



CENTRE FOR QUALITY ASSESSMENT IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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**EVALUATION REPORT**

**STUDY FIELD of BUSINESS**

at Klaipėdos valstybinė kolegija

**Expert panel:**

1. Assoc. prof. Dr. Natalie Aleksandra Gurvitš-Suits (panel chairperson), *academic*;
2. Assoc. prof. Dr. Zarina M. Reinhard- Charlesworth, *academic*;
3. Prof. Dr. Iveta Ludviga, *academic*;
4. Mrs. Rita Karabanovienė, *academic*;
5. Mr. Žilvinas Kulvinskis, *representative of social partners*;
6. Miss Indrė Baltakytė, *students' representative*.

Evaluation coordinator – *Mr. Gustas Straukas*

Report language – English

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## Study Field Data

|  |  |
|--|--|
| Title of the study programme                             | <b><i>Logistics Management</i></b>           |
| State code   | 6531LX007                                    |
| Type of studies  | Professional bachelor studies                |
| Cycle of studies   | First  |
| Mode of study and duration (in years)                    | Full-time (3 years)                          |
| Credit volume  | 180  |
| Qualification degree and (or) professional qualification | Professional Bachelor in Business Management |
| Language of instruction                                  | Lithuanian                                   |
| Minimum education required                               | Secondary education                          |
| Registration date of the study programme                 | 30/08/2002                                   |

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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 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 on 16<sup>th</sup> of May, 2022.

**Ass. Prof. dr. Natalie Aleksandra Gurviš-Suits**, *Department of Business Administration, Tallinn University of Technology, Estonia.*

**Prof. dr. Iveta Ludviga**, *Department of Business, RISEBA University of Applied Sciences, Latvia.*

**Ass. Prof. dr. Zarina Reinhard-Charlesworth**, *Haute Ecole de Gestion Arc, University of Applied Sciences and Arts, Western Switzerland.*

**Mrs. Rita Karabanovienė**, *Socialinių mokslų kolegija (SMK), Lithuania.*

**Mr. Žilvinas Kulvinskis**, *“Gusania”, social partners’ representative, Lithuania.*

**Ms Indrė Baltakytė**, *Faculty of Economics & Management, Vytautas Magnus University, Lithuania.*

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.  | Internship methodology and report example. |
| 2.  | Examples of Final Thesis.                  |
| 3.  | Description of study subjects.             |

#### **1.4. BACKGROUND OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION FIELD STUDIES AT KLAIPĖDOS VALSTYBINĖ KOLEGIJA.**

Klaipėdos valstybinė kolegija (hereinafter referred to as the KVK) is a state higher education institution of the Republic of Lithuania conducting studies based on professional practice, applied research and experimental development as well as providing higher college education, and creating conditions for lifelong learning. In 2009 Klaipėdos valstybinė kolegija was merged with Klaipėdos verslo ir technologijų kolegija. In August 2011, KVK changed the status from a budgetary institution into a public institution.

KVK has three faculties (Business, Technology and Health Sciences) and 10 departments supporting the implementation of 23 study programmes in 21 fields of study. The Faculty of Business (hereinafter – FB) is one of the three KVK faculties. The faculty contains three departments (Finances and Accounting, Pedagogy, and Business Administration), which offer eight study programmes. As of October 2021, the number of students enrolled at KVK was 2,496: 782 (31.33 per cent) at the Faculty of Business, 1,038 (41.59 per cent) at the Faculty of Health Sciences and 676 (27.08 per cent) at the Faculty of Technologies.

The latest accreditation took place in 2016 and the program (business study field program) was granted a maximum of six years.

## II. GENERAL ASSESSMENT

*Business* study field and first cycle at **Klaipėdos valstybinė kolegija** is given a **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                            | 5                                |
| 3.  | Student admission and support                                      | 3                                |
| 4.  | Teaching and learning, student performance and graduate employment | 4                                |
| 5.  | Teaching staff   | 3                                |
| 6.  | Learning facilities and resources                                  | 4                                |
| 7.  | Study quality management and public information                    | 2                                |
|     | <b>Total:</b>  | <b>24</b>                        |

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

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

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

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

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

### III. STUDY FIELD ANALYSIS

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

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

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

According to SER (p. 5) the aim of the study program is “to train a highly qualified manager, who is able to manage client service, transportation, warehousing, inventory management, and logistic cooperation processes and operations”.

Learning outcomes identified for the program are coherent with the aim of the program, and the VI Qualification Level Description of National Lithuanian Qualifications Framework addressing all the main descriptions, are clearly formulated and divided into five groups: knowledge and application, research, special, social, and personal skills. Complexity level of the learning outcomes corresponds to National Lithuanian Qualifications Framework qualification requirements and the European Qualifications Framework (EQF).

The evaluated program is developed and regularly updated in line with the requirements of social partners discussed during the roundtables and joint meetings as well as in line with the feedback from alumni.

