



CENTRE FOR QUALITY ASSESSMENT IN HIGHER EDUCATION

EVALUATION REPORT

STUDY FIELD of MANAGEMENT

at Lietuvos aukštoji jūreivystės mokykla

Expert panel:

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5. Ms. Joana Jasilionytė, *students' representative*.

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Report language – English

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Study Field Data

Title of the study programme	<i>Port and Shipping Management</i>
State code	6531LX078
Type of studies	College 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; English; Russian;
Minimum education required	Secondary education
Registration date of the study programme	2002 05 25

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I. INTRODUCTION

1.1. BACKGROUND OF THE EVALUATION PROCESS

The evaluations of study fields in Lithuanian Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) are based on the Procedure for the External Evaluation and Accreditation of Studies, Evaluation Areas and Indicators, approved by the Minister of Education, Science and Sport on 17 July 2019, Order No. V-835, and are carried out according to the procedure outlined in the Methodology of External Evaluation of Study Fields approved by the Director of the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education (hereafter – SKVC) on 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 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 SKVC on 31 December 2019, [Order No. V-149](#). The site visit to the HEI was conducted by the expert panel on *25th of May, 2023*.

Prof. dr. Teresa Paiva (panel chairperson) *Professor of Management and Economics
Department of Polytechnic University of Guarda, Portugal;*

Prof. dr. Erik Reimer Larsen, *Professor of Management, Department of Management,
Aarhus University;*

Assist.Prof. dr. Tomi Solakivi, *Assistant Professor of Maritime Business and Policy,
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Mrs Dovile Alijosiute, *Senior Project Manager, a/s Danske Bank, Lithuania;*

Ms Joana Jasilionytė, *student at Vytautas Magnus University.*

The documentation submitted by the HEI follows the outline recommended by SKVC. Along with the SER 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.	Final Thesis
2.	Additional information

1.4. BACKGROUND OF MANAGEMENT FIELD STUDIES AT LIETUVOS AUKŠTOJI JŪREIVYSTĖS MOKYKLA

The Lithuanian Maritime Academy (hereinafter LMA) is a state higher education institution of Lithuania that provides college studies with a Director as a sole governing body and a Council and an Academic Council. It is organised in different academic and study service units (Study Department; Science and Study Innovation Department; International Relations Department; Seafarers' Training Centre; Library; Career and Communication Department) and has administrative offices that supports the LAM activity (personnel, Accounting and economic units). It has been focusing on training highly qualified maritime and inland waterway transport professionals for the waterborne transport sector. LMA offers 6 different study programmes, and one of them is Port and Shipping Management (hereinafter PSM), which is part of the traditional system of maritime studies for the training of seafarers, ship engineers, and seaport managers in maritime academies. As a result of the last external evaluation, some recommendations were made and followed. There are some recognised developments still to be made that are important to be achieved, such as being more updated on the didactic science trends.

II. GENERAL ASSESSMENT

Management study field and first cycle at Lietuvos aukštoji jūreivystės mokykla is given **positive** evaluation.

Study field and cycle assessment in points by evaluation areas

No.	Evaluation Area	Evaluation of an Area in points*
1.	Intended and achieved learning outcomes and curriculum	3
2.	Links between science (art) and studies	3
3.	Student admission and support	3
4.	Teaching and learning, student performance and graduate employment	3
5.	Teaching staff	3
6.	Learning facilities and resources	2
7.	Study quality management and public information	3
	Total:	20

*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)

In LMA's SER (page 5) is described how the PSM programme was designed and implemented within the need of the international recognition to improve maritime studies and maritime degrees in Lithuania. It was possible to observe by the external expert committee how strong and important is the connection between LMA and the social partners. The Port and regional entities recognise the work developed inside the LMA and they themselves frequently integrate the students from LMA into their business and work. LMA, through its experience and expertise, has a strong knowledge of the maritime transport sector and understands what is needed for businesses and local government authorities. It is clear that there is an interest in PSM professionals, qualified port and shipping managers, in this economic sector in its development and competitiveness. The LMA also has the advantage in the region as Klaipėda's seaport competes with other Baltic states and Baltic Sea countries, this helps LMA to be part of supplying Klaipėda with needed specialists and have their hands on experience.

