



**STUDIJŲ KOKYBĖS VERTINIMO CENTRAS
CENTRE FOR QUALITY ASSESSMENT IN HIGHER EDUCATION**

MARKETING FIELD OF STUDY

Kauno Kolegija

EXTERNAL EVALUATION REPORT

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I. INTRODUCTION

1.1. OUTLINE OF THE EVALUATION PROCESS

The field of study evaluations in Lithuanian higher education institutions (HEIs) are based on the following:

- Procedure for the External Evaluation and Accreditation of Studies, Evaluation Areas and Indicators, approved by the Minister of Education, Science, and Sport;
- Methodology of External Evaluation of Study Fields approved by the Director of the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education (SKVC);
- Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG).

The evaluation is intended to support HEIs in the continuous enhancement of their study process and to inform the public about the quality of programmes within the field of study.

The object of the evaluation is to all programmes within a specific field of study. A separate assessment is given for each study cycle.

The evaluation process consists of the following main steps: 1) Self-evaluation and production of a self-evaluation report (SER) prepared by an HEI; 2) A site visit by the review panel to the HEI; 3) The external evaluation report (EER) production by the review panel; 4) EER review by the HEI; 5) EER review by the Study Evaluation Committee; 6) Accreditation decision taken by SKVC; 7) Appeal procedure (if initiated by the HEI); 8) Follow-up activities, which include the production of a Progress Report on Recommendations Implementation by the HEI.

The main outcome of the evaluation process is the EER prepared by the review panel. The HEI is forwarded the draft EER for feedback on any factual mistakes. The draft report is then subject to approval by the external Study Evaluation Committee, operating under SKVC. Once approved, the EER serves as the basis for an accreditation decision. If an HEI disagrees with the outcome of the evaluation, it can file an appeal. On the basis of the approved EER, SKVC takes one of the following accreditation decisions:

- **Accreditation granted for 7 years** if all evaluation areas are evaluated as exceptional (5 points), very good (4 points), or good (3 points).
- **Accreditation granted for 3 years** if at least one evaluation area is evaluated as satisfactory (2 points).
- **Not accredited** if at least one evaluation area is evaluated as unsatisfactory (1 point).

If the field of study and cycle were **previously accredited for 3 years**, the re-evaluation of the field of study and cycle is initiated no earlier than after 2 years. After the re-evaluation of the field of study and cycle, SKVC takes one of the following decisions regarding the accreditation of the field of study and cycle:

- To be accredited for the remaining term until the next evaluation of the field of study and cycle, but no longer than 4 years, if all evaluation areas are evaluated as exceptional (5 points), very good (4 points) or good (3 points).
- To not be accredited if at least one evaluation area is evaluated as satisfactory (2 points) or unsatisfactory (1 point).

1.2. REVIEW PANEL

The review panel was appointed in accordance with the Reviewer Selection Procedure as approved by the Director of SKVC.

The composition of the review panel was as follows:

1. Panel chair: Prof. Dr Teresa Paiva, *Technology and Management Superior School of Guarda Polytechnic Institute*
2. Academic member: Prof. Dr Akos Varga, *Corvinus University of Budapest, Institute of Marketing*
3. Academic member: Prof. Dr Vytautas Dikčius, *Vilnius University, Faculty of Economics and Business Management*
4. Student representative: Benas Verslovas, *Vilnius College*

1.3. SITE VISIT

The site visit was organised on 23 October 2024 onsite.

Meetings with the following members of the staff and stakeholders took place during the site visit:

- Senior management and administrative staff of the faculty;
- Team responsible for the preparation of the SER;
- Teaching staff;
- Students;
- Alumni and social stakeholders, including employers.

Translation was unnecessary, and the meetings were conducted in English.

1.4. BACKGROUND OF THE REVIEW

Overview of the HEI

Kauno Kolegija (KK) is a state (public) multidisciplinary higher education institution established in 2002. Its performance is grounded in *the Law on Higher Education and Research of the Republic of Lithuania and complies with the requirements of the European Higher Education Area*.

The institution is managed by the Director, the sole governing body, who has three deputies. The collegial governing bodies include the KK Council and the Academic Council. It has four faculties (the Faculty of Business, the Faculty of Technologies, the Faculty of Medicine, and the Faculty of Arts and Education) in Kaunas and a regional subdivision in Tauragė. It has a community of 4,600 students, 765 employees, and 35,300 graduates and implements 51 study programmes in 34 fields of study that award a Professional Bachelor's Degree. It cooperates with more than 274 foreign partners, 238 of whom are part of the *Erasmus+* mobility programme. It is a member of international associations and networks, has experience in international projects (more than 20), and belongs to a European University Alliance.