The program is also closely attached to the latest requirements of the labour market in the Western Lithuania region. The aim and learning outcomes of the program aim to provide the local market with young professionals able to work in all areas of logistics, supported with strong practical and theoretical knowledge and skills.

The program has a strong regional approach and is closely related to the needs of the labour market and the rapidly developing logistics field. The program also contributes to sustainable development of business and society by implementing the course of Sustainable Logistics and Occupational Safety. The more in-depth mandatory study of Russian and English languages was recently introduced. During the visit, the expert panel noted that all the stakeholders are committed to the strong modernization of the study program and are actively participating in its regular updates. During the visit, social partners expressed a high level of cooperation with the KVK and it became evident that these learning outcomes are developed in tight cooperation with social partners and are regularly reviewed in line with

the latest changes on the labour market. During the meeting with stakeholders, it was mentioned that “The biggest advantage is that the program covers the content of all logistics chains: warehouse, supply, operation and transport etc. It is focused on the needs of the social partners, main intentions paid to various technological novelties, digitalization with a strong practical aspect”.

The expert panel considers it useful to find truly unique things about the program in order to attract potential students and actively promote them on the market. It is also necessary to pay more attention to marketing the study program. Make sure administration takes an active part in this process by spreading a good word of mouth, inviting marketing related social partners, alumni and current student and external advisers to guide the discussions, and look for ideas outside the category. During the visit, it became obvious that certain actions need to be taken in regard to identifying the target market of the programs: during the meeting with stakeholders, it was also mentioned that the target market of the program are enterprises related to logistics activities, every enterprise in this region of the country. The expert panel would like to point out that employees cannot be identified as the primary target group, but as the secondary one. It is obvious that KVK is aware of channels and methods on how to attract students from Lithuania. However, more attention should be paid to social media where all current school children spend most of their time. Students can be attracted to assist to communicate via channels or at least – ask to audit KVKs plans or actions. It would be also useful to choose certain countries (1-2 would be the best) to have a real breakthrough for targeting foreign students. It will be helpful to participate in local study fairs, exhibitions, etc. This cooperation will be successful on both sides as foreign students will be looking for real exchange of international experience. It would also make sense to introduce elective courses in English to increase the internationalisation of the program.

### *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*

According to SER (p. 5) The aim of the study program is “to train a highly qualified manager, who is able to manage client service, transportation, warehousing, inventory management, and logistic cooperation processes and operations”, this is in line with the mission of the Institution which according to SER (p.5) aims to implement high-quality studies of higher education, based on professional practice, applied research and experimental development, and to provide conditions for life-long learning.



The aims of the study programmes also correspond to the latest Strategic Activity Plan as well as the KVK Strategy for Increasing Internationality for 2021-2023. However, it should be noted that in order to fulfil the strategic priorities and increase the internalisation of the study program it would make sense to introduce elective courses in English as well as introduce joint modules and joint programs with foreign institutions.

During the visit, it became evident that field and cycle study program aims and outcomes are in line with the mission and strategic priorities of KVK. The structure of the evaluated study program enables achievement of stipulated learning outcomes by preparing highly educated professionals equipped with all required knowledge, research and personal skills as well as social abilities to start their career in the field of logistics.

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

The structure of the study program is based on the legal documents on higher education in the Republic of Lithuania, Lithuanian Qualifications Framework, which complies with the descriptions of the levels of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) for lifelong learning and first cycle study descriptions of the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area (Dublin Descriptors).

The duration of the program is 3 years completing 180 academic credits or 4800 academic hours with each semester consisting of 30 credits. The program corresponds to legal requirements as indicated in table No. 1.

**Table No. 1** Study Programme's *Logistics Management* compliance to general requirements for first cycle study programmes

| <b>Criteria</b>  | <b>In the Programme</b> | <b>Legal requirements</b> |
|--|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| Scope of study programme                                       | 180, 210, 240 credits   | 180 credits               |
| Scope of the study programme subjects of the field, including: | At least 120 credits    | 174 credits               |
| - practical training   | At least 30 credits     | 48 credits                |
| - graduation paper   | At least 9 credits      | 9 credits                 |
| Proportion of researchers teaching                             | At least 10 per cent    | 11.7 per cent             |

|   |   |             |
|---|---|-------------|
| study programme subjects in the field of study  |   |             |
| Proportion of teachers teaching study programme subjects in the field of study with at least 3 years of practical work experience | At least 50 per cent                    | 100 percent |
| Practical training and other practice placements  | No less than one third of the programme | 40 percent  |

Source: SER

The study process includes contact hours in the form of lectures, seminars, internships and also includes individual work and consultations. During the course, students have several internships – Introductory Internship 3 ECTS, Management Practice 6 ECTS, Internship in Simulation Enterprise 6 ECTS, Logistic Skills Training Practice 6 ECTS, Internship of Logistic Process Management System 6 ECTS, Final Practice 21 ECTS, in total 48 credits and also practical aspect is implemented into every subject making it close to reality. The structure of the program and the duration enables it to achieve the stipulated learning outcomes of the evaluated study program. During the meeting it was stressed that students are satisfied with their study plan, they highly value internships as some of them already found jobs during these practices, and also they are happy with cooperation with teaching staff.

