to enhance student academic experience were detailed during the visit.

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

(1) Factual situation

The report lists the key design/fashion design software and equipment (digitiser, plotter and 3D scanner). The key laboratories/studios are Materials laboratory (testing equipment and samples), Clothing technology/design auditorium, and Clothing design studio. The practice centre is equipped with 19 industrial sewing machines, household sewing machines, dummies and ironing equipment. The VK has signed agreements with the social partners.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

There are a range of software provision available but generally are limited to design and fashion areas. For example, there is no provision for textile design software. The provision of specialist laboratories in the field of studies is also visible. It is important for Fashion students to have an understanding of textile manufacturing/technology. The details of the agreements with social partners are not included in the report but the on-site visit provided the details.

Strengths and weaknesses of this evaluation area:

(1) Strengths:

1. It is evident that the physical infrastructure is sufficient to meet the needs of the students and staff. This includes classrooms, library resources and software access.
2. The strong and close connection with the social partners in providing learning facilities to carry out practical work is evident.
3. The financial commitments and new projects to enhance student academic experience were detailed during the visit.

(2) Weaknesses:

1. There is no significant weakness identified, but attention should be paid to plan investment in the laboratories for knowledge about textile manufacturing. This would support both teaching and research activities.

3.7. STUDY QUALITY MANAGEMENT AND PUBLIC INFORMATION

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

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

(1) Factual situation

The main document of the VK's internal quality management system is the Quality Management Manual of VK. The quality assurance processes of study fields (programmes) in the implementation, evaluation and improvement of the study programme are established by the Description of the Procedure for Internal Quality Assurance of the Study Fields of VK. The implementation of the program is coordinated by the Department of Fashion Design and the Committee for Polymer and Textile Technology study field, which comprises seven members and meets twice an academic year. The Department also prepares an annual report on the quality monitoring of the study field and submits it to the Field Committee. To ensure the quality of the studies, periodic and non-periodical surveys of students, teaching staff, graduates and employers are carried out in accordance with the Description of the Procedure for the Feedback to Improve the Quality of Studies of VK .

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

There are College, faculty and study programme level quality assurance systems in place. The document includes the details of the systems but there is limited information on the functioning and outcomes of these committees/authorities. The composition of the Department committee is not given.

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

(1) Factual situation

The students, teaching staff, graduates and employers are involved in periodic and non-periodic surveys in accordance with the Description of the Procedure for the Feedback to Improve the Quality of Studies of VK (SER p.37).

Social partners and students are involved in the internal quality assurance supervision chain. They provide proposals, participate in the decision making process on the evaluation and improvement of the SP. Social partners and potential employers are invited to become members of the Final Theses Defence Commissions.

According to SER the involvement of students in the quality assurance of the SP is carried out through student surveys. Students collaborate with the social partners, actively participate in various social and educational activities, and support campaigns.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

Social partners and students are involved in internal quality assurance.

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

(1) Factual situation

The involvement of students in the quality assurance of the Programme is carried out through student surveys at the end of each semester to assess the quality of teaching. The aggregated results of the surveys of students and graduates are published on the VK website and submitted to the Faculty competition and certification commission, which takes decisions on the suitability of candidates for the post of teaching staff member. The following units of the Faculty collect and compile data on the implementation of field studies: Department, Study Division, Study Organisation Division.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The section describes the details of surveys and approaches to disseminate the results. This includes the responsibilities of the different VK departments. It would have been useful to include the results of the surveys.

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

In accordance with the Description of the Procedure for the Feedback to Improve the Quality of Studies of VK, at the end of each semester, the Department organises student surveys to assess the quality of teaching subjects, as well as surveys of the assessment of practices that are conducted outside the Faculty, the surveys of the final year students about the study programme, and surveys on the reasons for termination of studies. The results of the surveys are analysed by the Department, the problems that have emerged during the surveys and possible solutions to them are discussed. The results of the surveys are used to update the content of the subjects taught, to provide for new forms and methods of study and knowledge checks. Discussions on the feedback results are organised with the students and teaching staff of the Programme, they are also discussed at the Dean's meetings, and the aggregated survey

data are published on the website of the Faculty. The surveys of employers on the need for a study programme, study outcomes and content are conducted every two years.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

A range of surveys and measures are reported to be in place to capture the feedback of different stakeholders. The summary/insight of the surveys is not included in the report.

Strengths and weaknesses of this evaluation area:

(1) Strengths:

1. There are university, faculty and study programme level quality assurance systems in place.
2. Social partners and students are involved in internal quality assurance.

(2) Weaknesses:

1. A shortcoming noticed was, that the summary of the survey results was not provided.

IV. EXAMPLES OF EXCELLENCE

Core definition: Excellence means exhibiting exceptional characteristics that are, implicitly, not achievable by all.