Overview of the study field

The KK Marketing programme was initiated in January 2019 within the Faculty of Business. The faculty has five departments: Accounting and Finance, Communication, Tourism and Leisure Management, Management and Law, and Business. The study's mission is aligned with the objectives set out in the KK Strategy 2025, which aims to implement innovation-based higher education programmes with a focus on practical activities and to promote applied science and art activities that are significant for the development of society. The student body comprises approximately 1,470 individuals pursuing one of eight academic disciplines encompassed within ten academic programmes, including the Sales and Marketing study programme (SMSP), which is the sole study programme in the marketing field within the Department of Communication, with an enrolment of approximately 164 students. In the marketing field, it was indicated that 28 applied research projects were developed over the evaluation period.

Previous external evaluations

The study programme was evaluated before receiving a score of 21 points and conducting a three-year accreditation. Overall, the programme's structure and scope were considered sufficient to ensure the development of competencies, but there was room for improvement. The main issues to overcome were the "Intended and achieved learning outcomes and curriculum" and the "Learning facilities and resources" gained the best assessment score.

Documents and information used in the review

The following documents and/or information have been requested/provided by the HEI before or during the site visit:

- *Self-evaluation report and its annexes*
- *Final theses*

II. STUDY PROGRAMMES IN THE FIELD

First cycle/LTQF 6

Title of the study programme	Sales and Marketing
State code	6531LX087
Type of study (college/university)	college studies
Mode of study (full-time/part-time) and nominal duration (in years)	full-time, 3 years
Workload in ECTS	180
Award (degree and/or professional qualification)	Professional Bachelor's degree in Business Management
Language of instruction	Lithuanian
Admission requirements	Secondary Education
First registration date	January, 2019
Comments (including remarks on the joint or interdisciplinary nature of the programme and mode of provision)	

III. ASSESSMENT IN POINTS BY CYCLE AND EVALUATION AREAS

The **first cycle** of the Marketing field of study is given a **positive/negative** evaluation.

No.	Evaluation Area	Evaluation points ^{1*}
1.	Study aims, learning outcomes and curriculum	3
2.	Links between scientific (or artistic) research and higher education	4
3.	Student admission and support	4
4.	Teaching and learning, student assessment, and graduate employment	3
5.	Teaching staff	4
6.	Learning facilities and resources	4
7.	Quality assurance and public information	4
Total:		26

1*

1 (unsatisfactory) - the area does not meet the minimum requirements, there are substantial shortcomings that hinder the implementation of the programmes in the field.

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

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

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

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

IV. STUDY FIELD ANALYSIS

AREA 1: STUDY AIMS, LEARNING OUTCOMES AND CURRICULUM

1.1.	Programmes are aligned with the country's economic and societal needs and the strategy of the HEI
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FACTUAL SITUATION

1.1.1. Programme aims and learning outcomes are aligned with the needs of the society and/or the labour market

The expert committee sees that graduates of the Sales and Marketing (SPSM) programme at KK successfully integrate into the workforce due to the comprehensive and market-responsive structure of the programme. According to the latest data and the site visit remarks, graduates find employment in a wide range of sectors, including marketing, communication services, advertising, and creative agencies. These roles span private and public sectors, covering industrial, service, and commercial enterprises. Notably, graduates also possess the entrepreneurial skills required to establish and develop their own businesses. The programme's unique marketing and sales management knowledge combination equips graduates with versatile career options.

KK employs multiple strategies to assess market needs effectively. The institution continuously monitors national, regional, and global labour market trends, as well as in-depth analyses and surveys. Specific data sources include job portals (e.g., LinkedIn, CVbankas.lt) and labour market reports from entities such as the Lithuanian Employment Service and the World Economic Forum. The SPSM programme's alignment with market needs is reflected in its responsiveness to digital and technological changes and its focus on practical and problem-solving skills. There are institutional practices of connecting and receiving and giving feedback to the social partners.

The SPSM programme integrates industry feedback at several stages to ensure alignment with labour market demands. Regular collaboration with industry partners includes guest lectures, expert-led workshops, evaluations of final theses, and real-life case studies integrated into study modules. For example, stakeholders participate in projects and provide feedback on students' marketing plans and business proposals during module assessments. These interactions help maintain the relevance and applicability of the curriculum.

The programme includes specific competencies to address current technological and digital trends. Modules such as Digital Communication Management and E-Business Organization are designed to develop digital marketing, e-commerce, and data analytics skills. Additionally, the SPSM curriculum incorporates training on AI tools for marketing and business communication, digital content management, and the ethical use of AI. These competencies align with future market demands highlighted in reports by international organisations.