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

The aim of the assessment and learning methods in KVK is true and fair evaluation of students' knowledge and skills contributing to the distinctive evaluation principle. During the studies there are used such modern learning methods as case analysis, situation analysis, team work, critical self-evaluation (reflection), tests, preparation of Internship reports etc. These evaluation methods enable to trace students' progress over the course.

While formulating learning outcomes there is used the principle of Bloom Taxonomy, making them well-balanced, clearly stipulated and achieved via diverse learning methods implemented in the study process.

During the visit, it became clear that the curriculum of the study courses and the stipulated teaching and assessment methods enable distinctive evaluation of the knowledge and skills obtained during the study process and are compatible with each other as well as with the aims, and learning outcomes of the Business study field and the evaluated program.

### *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 program is developed and structured in accordance with the general requirements for professional higher education studies leading to the Professional Bachelor's Degree, the modular structure of the studies and the ECTS credit system. Program consists of 180 and each semester consists of 30 ECTS. The methods of study organisation used by KVK in the implementation of the Programmes are student class (contact) work and independent work.

The curriculum of the study program is developed in order to provide students with general knowledge, research, social skills, personal and special skills. The first semester gives and overview of the business and management process in general supported by the courses of Business Mathematics and Statistics, Basics of Management and Logistics as well as Business Foreign Language,, then followed by courses providing an overview of the selected study filed by introducing the subjects of Sustainable Logistics, Managing Freight and Transport Systems.

These courses enable students to define the path of future specialisation and during the second year to deepen their knowledge in logistics by studying Warehouse Logistics, Port Logistics and Supply Chain Management. The program also has a strong practical aspect achieved by several internships which is extremely useful for understanding the complexity of future career.

Study modules are allocated in a reasonable sequence and represent a coherent and explicit set of learning outcomes and evaluation criteria following the "general to specific" rule. Each module has well-defined learning objectives followed by the learning objectives of each course included in a particular module. During the visit, it became evident that program courses ensure consistent development of competences of students enabling them to reach the learning outcomes and the aim of the program.

The expert panel can conclude that the program has a well-defined module structure following the logic of study process aiming to deepen knowledge by obtaining general skills and competences first and logically followed by the ones aiming to develop the specific competences. The expert panel found it useful to incorporate sharing modules with HEIs from

Baltic and Scandinavian countries to boost the number of students and the added value of the study program.

### *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*

All studies have a component of distance learning, enabling studies to create personalised study plans. It is also possible to apply for the flexible schedule as well as to create a fully personalised study program combining different modules and courses from the various study programs provided by HEI. During the visit, students mentioned that they highly value this opportunity and are happy with their study plans. There is also the possibility to choose elective subjects during the second year of studies. Erasmus+ program also gives students a perfect opportunity to personalise their studies by spending a semester or a whole academic year abroad or in another HEI, get valuable experience, obtain new knowledge and get intercultural social and personal skills.

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

Final thesis preparation and defence procedure is regulated by the KVK Procedure for Preparation, Defence and Storage of Graduation Papers publicly available on the KVK website. Final thesis grants student 9 ECTS and aims to summarise and implement knowledge and skills obtained during the course. Students have the right to defend a final thesis after the completion of the study program and getting positively evaluated for all the courses. The process of preparation of the Final thesis consists of several stages making it easier for the student to ensure progress and successful defence.

The Defence Committee includes at least three members: employer representatives (also one is appointed as the chair, researchers from other institutions); representatives of KVK teaching staff (at least one teacher, responsible for the implementation of the study program).

Expert panel confirms that graduation papers are of a good quality with the topics focusing on contemporary real business situations. It can be concluded that during the studies students get all the necessary skills and knowledge to prepare and successfully defend graduation papers, which was confirmed during the visit by reviewing the selected theses by the expert panel. During the visit, the expert panel got confirmation from students that they highly appreciate cooperation with academic staff while writing their graduation papers.

In general, it can be concluded that all legal requirements are met in case of the evaluated study program and KVK is working hard to have all aspects well developed and properly implemented without any fundamental shortcomings.

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

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

1. Strong regional approach of the program.
2. Strong practical aspect and cooperation with leading companies in the logistics field.

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

1. The uniqueness of the program is not clearly defined;
2. The marketing and promoting of the program lacks clear strategy and targets;

### **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 aim of the applied research at KVK is to develop applied research and experimental development in the fields of technology, social, medical and health, and natural sciences, needed by the region of Western Lithuania, to consult local governmental and economic entities, and to carry out educational activities that enable to integrate the scientific knowledge into studies. Each aspect of the applied research is integrated and presented in accordance with the Procedure of Applied Research Management and in line with the main priorities of the Strategic Action Plan managed by the The Centre for Applied Research. Teaching staff takes an active part in the research in the field of Inclusive and Creative Society and Sustainable Environment by participating in various commercial and non-commercial research projects and publishing results in scientific journals: during 2019-2021 there were published 17 articles including two listed in WOS. Teachers take part in conferences in Lithuania and abroad to present the results of their research and disseminate them among colleagues. There is developed a motivation system for publications, research projects, publications etc. and during the visit teachers their awareness and appreciation of this system. Annually state funding is allocated to the applied research and is used by KVK to develop projects adding value to the sustainable development of the region.