The expert panel concludes that the programme is highly valued by the social partners and the program has a future perspective as the graduates will be needed for the labour market.

3.1.2. Evaluation of the conformity of the field and cycle study programme aims and outcomes with the mission, objectives of activities and strategy of the HEI

Since it is possible to understand the origin of PSM, which is also described in SER, it is clear that LMA followed its mission and strategy. LMA has a 2021-2023 strategic action plan which the Port and Shipping management program follows (<https://bit.ly/3VHh39S>) by offering this study programme and reinforcing its positioning as a Higher Education Institution with a professional vocational education approach for the maritime and waterborne transport sector.

The expert panel found that the study field meets the conformity of programme aims and outcome, also the mission and strategy of the HEI is met and followed.

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

There is an alignment with legal requirements, presented in SER, by listing all important rulings and regulations upon which the study programme rests. General requirements for the first-cycle study programmes are presented in Table No. 1.

Table No. 1 Study programmes' *Port and Shipping Management* compliance to general requirements for *first cycle study programmes of College level (professional bachelor)*

Criteria	General* legal requirements	In the Programmes
Scope of the programme in ECTS	180, 210 or 240 ECTS	180 ECTS
ECTS for the study field	No less than 120 ECTS	160 ECTS
ECTS for studies specified by College or optional studies	No more than 120 ECTS	90 ECTS
ECTS for internship	No less than 30 ECTS	30 ECTS
ECTS for final thesis (project)	No less than 9 ECTS	10 ECTS
Practical training and other practice placements	No less than one third of the programme	35 percent
Contact hours	No less than 20 % of learning	45 percent

The study field meets all legal requirements that are needed for program structure and recommendations could be added.

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

LMA's management field study programme PSM offers three specialisations in training port and shipping managers: Maritime business management, Maritime business financial management, and Maritime tourism management. In SER, it is possible to understand the link by LMA between the aims, learning outcomes and the study programme. This was confirmed by the external committee during the visit. In the examples given in Annex 2 it was possible to observe the link between the teaching/learning and the assessment methods.

With the decline of cruise tourism (at least for the short-term) in Klaipėda the expert panel would suggest to think/rethink the specialisation of Maritime tourism management. The LMA could reshape the specialisation or merge with a new specialisation. This suggestion comes not as it is a weakness but as a suggestion to think about to future.

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 main teaching methods are theoretical, with field trips and the use of different technologies and software for maritime specifications in the study programme. Critical thinking promotion and interactive lectures are pursued in the interaction and discussion within the classroom, which might not ensure the competences development intended. The external committee observed that the students and social partners interviewees have a lack of confidence in the use

of digital tools for management activities. Also, when analysing the test given in different courses during the visit, the external committee felt that the teaching and learning demand was not challenging to the students and didn't reveal the development of the competences or learning outcomes to be achieved. The suggestion would be to avoid multiple choice test and to test students only if they learnt the study material from lectures. The expert panel suggests giving exams and test for students that would stipulate student thinking and would not use only the theoretical knowledge but also to use problem solving or creative, critical thinking.

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

Although the PSM offers three specialisations, they are not always implemented which depends on the number of students choosing the specialisations. The financial specialisation only has a few students and is quite recent. However, there is an offer of different courses and specialisations students might choose.

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

The procedures and regulations underlying the final thesis preparation, writing and defence are in place and transparently listed in SER. The final thesis is applied to the social partner student engaged in its internship, which is positive and might result in student getting a job offer early in their studies. Although the final thesis analysed by the external committee complies with what is expected in terms of structure and content, there is a need to incorporate a more analytical and empirical approach by using SPSS or other software or another tool more often to incorporate a wider contribution to the study results achieved.

Strengths and weaknesses of this evaluation area:

(1) Strengths:

1. Strong knowledge of the waterborne transport sector and therefore the sector needs.
2. Very organised study programme.

(2) Weaknesses:

1. Need to apply more innovative pedagogies into the different courses to ensure a more applied and entrepreneurial teaching and learning process.
2. The digitalisation is crucial and is needed to be incorporated as a management component of the study programme.