Feedback from industry partners is collected through various channels, including direct consultations, advisory board meetings, and structured industry collaborations. Guest experts from domestic and international businesses provide insights into the curriculum and participate in module evaluations. The SFM Committee periodically reviews and revises the programme based on stakeholder input, graduate feedback, and forecasts of labour markets. This ensures that the programme stays current and continues to develop competencies that match industry needs. Adjustments made in recent years include adding modules on E-Business Law and Data Analytics.

In conclusion, KK's Sales and Marketing programme demonstrates strong integration into the workforce, a comprehensive market needs assessment, and active collaboration with industry partners. The curriculum is effectively updated to include technological and digital trends, ensuring graduates possess the competencies required for a rapidly evolving job market. The feedback collection process, combined with stakeholder participation, ensures the continuous improvement and alignment of the programme with real-world requirements.

1.1.2. Programme aims and learning outcomes are aligned with the HEI's mission, goals, and strategy

The SPSM programme strongly aligns with KK's mission to promote practical and innovation-based education. The programme nurtures students' abilities to adapt and respond to contemporary market challenges by emphasising real-life problem-solving, digital proficiency, and applied learning. This approach supports the HEI's strategic objective of fostering a learning environment that prioritises innovation and the practical application of knowledge.

The programme integrates the principles of sustainability and social responsibility, which are core elements of KK's mission. Modules focusing on responsible business practices, ethical marketing, and sustainable development ensure that students gain awareness and competencies in implementing socially responsible strategies. Final theses and project work often incorporate sustainability themes, aligning academic pursuits with global and regional sustainability goals. However, their inclusion policy does not include all situations. Therefore, they analyse them case by case, solving the situations as they arise.

The SPSM programme contributes significantly to the HEI's goal of internationalisation. Partnerships with foreign institutions, such as collaborative projects with universities in Spain and Belgium, enable student exchanges and joint research initiatives. Guest lectures from international business experts and participation in global academic networks further enhance the programme's international exposure, enriching the learning experience and aligning with the strategic objective of fostering global collaboration. Despite these efforts, the numbers reached are insufficient to ensure strong international collaboration and mobility.

ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSION (regarding 1.1.)

At this point, a strong correlation can be observed between the study programme, learning outcomes, and curriculum, which are aligned with the KK. However, some issues must be improved, such as a broader inclusion policy regarding accessibility.

1.2.	Programmes comply with legal requirements, while curriculum design, curriculum, teaching/learning and assessment methods enable students to achieve study aims and learning outcomes
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FACTUAL SITUATION

1.2.1. Programmes comply with legal requirements

The study program is structured and follows the required legal documents for the first cycle of study in higher education in the Republic of Lithuania. The full-time study program lasts three years (six semesters) and has 180 ECTS credits. The program consists of modules, and each of them has 15

ECTS credits. The independent student work accounts for 56% of the study program. The volume of contact studies in SP Marketing and Sales is 40% (in hours). The expert committee admits that practical training should make up at least one-third of the program volume, but it counts for 32%, which is slightly lower than required.

The Descriptor of the Study Field of Marketing presents requirements for learning outcomes that have to be achieved at the completion of college studies. The Descriptor presents a wide range of social and personal learning outcomes, but the SP Marketing and Sales has just two social and one personal learning outcome. The site visit (discussions with social partners) proved the importance of personal learning outcomes. Therefore, the program should focus more on personal and social learning outcomes.

1.2.2. Programme aims, learning outcomes, teaching/learning and assessment methods are aligned

To ensure the continuous improvement and alignment of teaching methods with learning objectives, the SPSM programme employs a robust review process led by the SFM Committee. This process includes regular curriculum evaluations, student and faculty feedback, and industry partners' insights. Annual reviews and benchmarking against international standards help maintain the programme's relevance. Integrating new teaching techniques, such as project-based learning, simulations, and real-life case studies, supports the alignment of teaching methods with programme aims and learning outcomes.

Teaching and assessment methods are tailored to support achieving specific learning outcomes. Diverse teaching strategies, such as collaborative projects, interactive workshops, and digital learning tools, are employed to build practical skills. Assessments, including presentations, case studies, and group projects, are designed to measure students' understanding and application of knowledge. The cumulative assessment approach ensures students engage consistently, with both formative and summative evaluations providing a clear trajectory of skill development.

Faculty members integrate feedback from assessments to refine learning outcomes and teaching methods. Regular feedback sessions and performance reviews with students help instructors identify areas for enhancement. Assessment outcomes are discussed in departmental meetings, allowing faculty to adapt and implement new instructional approaches as needed. This cycle of feedback and adjustment ensures that teaching methods remain effective and aligned with the intended learning objectives.