Social partners take an active part in research activities by organising seminars and

workshops for students and teachers in the field of logistics. Joint conferences are organised together with social partners, like in 2018 “Logistics Solutions: The Good Experience and Insights”. In general, it can be concluded that KVK does a good job in the field of integrating applied science into studies, which adds value to the image of HEI, professional competences of the teaching staff and the content of the study program. **The expert panel considers these relations extremely important and beneficial for all stakeholders making the programme unique and outstanding. Future graduates are expected to work in not only national but international companies and obtaining vital and relevant knowledge and skills will add value to their competitiveness and demand on both national and international labour markets.**

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

During the visit, the expert panel got full evidence that teaching staff implements case study methods in the study process. Lecturers also actively use contemporary study methods like discussion, practical projects worked out in teams, visits to companies and use the latest available literature and databases for research and teaching activities.

Social partners are attracted to provide lectures and seminars for students: representatives of *Cargo.lt* performed training on operating at Cargo freight and transport exchange, *UAB Infotransport* provided students with InfoTrans system, which is valuable for those willing to enter the logistics labour market. Students visit companies several times a year and get a broad overview of logistics operations. All these activities build up a strong link between the studies and the latest technologies introduced in the field of logistics and contribute to the future employment of graduates. The expert panel considers this as a strong point of the program making it highly competitive and beneficial for future graduates in obtaining knowledge and skills demanded on both national and international labour markets.

The expert panel would recommend active involvement of alumni practitioners in the teaching process.

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

During the visit, the expert panel got full evidence that teaching staff actively cooperates with students in regard to research. Students and teaching staff together participate in projects, organise conferences and seminars. During the period of 2018-2021 ten students participated in international projects, one of them is “CREATE: creative, unique

and caring generation” funded by the European Union. They also share obtained results via scientific publications and during the period of 2019-2021 teachers and students of KVK have published numerous articles in foreign and domestic journals and participated at several conferences in Lithuania and abroad. 25 students participated in these activities. During the meeting with students, several students confirmed their participation in joint research activities with the representatives of the teaching staff. Students are actively attracted and encouraged by teachers to participate in applied research, and each year at the beginning of the semester a special training is organised dedicated to the usage of scientific databases.

The expert panel acknowledges the efforts and distinguished achievements of KVK dedicated to active participation of teaching staff in applied research as well as practical implementation of research results and active participation of students and considers this as one of the strongest points of the program.

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

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

1. Strong involvement of students in research, good cooperation with teaching staff;
2. Strong interlinkage between study process and applied research.
3. Strong integration with social partners in bringing the teaching process up to date with latest developments in the logistics area.

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

1. None.

### **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*

Admission rules are provided on the website of the KVK. Admission to the study program takes place in accordance with the procedure prescribed by law, which is administered by LAMA BPO (Lithuanian Association of Higher Education Institutions to organise general admission). There are no special requirements for admission to the study program, but the competitive score of the candidates is the most important criterion. The competitive score is based on the minimum admission requirements for KVK. The minimum requirements shall be established in accordance with the procedure established by the Minister of Education, Science and Sports of the Republic of Lithuania. KVK advises from the

contacts listed on the website. During the expert panel meeting, all of the students stated that they were satisfied with this criterion and found no problems.

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

According to SER, the description of the procedure for crediting the results of KVK provides for the crediting of study results according to the harmonised study content. The description provides an opportunity to credit study results without restrictions to persons who have studied at another higher education institution or a foreign higher education institution under a part-time study agreement, an agreement concluded between KVK and a foreign higher education institution, or on another legal basis.

In order to ensure the possibilities of individualisation of studies, KVK has developed a procedure for the assessment and recognition of non-formal and informal learning and self-education learning achievements. According to this procedure, persons with experience in work, acquired knowledge and skills, studying independently or through non-formal education programs, etc., can formalise non-formal learning achievements. There have been no individuals who have taken this opportunity in the last 3 years.

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

Students can take advantage of the opportunity for Erasmus+ studies and Erasmus+ internships. All students can participate in the selection. The list of foreign countries of ERASMUS+ partners is publicly available on the website of KVK. Scholarships are given to exchange students. Students with special needs can apply for additional support. All candidate students must take part in a selection process conducted by the International Relations Department. KVK announces and organises public competitions for Erasmus+ studies and placements abroad in accordance with the selection criteria and competition procedures approved by the institution. All students participating in the selection are informed about the selection criteria, their order, the order of organisation, the number of applicants, and the results of the selection. The competition takes place twice a year (usually in February-March and September-October). According to SER, in 2019, eight LM (Logistics management) students went to study abroad (Erasmus+) part time at universities in Portugal, Turkey and Cyprus. Three students took part in Erasmus+ internship (at Ukrainian and Polish logistics companies). Only one student went to study at an Albanian university part time (Erasmus+) in 2020 and one student has been studying remotely at a university in Spain in



autumn 2021. In 2021, six LM students took part in Erasmus+ screening for studies and/or internship in spring 2022. Also one point should be mentioned that during the visit, students have noticed that there is a lack of integration of Erasmus students into the study process and cooperation with domestic students. The students mentioned that it would be beneficial for both sides to tighten cooperation and communication between local and foreign students.