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

This study program is placed within a maritime setting and the courses and research is framed by this. The Academy provides sufficient time for research, as expressed by the faculty and everybody from the teaching staff is encouraged to publish. The Academy has collaboration with other similar institutions in Europe and develops projects with these HEIs. This is also reflected in the international projects that the faculty takes part in.

The number of publications seems to be fluctuating but this is to be expected, due to the time it takes to get publications accepted. There is a positive trend in the number of publications published in international journals by the faculty (2019: 18; 2020: 13; 2021: 23). While there is a generally positive trend, there still needs to be more focus on publishing in international journals, this is the main way to connect with this more specialised area. The financial resources for participating in international conferences will need to be increased as it will provide the possibility for the faculty to test their ideas and make new connections within the area.

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

The content of the degree seems to be well connected to the development in the academic area. The faculty published within the core area of the degree and the course offering are appropriate for a specialised course like this. In general, this field in LMA is unique nationally and the research done by the staff is integrated into the study process, this is a positive aspect of the programme.

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

Students participate in conferences and publications, e.g., their thesis. Several of the students have won prizes for their scientific works. The best students are also invited to participate in the research and projects that the faculty is running. Overall, there is a reasonable possibility for participation in projects. It might be useful to further increase this area.

The expert panel would suggest thinking of ways to encourage students to participate in scientific projects, especially those students that work, so they could get to know how applied research is done.

Strengths and weaknesses of this evaluation area:

(1) Strengths:

1. Well established within the maritime/blue economy as reflected by the large number of courses run for external stakeholders and research done inside LMA.
2. Some international projects and publications. Funding for the faculty to carry out the research and participate in projects.
3. Connection to the main stakeholders, e.g., port and shipping companies, which provide opportunities for guest speakers, company visits and student projects.

(2) Weaknesses:

1. While there is a shift towards international publications, this should be further encouraged.

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

Students are admitted to the Port and Shipping Management study program through a joint admission process for both state-funded and non-state-funded places, facilitated by LAMA BPO (Association of Lithuanian Higher Education Institutions for the Organization of General Admissions). Admission to the program is based on students' admission grades.

For state-funded study places, the minimum competition score for college studies is 4.3. Additionally, students must have passed state maturity examinations in Lithuanian Language and Literature, Mathematics, and a free-choice state maturity examination.

In the case of non-state-funded places, students can have competition scores lower than the minimum requirement of 4.3. In recent years, competition scores have been decreasing, with scores of 3 in 2019, 2 in 2020, and 1 in 2021 and 2022.

The number of students studying in state-funded and non-state-funded places is similar. However, the number of admitted students each year has drastically decreased, from 74 in 2019 to 36 in 2022.

LMA admits foreign full-time students, and studies are organised in Lithuanian and English.

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

The recognition of qualifications obtained abroad, partial studies, and previous non-formal and informal learning is governed by specific procedures at LMA. There are defined procedures for the evaluation of foreign qualifications and partial studies. Only results from higher education institutions recognised by foreign countries are credited.

3.3.3. Evaluation of conditions for ensuring academic mobility of students

The LMA offers students the chance to engage in academic mobility. At the beginning of each semester, the International Relations Office shares information on the available academic mobility options for the upcoming semester through the website and email.

During the period under review, there is a significant difference between the number of incoming students to study at LMA (43 students in total) and those outgoing through academic mobility programs (19 students in total) (SER, Table 13). Students are less motivated to take part in long-term academic mobility programs due to work commitments or other obligations. **The LMA should encourage students to take part in long-term mobility, especially considering that the institution has a long list of opportunities for students. Even if the LMA cannot force**

students to go abroad, the LMA needs to find ways on how to support the students and enhance the study process to the fullest and this would include finding ways to nudge students to use outgoing long-term mobility programs.

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 enrolled in the Port and Shipping Management study program at LMA receive extensive support in multiple areas, encompassing academic, financial, social, psychological, and personal aspects.

Financial support is provided through scholarships, bonuses, and financial assistance offered by diverse legal entities and organisations. Incentive scholarships are awarded to acknowledge outstanding academic and social accomplishments. Additionally, students studying at non-state-funded study places may have the opportunity to receive tuition fee reimbursement based on their academic performance. LMA also offers psychological support services to cater to the needs of both students and staff. However, students were unaware that LMA provides psychological counselling.