1.2.3. Curriculum ensures consistent development of student competences

The expert committee feels that KK employs a multifaceted approach to assessing the cumulative development of competencies across all programme modules. Regular module reviews, continuous student performance evaluations, and comprehensive final assessments ensure that students progressively build their competencies. Using cumulative assessment methods, including periodic testing, integrated projects, and practical assignments, helps monitor the consistent development of essential skills. These assessments are supported by feedback from faculty and industry stakeholders, ensuring the development of competencies aligns with industry expectations.

The SPSM programme ensures interdisciplinary learning through a curriculum integrating modules across various domains, such as economics, management, and digital technology. This integration prepares students for complex, real-world professional scenarios by encouraging them to apply

knowledge from multiple fields. Collaborative projects, simulations, and case studies that involve cross-functional topics enhance students' ability to think beyond traditional disciplinary boundaries. Such interdisciplinary initiatives foster a holistic understanding of marketing and sales, ensuring students are well-equipped for multifaceted professional roles.

The development of competencies in critical thinking, problem-solving, and digital literacy is embedded throughout the programme's modules. From the first year, students engage in activities that promote analytical thinking and decision-making through courses like Business Communication and Negotiation. Advanced modules, such as Digital Communication Management, further enhance problem-solving skills and digital literacy through hands-on projects and contemporary digital tools. These competencies are continually reinforced by incorporating real-life business scenarios, interactive workshops, and case studies that challenge students to develop and present solutions, fostering a culture of critical and independent thought.

In terms of technology use, and despite the positive efforts referred to, some of the technologies described and identified are not fully applied in the teaching and learning process, as it was possible to observe during the expert's visit.

While the Sales and Marketing study programme offers a strong interdisciplinary curriculum, there are areas for enhancement to address emerging industry needs more comprehensively. For instance, the program does not currently include a dedicated course on Sales Management, which would provide a focused exploration of strategies, techniques, and tools essential for modern sales leadership. Similarly, while Trade Management incorporates elements of retail and e-commerce, expanding this into additional modules on topics such as E-commerce Operations and Digital Retail Strategies could better prepare students for the rapidly growing online retail sector. (Furthermore, adding specialised courses on Assortment Management and New Product Development would complement existing modules like Brand Management and Consumer Experiences, offering a more rounded perspective on product lifecycle and portfolio management. These additions would align the program more closely with industry expectations and ensure students gain a deeper and more diverse skillset.

1.2.4. Opportunities for students to personalise curriculum according to their personal learning goals and intended learning outcomes are ensured

The expert committee evaluates the opportunities for students to personalise curriculum according to their personal learning goals, and intended learning outcomes are ensured as the following:

The SPSM programme offers students various opportunities to customise their study paths through elective modules and optional courses. Students can choose from a selection of elective modules that align with their interests and career goals, such as Customer Relationship Management, Business Change Management, and Digital Marketing Strategies. This flexibility allows students to tailor their educational experience to focus on the most relevant and beneficial areas for their professional development.

KK is committed to ensuring accessibility and personalisation for students with special needs or diverse learning preferences. The institution has established a supportive learning environment that includes individual study plans, modified assessment methods, and tailored learning resources. Students with disabilities or specific learning requirements are provided with the necessary accommodations to engage with their studies fully. This approach ensures that all students can customise their educational journey effectively regardless of their needs.

The programme offers substantial flexibility in selecting project topics, internships, and other applied learning opportunities to align with individual career aspirations. Students are encouraged to propose their project themes and seek internships that resonate with their career plans. The final-year internship and project work often integrate real-world business challenges, allowing students to apply what they have learned in practical settings that match their professional interests. This adaptability supports students' career development by providing experiences directly related to their future career paths.

1.2.5. Final theses (applied projects) comply with the requirements for the field and cycle

The expert's panel opinion regarding the final thesis is that the topics are chosen to reflect current trends and needs in marketing and sales. Students are encouraged to propose topics based on their professional interests, current industry challenges, and insights from their internships. Additionally, faculty members and industry partners contribute with suggested topics that align with ongoing developments in the sector, ensuring that these remain relevant and impactful.

Final theses are evaluated based on rigorous criteria that assess theoretical knowledge and practical application. These criteria include the depth of research, analytical rigour, the integration of contemporary industry practices, and the originality of solutions proposed. The thesis must demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of marketing concepts and include practical recommendations that could be feasibly implemented in a professional context.