#### *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*

Students are provided with academic, psychological, financial and social support. Information on forms of support and where to apply for students who have problems studying is available on the KVK website, in the section “Student Support”. During the meeting with the group of experts, the students stated that they were informed about the ways of support. It was also stated that support is provided quickly, and counselling is helpful. All kinds of support for students are effective.

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

Before the beginning of the studies, the faculty organises an Adaptation week for students, during which they are provided with the most important information about the chosen study programme, study procedure, academic integrity, and other relevant topics. Students can always consult with the mentor services or senior students. At the beginning of the course, all students are introduced to the procedure and criteria for the assessment of the study results of the subject, the responsibility for the unfairly performed tasks, interim reports, and examinations are explained. At the end of each semester, students are asked to complete a Program Performance Assessment Questionnaire. Students provide feedback on all study subjects for that semester and may write additional notes. The results and remarks of the survey allow for improving the quality of the implementation of the whole Program and the content and teaching of individual subjects in order to achieve the intended results. During the meeting with the experts, the students stated that their comments are being considered.

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

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

1. KVK provides complete, clear, and accessible information to the public.

##### ***(1) Weaknesses:***

1. The number of students choosing Erasmus mobility is low.

2. Low integration of Erasmus students into the study process and cooperation with domestic students.

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

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

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

The teaching and learning process at Klaipėdos valstybinė kolegija (hereafter referred to as KVK) is student oriented which implies taking student needs into consideration. A variety of methods are used for course delivery and evaluation. This too shows that KVK is responsive to student needs and supports the achievement of the learning outcomes.

Students are actively involved in the learning process which encourages the development of competencies such as critical thinking and autonomy and which in turn contributes to the achievement of the learning outcomes. The Expert Panel received confirmation that this involvement is appreciated by the students.

Students follow several internships which allow for the practical application of theory and complement the in-class teaching and the attainment of the learning outcomes.

Finally, the needs of the students are taken into account through the inclusion of optional courses, the provision of flexible programs and scheduling with both part-time and full-time study options available. For auditing students, a personalised programme, drawing on all the study programmes offered at KVK is also available.

Students are also offered the opportunity twice a year to study abroad through the Erasmus+ programme. In discussions with the Expert Panel students mentioned that the feedback from peers abroad was positive and that they were happy to have this option in place.

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

A number of scholarships and financial aid options are available for both socially vulnerable students and students with special needs (SER p. 22).

At this time there are no students registered in the field business studies having special needs. However, provisions are made for their inclusion. Once enrolled, students with special needs are able to indicate their individual needs by submitting a form on the Learning

Management System (LMS), Moodle. The physical environment, study content and method of study can be adapted according to the student's needs. Consultations are also available in order to provide psychological support.

#### *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*

Student study progress is monitored by the teachers of their subjects through various methods throughout the semester to assess their level. Students are also expected to monitor their progress and in order to this a variety of methods are used from interim and final assessments as well as other academic activities. Students receive feedback on their progress from their individual teachers in both the LMS and in individual consultations.

Students having difficulty with their studies or whose class attendance is low are invited to discuss the situation with the Vice-Dean. Summaries of the students' academic progress are compiled at the end of every semester to complete the process. The methods in place are appropriate.

In addition to measures of individual student progress the study programme itself is evaluated through a variety of feedback measures and surveys which allow KVK to monitor the overall programme and make necessary or desirable changes to the study process. An example of how this process works (SER p. 25), shows it to be efficient.

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

Career tracking uses both official government sources and graduate surveys conducted by the KVK's Career Centre. This allows KVK to assess both the employability of its graduates as well as providing a benchmark against which KVK can compare graduate performance. According to the SER (p. 26) the implementation of a 6-month and 12-month graduate monitoring process is now underway which will further reinforce current practices. The results are good on both levels with the employment rate of KVK graduates being quite high at over 80% post-graduation.

The integration of a bi-annual employer opinion poll on graduate performance coupled with round-table discussions with social partners allows KVK to adjust and develop the study programmes in line with employer and industry needs.

Discussions between the Expert Panel and both the alumni and the social partners confirm the good relationship between them and KVK.

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

Academic integrity, tolerance and non-discrimination are ensured through the application of the KVK Code of Academic Ethics together with sections in the KVK Procedure for the Evaluation of Learning Outcomes. Particular emphasis is placed on academic integrity with students being required to sign a Declaration of Student upon admission to the College (KVK). This is further reinforced during the course of study with procedures applying for term and graduation papers as well as certain exams ranging from oaths of fair conduct to audio/video recordings (SER p. 26).