During the site-visit, students expressed that not all are aware of student support. This needs to be resolved and discussed with the students - if the information provided in LMA is not very suitable, or the ways the information is provided or the information provided is too complicated, etc.

3.3.5 Evaluation of the sufficiency of study information and student counselling

The LMA ensures that students receive sufficient information and support regarding their studies and counselling. During the induction week organised by the Career and Communication Department, students are familiarised with study procedures through various activities and meetings with department heads, the Student Representative Office, and training sessions.

The LMA has an effective study tutorial system, with updated timetables for teacher consultations each semester. Students can receive consultations on-site or remotely.

Strengths and weaknesses of this evaluation area:

(1) Strengths:

1. The admission processes are clear and well communicated.

(2) Weaknesses:

1. The drastically decreasing number of admitted students necessitates consideration of how to attract students to this study program.
2. The number of students participating in international mobility programs is low, and students are not motivated to participate.
3. Students are not well aware of the support services provided by LMA for 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

There are 2 types of study programmes in SP PSM studies: full-time timetable (weekdays) and full-time studies with a sessional timetable (Friday, Saturday). Also, study material is available on a distance learning platform. During the quarantine period, all studies were in online mode. After the quarantine, LMA provided only psychical lectures.

Used teaching methods: traditional lecture (theoretical, applied exercises, field trips, analysis of scientific and practical literature, and content analysis of national and international legislation governing) and practical (research work, applied research publications, presentations at national and international conferences, problem-based learning, case studies, business planning projects, small and large group work, discussion and reflection, creative writing, tutorial, self-study practice). (SER p. 10). Specific simulators and prototypes of information systems operating in a seaport, logistic management programs and other specific programs are also used to ensure practical knowledge. (SER p. 10).

Even though there is a list of different teaching methods, including maritime business-specific practical simulators and program prototypes that actively involves students in the learning process and enables them to achieve learning outcomes, the expert panel group identified the need to include more digital tools not specifically related with maritime business as part of theoretical and practical parts teaching methods.

After SER analysis and site visit, an expert panel group identified the need to review soft skills learning outcomes by adding teaching methods to strengthen soft skills such as stress and conflict management, formation of teamwork, leadership and others.

Students participate in the study planning and monitoring process's part, but there is a need to strengthen students' participation and be more flexible and be able to individualise the structure of the study field based on Student's needs to achieve their learning outcomes.

Social partners, in general, participate in studies planning and monitoring process and material review, but expert panel groups identified the need to strengthen social partners' participation in specific port and shipping management study field planning, review process and be more actively involved in the material review or provide feedback about needed improvements.

Independent work is organised in 2 ways: study remote work or study individual work. LMA uses the Google Classroom tool to provide requirements, information and assessments for independent work. In full-time studies, independent work consists of 55 %, in-sessional type of studies – 86 %.

Graduates after their studies may continue their second cycle studies in other Lithuanian or foreign universities. Only about 15-20 % of students continue their next cycle studies which is not a weakness in itself but the expert panel would suggest motivating students to continue their studies especially considering the merger of LMA with VILNIUS TECH.

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

Because of higher education institutions' specialisation, there are no students with special needs at this moment, however, building premises are not adapted to the students with special needs.

Students with special needs can apply for additional financial support twice per year, and the support process is coordinated by the Study Department.

Even if SER states that students with special needs can choose distance or hybrid studies, during the site visit expert panel group found out that after the quarantine, all lectures are physical, and online lectures are not available.

The expert panel group would like to suggest reviewing LMA's position and attitude regarding students with special needs entering LMA University in general. Even if LMA specialisation is a maritime business which in traditional mindset is for "healthy" students, workplaces digitalisation and robotics provide an opportunity for people with special needs to become potential LMA students. Maritime business financial management specialisation might be fully adapted to students with special needs and does not require any physical preparation. Especially the attitude towards students with individual needs have to change as the strategy of Klaipėda is to have an autonomous port which would require less physical work (coming aboard the vessels and other physical work) and would require more distance/ computer work. In other words, considering that the port authorities are planning to modernise the work that is done throughout the port, the studies should be adapted to students with special needs.