The programme ensures that final theses meet professional standards by involving industry experts in the evaluation process. External reviewers, who are experienced professionals in the field, provide feedback on the applicability and relevance of the research. This approach not only upholds academic quality but also prepares students for employment by ensuring that their work reflects real-world expectations and professional benchmarks. Completing the final thesis, which includes research, analysis, and presentation, equips students with essential skills needed for their future careers.

Regarding the level of the theses, they correspond to the expectations of the first study cycle. The topics and research approaches are designed to develop and showcase the competencies outlined in the European Qualifications Framework Level 6. This includes the application of theoretical knowledge to practical problems, the integration of contemporary industry practices, and the formulation of actionable recommendations. Over the evaluation period, 29% of the theses were contracted by industry stakeholders, reflecting the program's emphasis on practical applicability and its alignment with professional needs.

ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSION (regarding 1.2.)

KK develops the SPSM within the legal requirements and seeks to design its curriculum, teaching/learning, and assessment methods to enable students to achieve study aims and learning outcomes. This well-thought-out area is key to complying with the learning outcomes and market needs. The program should better develop social and personal learning outcomes.

Some improvements in the teaching and learning process are continuous, particularly in integrating all the technologies necessary to become a sales and marketing professional. A bigger attention must be dedicated to practical training as it is required to have at least one-third of the program volume.

AREA 1: CONCLUSIONS

AREA 1	Unsatisfactory - 1 Does not meet the requirements	Satisfactory - 2 Meets the requirements, but there are substantial shortcomings to be eliminated	Good - 3 Meets the requirements, but there are shortcomings to be eliminated	Very good - 4 Very well nationally and internationally without any shortcomings	Exceptional - 5 Exceptionally well nationally and internationally without any shortcomings
First cycle			3		

COMMENDATIONS

1. The Sales and Marketing programme is aligned with the institution's vision and mission
2. The study programme has a good connection between the teaching and assessment methods and course design.
3. Students have a say in the study programme path and in the choices of themes for their projects and final thesis.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To address shortcomings:

1. Full integration of the technologies used in various courses to ensure the student's skills in some of the software necessary to be used in real practice.
2. The programme should pay more attention to practical training and improve the incorporation of the sales perspective.

For further improvement:

1. Improvement of the KK's inclusion policy regarding student's accessibility.
2. Higher attention should be paid to social and personal learning student's outcomes of the programme..

AREA 2: LINKS BETWEEN SCIENTIFIC (OR ARTISTIC) RESEARCH AND HIGHER EDUCATION

2.1.	Higher education integrates the latest developments in scientific (or artistic) research and technology and enables students to develop skills for scientific (or artistic) research
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FACTUAL SITUATION

2.1.1. Research within the field of study is at a sufficient level

The expert's panel acknowledges that the science activities are developed systematically, including formal policies and annual activity plans. The site visit confirmed the systematic approach, and it was declared that the institution opened science-related positions. The institution focuses on the practical applicability of the learning outcomes, interdisciplinarity, integration into studies, and open science principles.

SER presents a large number of scientific outputs of applied scientific activities in 2021-2023. The number of articles grew constantly - 89 in 2021 and increased to 106 in 2023. The number of scientific reports and seminars almost doubled during the period of evaluation, while applied studies increased as well. However, the expert panel noticed that a large part of the articles presented as the three most significant research works were published in regional journals and conferences. Thus, higher attention should be paid to the quality of the applied research rather than quantity in the future. The KK organises many conferences, but they are related only to marketing.

There is a significant body of strategic partners in implementing applied research activities. The institution performs applied science projects with local and international partners. These activities generate a significant amount of money, growing every year. The expert committee acknowledges that the researchers working in applied sciences have support from the institution.

2.1.2. Curriculum is linked to the latest developments in science, art, and technology

The link between the content of studies and the latest scientific developments is provided at various levels. The SER stated that new courses were introduced to reflect the importance of digitisation, sustainability, and e-business. Most of the latest developments in science and technology have been integrated into assignments of the SPSM study modules.

The expert committee emphasises the importance of including the latest developments in the final thesis since the topics of these papers reflect casual problems. The link between the content of studies and the latest developments in marketing can be strengthened by closer cooperation with the Lithuanian Marketing Association and international aspirations (e.g., inviting distinguished professors).

2.1.3. Opportunities for students to engage in research are consistent with the cycle

The experts pointed out many possibilities for students to be involved in research activities. Some students write and publish articles or reports. Other students participate in scientific-practical conferences, such as Business Actualities from the Perspective of Future Professionals or forums

titled Development of the Circular Economy in Lithuania and the EU, which have been organised annually at the Faculty since 2020.