To date the LM study programme has not had any cases of violation of academic integrity, tolerance, or discrimination. Should a complaint be lodged in the future the procedure is for it to be handled by KVK's Committee of Academic Ethics.

### *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*

There are different procedures for submitting an appeal whether for a subject evaluation or the graduation paper. These are made clear to the students. Following an appeal an Appeal Committee is formed. The procedures are well regulated and limited in the time allocated. The past two years have been appeal-free for the study program.

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

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

1. The standardisation of policies and procedures and the committees that have been established to deal with a variety of issues.
2. A focus on the local labour market needs.

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

1. The use of Bloom's taxonomy could be updated through the inclusion of Bloom's Digital Taxonomy.
2. Having local and exchange students study separately and in different languages is detrimental to the internationalisation of the study programme.

## **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*

There have been no major changes in the composition of the staff of the KVK LM study program during the assessment period. All teachers of the LM have been working at the KVK for at least 3 years.

The LM study program teachers' team consists of 24 teachers. All teachers have at least a masters' degree, and, according to data presented in Annex 4, 6 of them have PhD. Teaching staff's distribution according to the academic degree: 20 (83.3 percent) lecturers and 4 (16.7 percent) associate professors. Teacher full-time equivalent (FTE) is distributed as follows: lecturers constitute 8.4 FTE (88.8 percent), associate professors – 1.06 FTE (11.2 percent), PhDs – 1.11 FTE (11.7 percent) (SER, p. 27, 28).

All teachers are active in science as all except one language teacher have presented 2-3 scientific outputs (according to the data in Annex 4).

The pedagogical work experience of the teachers ranges from 2 to 39 years. The practical work experience in the field of the study programme subject ranges from 7 to 39 years (according to the data in Annex 4, 100% have practical work experience more than 3 years).

For teachers working with ERASMUS students the minimum English language level required is B2. However, during the visit, teaching staff representatives who teach foreign students did not speak English. When asked about their experience with teaching incoming ERASMUS students, teachers mentioned using vocabulary and videos. This raises doubts about the level of English language of the teachers and also about the quality of communication with students. The expert panel considers this area requiring further development and additional efforts to make the program useful and contributing to the study process of foreign students.

The workload of the teachers at KVK ranges between 0.04 to 1.47. For 14 teachers the workload is indicated as higher than 1. Moreover, one teacher has a workload of 1.3 in the LM programme (5 subjects taught, according to the data in Annex 4). The small workload is for teachers who teach just on specific subjects (e.g. occupational safety); still a high or too high workload could lead to teachers' exhaustion and violation of their work-life balance.

The student-teacher ratio is 19 students /1 teacher FTE. Taking all teachers, it is 197 students for 24 teachers, or 8.2. This number has been stable for the last 3 years. This allows concluding that the number of teachers is sufficient to achieve the intended learning outcomes as it complies with the Methodology for Evaluating the Real Resources of an Institution of Higher Education at KVK.

All previous mentions allow concluding that the number of the lectures in the LM study programme, their experience of pedagogical and practical work, and qualifications is sufficient to achieve the learning outcomes and comply with the requirements, established in the legislation. Still, more attention should be paid to the distribution of workload between lecturers at the KVK. Moreover, the English language level of the teachers needs significant improvement.

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

KVK has developed the Internationalisation Strategy, which includes an action plan to promote internationalisation including teaching staff mobility (SER, p. 29). The mobility of teachers in the Business field of study and LM programme takes place mainly as part of ERASMUS+ and is ensured in accordance with the general rules and conditions of KVK (Coordination Procedure for Erasmus+ Mobility Programme of Klaipėda State University of Applied Sciences). All teachers have equal opportunities for academic mobility. Distribution of the mobility's is competition based (according to 'Coordination Procedure for Erasmus+ Mobility Programme of Klaipėda State University of Applied Sciences, approved by the Order No. V1-018, issued by KVK director on 26/01/2017) and all competition winners have an opportunity to go abroad (SER, p. 29).

During the visit, teachers confirmed that they are informed about academic mobility and encouraged to participate in it. As examples of foreign visits, they mentioned universities in Latvia, Estonia, Poland, Greece, Portugal, France, Turkey, Denmark, Hungary, and Romania. According to the information provided in the SER, teaching staff mobility before covid was good with 8 outgoing staff members and 14 incoming teachers, and in spring 2020, mobility was hindered by the global pandemic.

In addition to mobility, two international weeks are organised at the KVK every year. They attract foreign representatives - in 2019 there were 116 teachers from abroad, 11 of whom came for the LM study program (SER, p.29).