Being open for students with special needs may create a success story not only for business organisations in which such students will work but also for LMA itself, giving additional challenges to become more open, more adaptive to changes, and a more innovative maritime academy. The expert panel decided this is a shortcoming that needs to be resolved.

The expert panel stresses that this is not relevant only to students with special needs but also it can be relevant to external guests or stakeholders, visiting lecturers or the society in general.

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

Students' study progress is monitored systematically. As a main tool for study progress, assessments and students' performance tracking, LMA uses the administration system EDINA which is in Lithuanian and English. This system allows for students: to track their assignments, interim and final assessments values, and plan studies; for teachers: to track each student's

performance, identify the most difficult and critical topics, and plan subject review; administration also can track students' performance, evaluate courses, identify students who need additional consultations or improvement plans.

Chosen assessment method depends on the teaching and learning method, but in all cases, the final value consists of intermediate and final assessments. Examples of existing assessments methods: oral and written questioning, colloquium, testing, examination, demonstration of practical skills in the use of electronic simulators, review of the literature and information sources, report, case study, folder method, problem situation analysis, business planning project, research paper, course work, preparation of a practice diary and report, public presentation of practical, independent work, preparation and presentation of scientific research publications at national and international conferences, public demonstration of professional foreign language skills at conferences and in maritime and business English examinations, preparation and public defence of the professional bachelor thesis.

Professional practice is also monitored by LMA. Students can choose their professional practice (Internship) in one of 58 maritime companies from the LMA provided list. Professional practices (Internships) results and studies quality are analysed with business partners, and there exists close cooperation between business partners and LMA. Expert panel identified the need to strengthen collaboration with social partners in regards to not maritime or port specific Internships (practice) places especially for students who choose Maritime business financial management specialisation.

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

LMA tracks graduate's careers using the tool the portal www.karjera.lt. Career tracking methods: data from employment service, interview with graduates and representative companies. Graduates' employment rates after the studies reduced due to COVID-19, but after the quarantine period the employment percentage increased from 43 % to 70 % (12 months after graduation).

LMA gathers feedback about the studies from graduates and from social partners, where usually students get their internship (practice) places. Both graduates' and social partners' feedback rates about preparation for professional activities are high.

The expert panel group identified that Alumni are not active participants in study field planning and studies monitoring processes; graduates' feedback about improvement areas are not collected in a formal way. Alumni feedback about improvement areas and direct Alumni participation in study field planning and study materials review process is important because it is a real experience and knowledge about improvement areas.

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

Main LMA documents to ensure academic integrity, tolerance and non-discrimination policies implementation are: the Statute, Study Regulations, Equal Opportunities Policy, the Code of

Academic Ethics and other internal documents of the LMA. Main document – The Code of Ethics where listed all LMA community values and ethical norms.

In case of plagiarism or dishonesty, the LMA director has the final decision right. LMA uses MS Word tools and web tool plag.lt to check plagiarism cases. There is a plan to have a centralised plagiarism-checking tool centrally in higher education systems. No cases were registered during the last 3 years.

The expert panel group identified that even if LMA's main procedures are in place, Students have a weak understanding of LMA procedures, and they would mostly rely on strong collaboration with the teachers asking for their help.

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

The Dispute Commission Rules of Procedure defines appeals procedure. Students should submit their appeal within 15 days, and the LMA director or his delegate takes the decision. If a student does not agree with a decision, the Dispute Commission is involved. No cases were registered during the last 3 years.

The expert panel group identified that even if LMA's main procedures are in place, Students have a weak understanding of LMA procedures, and they would mostly rely on strong collaboration with the teachers asking for their help.

Strengths and weaknesses of this evaluation area:

(1) Strengths:

1. Strong professional Internship (practice) in maritime business area opportunities and support from LMA in getting an Internship (practice) place.
2. Innovative and practical teaching methods which are related to maritime business, such as simulators and pilots of different programs, which allow students to get practical knowledge and be prepared for future jobs in the maritime business sector.
3. Strong collaboration with social partners from the maritime business.
4. Strong relationship between Students' Internship (practice) place and their final thesis topic, which allows the students to further analyse the knowledge gained in practice till the final thesis.
5. Strong EDINA IT tool features usage to plan and monitor study progress.