Students have the possibility to improve their research competence by participating in various activities in local and international projects. The institution invites students to meetings and workshops with local and foreign experts in the marketing area. The institution provides financial support for students' visits and trips for international student projects.

The site visit proved that students were aware of statistical tools for data analysis, but they were not used for the final thesis. The expert committee argues that recommendations made by students in their final thesis would be more reliable if statistical or predictive analyses were applied.

The expert's panel admits that most of the research activities are directed toward the marketing area (see SER) including branding, new product development, customer loyalty. The SP's title also includes Sales, but it receives much less attention - less than 10% of papers were related to sales. Thus, sales should play an equally important role in scientific activities.

ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSION (regarding 2.1.)

Research activities are developed systematically, including formal policies and annual activity plans. Research output, including scientific articles and applied research activities, grows every year. The latest developments are represented in various tasks within courses and by adding new courses. Students have many possibilities to participate in scientific activities.

The SP SM should pay more attention to the selected journals for the articles since, currently, a part of the articles is published in regional journals. Most of the science-related activities were directed to various areas of marketing, while sales activities could have emphasised since every marketing action indirectly related to the sales of products.

Students participate in the research activities. However, the final thesis development lacks the use of technological tools (e.g. statistical inputs and software) to improve the quality of the work done.

AREA 2: CONCLUSIONS

AREA 2	Unsatisfactory - 1 Does not meet the requirements	Satisfactory - 2 Meets the requirements, but there are substantial shortcomings to be eliminated	Good - 3 Meets the requirements, but there are shortcomings to be eliminated	Very good - 4 Very well nationally and internationally without any shortcomings	Exceptional - 5 Exceptionally well nationally and internationally without any shortcomings
First cycle				4	

COMMENDATIONS

1. There is a positive orientation to marketing research in the study programme.
2. Student's engagement in the research activities is positive.

RECOMMENDATIONS

For further improvement:

1. To continue on the applied research path, some strategic research guidelines can be defined to improve the quality of the research publications made by lecturers and students.
2. The integration of technology software or tools to improve the applied research quality.
3. Highlight the sales area within the marketing research development.

AREA 3: STUDENT ADMISSION AND SUPPORT

3.1.	Student selection and admission is in line with the learning outcomes
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FACTUAL SITUATION

3.1.1. Student selection and admission criteria and procedures are adequate and transparent

The admission requirements are well-founded. Student admission to the studies of the field of Marketing is carried out following the terms and conditions of students' admission to collegial studies, following the principles of general admission, and the Rules of Students' Admission to Kauno kolegija. The LAMA BPO administers general admission. Students' admission rules define the competitive score's structure and the methodology of its calculation. The structure of the competitive score and other criteria are published on the KK website.

The Expert recommendations provided during the last external evaluation suggested that "There is a need for a higher level of internationalisation of the studies. At least the webpage information in English should be added." However, no information about SP SM in English exists on the webpage of KK, which leads to the recommendation of the internationalisation of SP SM.

A growing number of applicants and enrolled students have proven interest in these studies. Moreover, the analysis of the competitive scores of the enrolled students in the SP SM reveals that students with higher competitive scores than the established minimum (4.3) were admitted. The expert panel pointed out that the difference in the admission score between the highest for state-funded studies and the lowest score for state-non-funded is growing (SER), which could have a negative impact on study quality in the future.

3.1.2. Recognition of foreign qualifications, periods of study, and prior learning (established provisions and procedures)

The right to carry out academic recognition of prospective students' education and qualifications related to higher education obtained under the educational programmes of foreign countries and international organisations has been granted to Kauno kolegija since 2021. The number of applicants for academic recognition of foreign qualifications for studies at KK was constantly growing during 2021-2023, while no applications for recognition were received for this programme.

The SPSM students can submit applications to have their learning outcomes from previous studies achieved in a formal or non-formal (informal) way credited. A maximum of 75% of the volume of the study program can be credited. During the period under assessment, 13 SPSM students applied for credit for partial studies.

The assessment and recognition of the knowledge and skills acquired through non-formal and informal learning and self-study is carried out following the formal procedures for Assessing and Recognising Competencies Acquired in Non-formal Education and Self-study as Learning Outcomes in KK. During the period under assessment, there was no need to assess and recognise the informal and non-formal learning achievements of the SP SM students. The expert panel suggests that more efforts can be made to inform and explain the recognition of non-formal and informal learning to future students since the site visit proved that most students had part-time or full-time jobs in the study field during their studies.

ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSION (regarding 3.1.)