If, according to the expert panel, there are no such exceptional characteristics demonstrated by the HEI in this particular study field, this section should be skipped / left empty.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS*

Evaluation Area	Recommendations for the Evaluation Area (study cycle)
Intended and achieved learning outcomes and curriculum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constantly revisions and improvements of SP following the trends and emerging themes in the study field, such as sustainability, innovations, digitalisation, and circular economy are needed. Those topics should be included in the content of more study subjects and their learning outcomes, as well as with introducing new study subjects into the SP. • Give students more opportunity for personalization of their study, above all to gain more general, soft skills. • In more study subjects include learning outcomes related to development of research skills and life-long learning. • Further encourage cooperation with social partners at implementation of final projects to increase their number done in real working conditions and situations.
Links between science (art) and studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apart from many good practices that VK has already introduced, continuous efforts should be taken to increase the internationalisation of the SP which will strengthen the international context of the education in the field. Similarly, VK should take more focus on this type of cooperation with social and industrial partners especially by increasing the number of final projects conducted in the framework of cooperation with them. • The scientific activity and transfer of knowledge should be encouraged by the management, resulting in an increased number of publications, citations, patents and innovations.
Student admission and support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The VK should provide as many as possible opportunities for students to take part in mixed types of mobility and internationalisation in-house (shorter study visits, visiting professors' lectures etc.) which could be an important part of education in pandemic reality and for students who travelling outside of country is impossible due to personal reasons. • The College, as well as the Student Representation, should take steps to encourage students to take part in the surveys. This should be a permanent element of the education quality assurance system.
Teaching and learning, student performance and graduate employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Academic Integrity process needs to be clearly defined. The support and example access to the similarity check at the start of the cycle could be provided to students, but this should not happen later on. • The college can consider conducting assessment mapping to assess the diversity of assessment and opportunities of self-reflection for students. • The student input into the SP committee on the academic matters needs to be more present.

Teaching staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VK should continue to pursue a good policy of supporting the development of teachers and enable them to improve their various competences, including teaching competences.
Learning facilities and resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The college should consider to set-up laboratories for knowledge about textile manufacturing.
Study quality management and public information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All survey results should be summarised and shared with all the stakeholders.

*If the study field is going to be given negative evaluation (non-accreditation) instead of RECOMMENDATIONS main **arguments for negative evaluation** (non-accreditation) must be provided together with a **list of “must do” actions** in order to assure that students admitted before study field’s non-accreditation will gain knowledge and skills at least on minimum level.

VI. SUMMARY

Main positive and negative quality aspects of each evaluation area of Polymer and Textile Technology field study at Vilnius Kolegija (VK):

The expert panel gives a positive evaluation of the 1st cycle *Fashion Technologies and Business* study programme (SP) at the Faculty of Arts and Creative Technologies, Vilniaus Kolegija (VK), with all areas of evaluation assessed as “good” or “very good”.

Major positive aspects:

- The main aim of *Fashion Technologies and Business* SP is well defined, and is in line with the VK strategy and mission, which will ensure further development of SP. SP is on the level of studies for a Professional Bachelor degree in the field of Textiles and Clothing Technologies on national and international level.
- Students gain good professional competences needed for the textile and clothing sector which meets the current need of the Lithuanian labour market resulting in high employability of graduates.
- Very strong connection to the socio-economic system and well-established cooperation with industrial partners provide a great background for including social and industrial partners into education related processes.
- VK and teachers of SP organise many different activities characteristic to the fashion sector in which students can take part and gain different experience.
- The scientific activities of the teachers represent the most current trends in the field (e.g. socially responsible fashion, sustainable fashion and harmonious development of products, digitalisation and 3D virtualisation).
- VK adopted a systemic and central approach to education of its teaching staff, including financial support and reorganisation of the workload.
- A strong bond in the community and mutual trust between students and academic staff was established which is beneficial for students development.
- Student study progress is systematically monitored, and feedback is provided to students on their submitted work and/or examinations.
- The study environment is fully adapted for students or employees with special needs.
- There were no appeals, complaints submitted by students in the evaluated field of study in the last 3 years.
- There are university, faculty and study programme level quality assurance systems in place. Social partners and students are involved in internal quality assurance.

Suggestions for improvement:

- Specialization is not included in the structure of the SP itself, however, the program allows a certain degree of personalization. With including more elective subjects and redistribution of credits in favor of elective subjects, students could personalize the structure of SP according to their personal learning objectives and gain broader competences and skills which will enable life-long learning.
- The updating of the SP is limited to the changes in the content of study subjects. Though the emerging themes are partly included in the content of study subjects they are not sufficiently included in the learning outcomes of SP. It would be recommendable to include major changes with introducing new subjects addressing

emerging themes (sustainability, innovative technologies, digitalisation, circular economy).

- Majority of final projects should be conducted in cooperation with the industry. The VK should take more focus on this type of cooperation with social and industrial partners.
- Scientific activity, publishing and documented transfer of knowledge should be more promoted.
- Academic Integrity process needs to be clearly defined. The students can be provided with the support and example access to the similarity check at the start of cycle but this should not happen later on.
- The College can consider conducting assessment mapping to assess the diversity of assessment and opportunities of self-reflection for students.
- The student input into the SP committee needs to be more present on the academic matters.
- The College should consider to set-up laboratories for knowledge about textile manufacturing.
- All survey results should be summarised and shared with all the stakeholders.

Expert panel leader

Professor dr. Diana Gregor-Svetec