(2) Weaknesses:

1. Insufficient other than maritime business-specific digital tools usage as teaching methods in different lectures.
2. Weak soft skills learning outcome fulfilment, to strengthen soft skills such as stress and conflict management, formation of teamwork, leadership and others.
3. Insufficient students' and social partners capabilities and needs and Alumni practical knowledge usage in specifically Port and shipping management study field and studies planning, monitoring and material review process's part.

4. LMA building premises are not adapted to the students with special needs, and administration staff and teachers are not prepared to work with students with special needs and to integrate such students into the LMA academic community.
5. Even if academic integrity, tolerance, non-discrimination and appeal procedures are in place, students have a weak understanding of LMA procedures, and they would mostly rely on strong collaboration with the teachers asking for their help.

3.5. TEACHING STAFF

Study field teaching staff shall be evaluated in accordance with the following indicators:

3.5.1. Evaluation of the adequacy of the number, qualification and competence (scientific, didactic, professional) of teaching staff within a field study programme(s) at the HEI in order to achieve the learning outcomes

The qualifications of the teachers combine academic and practical competences. The ratio of students to lecturer workload has decreased accordingly: from 24 students per lecturer workload to 22. Researchers (academics) teach 45 out of 160 credits, or 28% of the required and elective subjects of the SP PSM field of study, together with elective specialisation subjects from 34% to 38%. In 2022 close to 88% of teachers had practical work experience.

The ratio of students to lecturer workload can be considered rather high, as it currently is 22. However, it has declined recently, being 24 before. Regardless of the student-teacher ratio, the college is able to allocate small groups and utilise innovative teaching methods. Simulations are taught and studied in groups of three. However, the innovative pedagogies have to be more connected to the business area, where there seems to be a lack of use of technologies and other innovative methods.

SP PSM has 20 lecturers teaching foreign languages. 75% of the teachers are certified in either B2 or C1 -levels in the English language. The remaining 5 lecturers are not certified but are said to be fluent in speaking and writing English.

In addition to full-time and part-time teaching staff, external lecturers are utilised. These include guest lecturers from business, most from logistics, not only from maritime but also from freight forwarders, customs etc.

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)

In the self-evaluation report, it is said that international mobility has been at lower levels due to Covid-19 pandemic, but that international mobility is expected to return to pre-pandemic levels. Lecturers, as well as students, can apply twice a year, in the autumn and spring semesters, to participate in teaching and learning mobility activities under the Erasmus+ programme.

The staff of the college has participated in international mobility in the Baltic Sea Region but in addition in the Balkans and Western Europe. The college reports putting special emphasis on language training in international mobility. In addition to Erasmus+, the staff of the college participates in international projects together with maritime academies abroad.

In general, the academic mobility of the teaching staff is adequate and teaching staff should encourage the students to participate in mobility programs and to explain what prospects the outgoing mobility brings.

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

The college emphasises the professional development of the staff. Competence development is addressed on a strategic level through a three-year Strategic Action Plan (the most recent one for years 2021-2023), where the improvement and development of the didactic, professional, research and general (digital, communication, intercultural, managerial, etc.) competencies of the lecturing staff are addressed. In addition, an annual development plan for the LMA staff is drawn up and evaluated.

The staff of the college is provided with development possibilities, including the possibility of pursuing a doctoral degree. In 2020-2022, 40% of the teaching staff is reported to have upgraded their qualifications. Reportedly the main source of professional development has been international internships.

Strengths and weaknesses of this evaluation area:

(1) Strengths:

1. The college seems to be well resourced also considering the teaching staff. Teachers are encouraged to self-development.
2. Competence development of the teaching staff is considered a strategic priority of the college.
3. The college is collaborating internationally, and this also applies to this degree Programme.

(2) Weaknesses:

1. The innovative pedagogies have to be more specific to the management field, and therefore, the business teachers have to improve their efforts to incorporate them into the teaching and learning process.