Although the sections and admissions criteria are adequate and transparent, some issues regarding the information provided by KK's website need to be addressed. It needs to be in English to comply with the advice of the previous and present expert assessments. To ensure the study programme's future quality, some attention is paid to the difference in the admission score between state-funded and non-state-funded studies.

Positive regulations exist regarding the accreditation process of international and non-formal qualifications. Still, not enough information is available about the possibility of non-formal accreditation, which may lead to the non-existence of applications.

3.2.	There is an effective student support system enabling students to maximise their learning progress
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FACTUAL SITUATION

3.2.1. Opportunities for student academic mobility are ensured

All KK students have the opportunity to participate in short/long-term mobilities or professional and postgraduate internships under Erasmus +, Nordplus programmes, and bilateral cooperation agreements. Students can choose from more than 200 HEIs in 40 countries. The academic mobility is organised by the International Relations Unit and the coordinator of international activities at the Faculty of Business.

Students from the marketing field actively participate in short-term mobility programs, but not many choose to go on long-term mobility programs. According to the SER, this is because most students work. In total, 101 students from the field of marketing had long or short international mobility experiences in 2022-2023, and they had 116 incoming students. The participation in international mobility and projects is very positive. This committee suggests continuing to promote international mobility programs to students.

3.2.2. Academic, financial, social, psychological, and personal support provided to students is relevant, adequate, and effective

KK provides its students with a wide range of academic, social, and financial support services, such as the University's talent scholarships, scholarships by enterprises, sponsor's scholarships, and scholarships for actively participating in extracurricular activities. They also cover the expenses of representation in activities in which students represent the university. Economic funds are also used for student situations. Students benefit from the free activities of the Cultural Activities and Sports Centre and have psychological help if they need it. The students with special needs are provided with support for studies, infrastructure adaptation, financial and psychological support, etc. Students have numerous university activities and grants at their disposal that cover all their needs. They also, mentioned their satisfaction with the academic support (virtual library, data basis, receiving the replies to their questions from the academic staff and administration).

This committee positively appreciates the wide variety of activities available.

3.2.3. Higher education information and student counselling are sufficient

KK's academic support encompasses student counselling and guidance, assistance with international mobility, utilisation of library and scientific communication centre resources, and career and language centre services. The non-academic assistance includes financial aid, accommodation, sports and leisure services, and the provision of services tailored to students' individual needs. Psychological support is also available in Lithuanian, English, and Russian.

The KK website offers comprehensive support and information for both students and prospective students, encompassing a wide range of topics. These include study programmes, admission conditions, international opportunities, scholarships, loans, accommodation, psychological support, IT guidelines, and library services. Some updates collected through the students' surveys have been integrated into the Moodle system (FAQs, study documents, academic literacy resources, and career-related information). First-year students receive bespoke support during an induction week, during which they are introduced to study procedures, schedules, regulations, scholarship opportunities, and library services. Additionally, a dedicated Moodle course provides a detailed study calendar, guidelines for assignments, and other relevant resources.

The provision of support for students is further extended through individual counselling (both remote and in-person), tutoring systems involving lecturers and senior students, and regular meetings with faculty deans, international coordinators, and administrative staff. These meetings provide guidance on exchange opportunities and career planning and address issues such as appeals and complaints. The KK Students' Representative Council collaborates with faculty to enhance student engagement and ensure ongoing communication, particularly for first-year academic groups.

During the site visit, it was possible to assess whether students are aware of the support they may have and how to ask for it.

ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSION (regarding 3.2.)

There is an effective student support system that enables students to maximise their learning progress.

Even though the international mobilities SPSM reveal positive engagement, continuous improvement of student engagement is necessary.

AREA 3: CONCLUSIONS

AREA 3	Unsatisfactory - 1 Does not meet the requirements	Satisfactory - 2 Meets the requirements, but there are substantial shortcomings to be eliminated	Good - 3 Meets the requirements, but there are shortcomings to be eliminated	Very good - 4 Very well nationally and internationally without any shortcomings	Exceptional - 5 Exceptionally well nationally and internationally without any shortcomings
First cycle				X	

COMMENDATIONS

1. Effective academic, social, and financial support services are provided.
2. Student counselling exists and is well-disseminated
3. The international mobilities are growing.

RECOMMENDATIONS

For further improvement

1. Continuous promotion of the student's mobilities, especially the long-term ones.

AREA 4: TEACHING AND LEARNING, STUDENT ASSESSMENT, AND GRADUATE EMPLOYMENT

4.1.	Students are prepared for independent professional activity
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FACTUAL SITUATION

4.1.1. Teaching and learning address the needs of students and enable them to achieve the intended learning outcomes

The SP SM studies are run through 11 modules, each containing three courses. Contact hours (theoretical and practical classes, consultations) account for 47% of students' workload. However, just 7.8% of it is dedicated to theoretical lectures, which are just 8 hours in some courses. During the site visit, it was stated that some additional time for the presentation of theory was used as consultation time dedicated to project activity. The expert panel admits that the titles of some courses are rather broad and should devote more time to presenting theoretical knowledge.