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

The teachers' professional development is regulated by the Procedure for KVK Staff Professional Development. A professional development plan for each teacher is prepared every year in line with the Department qualification improvement plan and in line with the changes in the program. Teachers have a possibility to develop their competence development plans themselves according to their interests, then they are discussed during

the annual interview, approved and necessary funds allocated. Specific decisions on which competencies of teachers should be improved and respective methods are determined by academic interests and goals, defined in the annual interview. According to the data, LM program teachers during the assessment period have spent 897 hours on improving research competencies, 1284 hours – on pedagogical competencies, and 2070 hours – on their subject competencies (SER, p.29-30).

During the visit, teachers confirmed that they have enough opportunities and they have improved their competences at training seminars, international and national conferences, and also internships at business companies.

In 2021 the Business Competence Education Centre was established at KVK. Although the teachers of the LM study program have extensive practical work experience (15 years on average), they have the possibility to attend internships at companies (SER, p.28). This was confirmed by teachers and company representatives during the visit.

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

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

1. Teaching staff has strong links with the world of business leading to the strong practical focus of the program;
2. Involvement of teachers in applied research.

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

1. Low level of English language proficiency of the teachers, especially those who work with ERASMUS students.

## **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 students at KVK benefit from a variety of physical resources for both formal and informal learning. From the mini-zones that are found on every floor complete with bean-bags and vending machines to the language labs, from the multimedia classrooms to open spaces for entrepreneurship development or the library the resources are on par with what one finds at an international level. Students have access to scientific databases like EBSCO, e-books, and scientific journals. All student papers are checked for plagiarism.



Informational resources are also very comprehensive providing the students with access to databases and current software to enable them to succeed in their studies. In addition to this there are resources within the databases that allow students to access topics on self-improvement, health and well-being.

The procedures for the upgrading of resources (see section 3.6.2) allow for the budgeting of department monies to ensure that there are sufficient financial resources available for the continual updating of the study program.

It is also worth noting that attention is paid to the resources necessary for special needs students.

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

An annual procurement demand plan is compiled by the Department of Business which takes into account material and informational needs for the effective management and running of the study programme (SER p. 34). This upgrading of resources has been extended to the Entrepreneurship Competence Centre which, in 2021, benefitted from 25'000.00 Euros for the continued development of the resources it has to offer.

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

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

1. Very good formal and informal learning spaces available;
2. Constant renovation of student, faculty, and special needs resources and facilities.

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

1. Better advantage could be taken of the alumni to complement the existing resources and provide additional resources for students.
2. Additional attention to the integration of teachers in the digitalisation of teaching and learning on the study program.

## **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*

According to SER: „The University initiates and organises periodical and systemic surveys and studies: on the study program subject level (student surveys at the end of each semester), satisfaction with the student and graduate satisfaction with the study quality (annually), employer opinions on KVK graduate preparation for work (every two years), KVK staff work satisfaction (every two-four years); also, an annual internal audit and



external audit“. The KVK has a clear monitoring system that helps to improve study quality at all levels. Monitoring the results of surveys helps to react quickly to possible improvements in different fields, which could help to raise internal study quality. Graduates actively participate in this process.

Group of experts found it useful how the college act in internal quality assurance system as it is proved in SER „The study plans of the *LM* study program are subject to improvement every year, based on the following: feedback survey results, recommendations, developed during round table discussions with social partners, external legal documents and business market innovations“.

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

In SER it is stated that: „The main mode of action consists of round table discussions, individual meetings, visits to social partners and graduates, meetings at conferences and meetings of the Lithuanian Logistics Association (LLA) (at least twice a year), inviting them to the Faculty’s events and the GP (graduating paper) defence panel, SP (study program) Panel, other working groups, offering trainings, based on social partner needs. “ During the meeting with a self-evaluation report compilers group mentioned that Study program Committee meetings take place „every second week, at least once a month“. The expert group found it misleading, because in SER it was written differently. It was not clear what improvements or changes are possible with such frequent meetings. The group of experts found that it would be useful for KVK to organise round table meetings with all stakeholders to improve the internal study quality. Remarkable improvements were made due to teachers' suggestions (such as a simulation company, etc). **KVK makes efforts to improve the study quality and stakeholders participation in this process but lacks systematic approach which is considered a shortcoming by the experts panel.**

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

According to the SER „The results of the quality improvement of the study field are published both at KVK and beyond. Information about the internal assessment results of the study field is first provided to the teachers and administration, discussed at the meetings of the Study Programme Committee, the Department, the Faculty Community and the Academic Council. Afterwards, the results are presented to students and social partners at meetings, seminars, conferences, meetings of graduation paper qualification panels, study

programme committee, self-analysis, study programme renewal working group meetings.“ In the KVK website it is possible to find students' survey results of study subjects in each semester (just 2020-2021), the earlier results are not published. Experts found it difficult to analyse the results of considered period without comparing with earlier periods. The College website publishes surveys of students' opinions per semester and Erasmus students' opinions per semester. Other stakeholders' survey results were not found. There is no information about quality management in the college website in the English language, so it could be difficult for Erasmus students to observe the results. In experts opinion transparency is one of major cornerstones of the quality process. Randomly published results with no English version make it absolutely impossible to achieve transparency as well as to keep a close cooperation with stakeholders on the development of the program, which is considered a serious problem by the expert group.