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 college is able to provide sufficient material resources for teaching. This applies to classroom facilities, as well as hardware and software. The planning of material resources in

the college is organised through the formal Procedure of Planning Activities. In the computer classes, there is 1 workstation per student in specialised simulators and one workstation per two students in ordinary computer classes.

The college presents that there are no students with disabilities or special needs, and therefore there is no need for equipment. This matter should be considered proactively, as it might be the case that the absence of students with special needs or disabilities could be caused by the fact that the degree programme and facilities are not designed to accommodate such students well. As mentioned before, the accessibility for students with special needs should be solved as the premises do not have any elevators, escalators or equipment that helps with mobility.

The library provides sufficient availability of course books both in Lithuanian and English language. The staff and students are able to access a large selection of online book and journal article databases for study and research purposes, including EBSCO, Taylor & Francis, Springer and Emerald, mainly databases centralised from the Lithuanian university libraries.

Even though the hardware and software resources seem to be sufficient, there is room for improvement, as some of the digital programmes used in teaching will be outdated **in the future**. The college is recommended to **periodically** review the used and available software to update them to meet future needs.

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

The college has an annual plan for managing the financial and physical resources. Moreover, the plan and the procedure on how to update the plan are based on the quality management system. The planning of the material resources of the LMA is carried out following the Procedure for Planning of Activities, according to which the planning process is initiated within the departments. The Head of SP PSM is responsible for the continuous monitoring of the material resources necessary for the SP PSM. The identified need for resources and the fund for their procurement is planned in the annual plan of activities of the SP PSM; it is approved by the Director, and the planned procurement is included in the annual procurement plan.

Overall, it can be said that in addition to having a well-structured plan for resource improvement, the college also has the financial resources for it.

Strengths and weaknesses of this evaluation area:

(1) Strengths:

1. College appears to be well-resourced concerning both physical and IT resources.
2. The college is well organised in managing the physical and IT resources.

(2) Weaknesses:

1. Even though the college possesses good resources to maintain high-quality physical and informational resources, some of the programmes used in teaching could be considered outdated. Bringing them up to date should be in focus.

2. The degree programmes and facilities are not planned to incorporate students with special needs. While there is no doubt that the college would be able and willing to provide sufficient support to such students if needed, the reactive approach could prevent students from considering the college and the degree programme as a study alternative.

3.7. STUDY QUALITY MANAGEMENT AND PUBLIC INFORMATION

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

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

The Academy has a systematic way of collecting data, depending on the data that takes place every semester, year, and ends by the end of the degree. It has an external standard for reliability and validity (ISO) which is certified every two years. It has a clear allocation of responsibilities in connection with the degree. The feedback from student and employer surveys are used to update and keep the degree when needed.

In summary, the management of academic quality is maintained at various levels, aligning with national standards and guidelines. HEI has effective internal mechanisms for quality assurance, regularly monitored through targeted assessments.

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

Students and employers are invited to comment on the implementation of changes done based on the surveys. Social partners were generally satisfied with the links and involvements that they had with the College, although the expert panel as previously mentioned would like to see further and closer cooperation with social partners on the study development. The alumni felt that they could have a closer connection as many of them lost the connection after graduation (although others became social partners later).

In conclusion, the higher education institution has implemented formal procedures and measures to enhance curricular developments and ensure program quality assurance system but there is still room for improvement – mainly larger involvement of students and social partners.

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

The collection of data regarding the studies, evaluation and improvement, including the type of data and the frequency of these (semester and yearly, depending on the data), are systematic and sufficient as a basis for the quality processes and the general update of courses and information about the degrees. The public information about the degrees seems adequate. The College uses a wide variety of social media to keep stakeholders updated (e.g., Facebook, Instagram etc.).

LMA college has a very informative website where you can find all needed information about studies, quality improvement, survey results, etc., it even includes possibilities for Chat with LMA representatives. Information about quality available on the website includes Quality policy and system etc. However, many important sections are missing. For example, you cannot find the survey results of social partners, the survey results of students on the website or other evaluations. The expert panel also suggests adding a possibility for stakeholders at any time to fill a special form about suggestions related to quality or any other improvement which would be available on the LMA website. The website is also available not only in Lithuanian, English but also in Russian which is helpful for the foreign students that come from Ukraine. The website, however, lacks a section about research fields and research output. It could be advised to include this information as it would positively contribute to the LMA brand and image.

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

The College collects data on the degree in a variety of different ways. The stakeholders are satisfied with their possibility for contribution input to the degree and the way in which results from the process is communicated to them via a number of different methods, from meetings to social media.

In summary, the quality assurance process actively involves students through meetings with Programme Directors, feedback questionnaires, and collaborative efforts between faculty and the Study Committee to implement improvements, ensuring the program meets the needs of current and future students, which is deemed adequate. The expert panel would suggest also to encourage students to be more critical and analyse their studies and to provide the feedback formally to LMA and of course the faculty needs to ensure that the climate for critical and constructive criticism is provided for the students.

Strengths and weaknesses of this evaluation area:

(1) Strengths:

1. Systematic collection of data.
2. The use of diverse methods to communicate with the stakeholders.

(2) Weaknesses:

1. **Lacking genuine** connection with alumni. It might be beneficial to create stronger links.

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

Evaluation Area	Recommendations for the Evaluation Area (study cycle)
Intended and achieved learning outcomes and curriculum	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The modernisation of the study programme is imperative to promote the student engagement and answer to the future of the industry in terms of the management field. 2. A more entrepreneurial course is in need to give a practical business approach to the study programme.
Links between science (art) and studies	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. While there is a shift towards international publications, this should be further encouraged.
Student admission and support	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Make more effort to motivate students to participate in academic mobility programs. 2. Communicate more with students about the various possibilities to get support. 3. It is recommended to have a strategy to address the decreasing number of students.
Teaching and learning, student performance and graduate employment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To include and use more digital tools not specifically related to maritime business as part of both theoretical and practical parts teaching methods. 2. To review soft skills learning outcomes by adding teaching methods to strengthen soft skills such as stress and conflict management, formation of teamwork, leadership and others. 3. To strengthen students', social partners' capabilities and needs and Alumni practical knowledge usage in specifically Port and shipping management study field and studies planning, monitoring and material review process part. 4. To develop LMA premises adaptation for students with special needs plan and implement it; develop LMA academic community attitude regarding students with special needs improvement plan so that potential students with special needs could get sufficient support (psychological and physical, because financial support already exists) to study in LMA. 5. To strengthen Students' knowledge about academic integrity, tolerance, non-discrimination and appeal procedures.

Teaching staff	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The innovative pedagogies have to be more specific to the management field, and therefore, the business teachers have to improve their efforts to incorporate them into the teaching and learning process.
Learning facilities and resources	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. informational resources, some of the programmes used in teaching could be considered outdated. Bringing them up to date should be in focus. 2. The degree programmes and facilities are not planned to incorporate students with special needs. While there is no doubt that the college would be able and willing to provide sufficient support to such students if needed, the reactive approach could prevent students from considering the college and the degree programme as a study alternative.
Study quality management and public information	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Minimal connection with alumni. It might be beneficial to create stronger links.

V. SUMMARY

LMA is a Higher Education Institution of Lithuanian specialised in the maritime sector. It offers a management study programme field with different specialisations even though not all of them are currently implemented. It has a recognised positioning in the maritime context with a strong engagement with social partners. The business side of the management field of the study programme can be developed not only through its research but also through its pedagogies and digitalisation. The main issue to be overcome is the accessibility of LMA's premises. Even if it is not an often the first choice of students with special needs in terms of management, there is an opportunity to offer this study programme and to include them.

Furthermore, the LMA has a clear mission, the studies are in adequate shape but no major shortcomings were found during the evaluation except the premises and very reactive position of LMA towards students with special needs, mostly towards the students with limited mobility.

The expert group hopes that the provided feedback from the panel will help the Lithuanian Maritime Academy (Lietuvos aukštoji jūreivystės mokykla) to further enhance the study process and enhance the study quality not only inside the management study field but also other study fields. The uniqueness of the institutions provides many possibilities to provide a strong college degree. With further help from LMA – the students could further their studies.

The expert panel appreciated the welcoming of the college and staff, students and social partners during the site-visit and the prompt response to the additional information and questions.

Expert panel chairperson signature:

Prof. dr. Teresa Paiva

(signature)