#### *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*

In SER „The LM student satisfaction with the quality of the studies is studied and evaluated on the level of the study program subjects (students answer questions after each exam on Edina system) and on the level of the program (questionnaire on student satisfaction with the study quality). “ The positive side is that KVK has an evaluation of the study program after each semester, the students answering the surveys and giving their opinion on the study subject, process and possible improvements. The survey results are published on a website where students can see the results. However, during the visit it was noted that the procedure of informing of changes in study quality is not clear. The expert group would like to outline that the study quality process should be clear and visible to all groups of stakeholders and conducting the surveys and analysing the results is just the first step, which should be followed by not only drawing conclusions and making changes but also keeping all stakeholders informed about the changes in the process. This procedure of keeping all groups of stakeholders informed about the changes in the study process should be clear, transparent and understandable to everyone, which was not observed by the expert panel in the case of the evaluated study program. In general, it can be concluded that while the quality management is in place in KVK and the internal quality assurance system is implemented, it lacks transparency, periodicity and public awareness, which is considered a serious problem requiring urgent solution .

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

***(1) Strengths:***

1. Students, teachers and social partners play a big role in study quality improvement process;
2. Monitoring system of graduates.

***(2) Weaknesses:***

1. Lack of periodic and regular Study Committee meetings;
2. Lack of information about improvements in study quality.
3. Lack of systematic approach to the study quality process.

#### IV. RECOMMENDATIONS\*

| Evaluation Area  | Recommendations for the Evaluation Area (study cycle)   |
|--|---|
| Intended and achieved learning outcomes and curriculum             | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Introduce joint programs, joint modules.</li> <li>2. Introduce elective courses taught in English.</li> <li>3. Identify truly unique things about the study program.</li> <li>4. Develop a clear strategy of marketing and promotion of the study program.</li> </ol>   |
| Links between science (art) and studies                            | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Encourage active involvement of alumni practitioners in the teaching process.</li> </ol>  |
| Student admission and support                                      | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Pay more attention to marketing of the study program, identify target groups and develop a clear strategy in targeting foreign students.</li> <li>2. Higher integration of Erasmus students into the study process by providing at least a couple of courses together with local students.</li> <li>3. Increase outgoing students' mobility.</li> </ol> |
| Teaching and learning, student performance and graduate employment | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The inclusion of a digital competence framework for the structuring of both course content and the program in the future.</li> <li>2. The development, together with the students, alumni, and social partners of an active Alumni Association.</li> </ol>  |
| Teaching staff   | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The level of English language proficiency of the teachers, especially those who work with ERASMUS students, should be increased.</li> </ol>   |
| Learning facilities and resources                                  | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Going further with the digitalisation of resources and the development of digital competency for teachers and students alike.</li> </ol>  |
| Study quality management and public information                    | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The results of study quality surveys should be made publicly available. <b>It is also necessary to give regular information about made improvements. Such information on the website should also be available in the English language. The whole process needs to be transparent and visible to stakeholders.</b></li> </ol>                            |

\*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.

## V. SUMMARY

### **Main positive and negative quality aspects of each evaluation area of the study field of *Business at Klaipėdos valstybinė kolegija*:**

The evaluated study program is developed and regularly updated in accordance with the requirements of the labour market, needs of the society and legal requirements. The aims, objectives and learning outcomes correspond to the first cycle requirements and are supported by the applied teaching methods. The experts panel finds it useful to identify really unique features of the program and to develop a clear market strategy in targeting potential students.

Links between arts and science are at an exceptionally high level. During the visit, the expert panel got full evidence on strong interlinkage between study process and research as well as active involvement of both teachers and students in the applied research process.

The student admission process is well-developed, transparent and publicly available. The level of involvement of Erasmus students into the KVK activities and integration with domestic students is quite low. Also, more attention should be paid on marketing of the study program by identifying target groups and developing a clear strategy in targeting foreign students.

The study program operates in a teaching and learning environment that is responsive and supportive to student needs. Various teaching methods used by teaching staff ensure the achievement of Learning Outcomes. However, the level of English language of teachers needs to be improved.

The program is delivered by a professional and dedicated group of teachers. They attend conferences, workshops and actively participate in applied research. However, the level of English language proficiency of the teachers, especially those who work with ERASMUS students, is quite low.

Learning resources and facilities are at a good level, all auditoriums and have the necessary equipment. Students have access to scientific databases like EBSCO, e-books, and scientific journals. All student papers are checked for plagiarism. It would be beneficial to keep up the digitalisation of resources and the development of digital competency for teachers and students.

The study quality management and publicity are well developed, transparent and publicly available. However, it would be beneficial to make the results of study quality surveys and keep the stakeholders updated on the latest changes or improvements of the study program. As well as to implement periodic and regular meetings of the Study Committee.

Expert panel chairperson signature:

Natalie Aleksandra Gurvits-Suits

(signature)