The methods of assessing learning achievements include such methods as tests, reports, different types of written assignments, demonstration of the completed practical assignments and skills, assessment of the reports on individual and group assignments, and self-assessment. However, SER presents an integrated project as an evaluation method for every module. Various assessment methods are used to assess the effort of students' team/group as objectively as possible (e.g., problem-solving analysis, report, evaluation of group reports). The expert panel points out that such evaluation methods enable the evaluation of just a student's effort rather than knowledge or abilities. SER stated, "The self-assessment of group activities is carried out, assessing each group member individually based on the tasks performed. Students are also asked to provide a reflection on the completed work and the process itself." However, the site visit revealed that students' intention to do projects in the same groups for most of the modules and their responsibilities are quite constant. Such constant distribution of activities does not develop a wide scope of learning outcomes.

4.1.2. Access to higher education for socially vulnerable groups and students with individual needs is ensured.

KK's students have the opportunity to seek professional counselling to resolve problematic personal situations. Students with special needs may request adjusted and flexible forms of assessments to reflect their specific requirements. KK facilities are accessible for students with physical disabilities in most situations.

The institution supports socially vulnerable groups and students with special needs and offers various schemes that reflect students' specific situations and limitations. Although this was confirmed during the site visit it was also evident that KK does not have a previous identification of all the situations and develops solutions case by case. This can be improved by a thorough analysis and reflection on the institution's policy, at least in terms of accessibility difficulties. It also would be important for KK to design a procedure to incorporate all the specific situations that occurred outside their policy and incorporate them in new policy versions.

ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSION (regarding 4.1.)

There is a constraint in the student's assessment regarding the group's assignments identified in the expert's visit that constrains the learning outcomes since students tend to have the same work

groups over the years for getting the degree, which allows them not to acquire different knowledge. This situation is important as it limits their capabilities and competences. Therefore, teachers should ensure that this does not happen, motivating students to have different work groups or individualising the assessment methods more.

4.2.	There is an effective and transparent system for student assessment, progress monitoring, and assuring academic integrity
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FACTUAL SITUATION

4.2.1. Monitoring of learning progress and feedback to students to promote self-assessment and learning progress planning is systematic

The monitoring of student study progress is systematic and is formally delimited in the internal directives. The students receive feedback that reflects the nature of assignments. Students may raise complaints or comments on their evaluation, and their feedback is reflected on the module and program level. The results and achievements are systematically monitored and evaluated by departments and the Study Field Committee. Students' study progress is being monitored to prevent dropouts.

The institution conducts surveys on a regular basis, and the results are reflected in the development of the study program. The surveys and feedback are not limited just to students; other stakeholders (i.e., internship supervisors) may also sound their voices. During the meeting, students indicated that the assessment is generally fair and reflects their performance. They appreciated that the teachers were available for discussion and feedback. Monitoring student study progress and feedback to students to promote self-assessment and subsequent planning of study progress is adequate.

4.2.2. Graduate employability and career are monitored

SPSM regularly receives information from the Lithuanian Employment Service on graduates' registration and analyses the Government Strategic Analysis Centre data on graduates' employment according to the qualification acquired 12 months after graduation. Additionally, the Student Affairs and Career Unit conducted a graduate survey to determine graduates' employability rates after six months of graduation and their professional readiness and integration into the labour market one year after graduation. Finally, employers' views on graduates' professional readiness and acquired competencies are also collected.

The expert committee pointed out that the employability of the SPSM graduates ranges from 69 to 77%, depending on the graduation year. A survey of graduates performed six months after graduation presented quite similar results. The site visit pointed out that SP has no clear understanding of why a large part of graduates was unemployed or not employed by speciality. Therefore, more attention must be given to unemployed graduates and employment in other specialities.

4.2.3. Policies to ensure academic integrity, tolerance, and non-discrimination are implemented

The institution has a well-established framework to ensure academic integrity, tolerance, and non-discrimination. The system is formal (institutional directives, i.e., Code of Academic Ethics) and informal (i.e., seminars on avoiding plagiarism, specific plagiarism prevention programs). The institution uses an anti-plagiarism system to check final theses and other submitted works. Other assignments are alternated annually to further lower opportunities for non-ethical behaviour. Reported cases are submitted to the KK Ethics Committee for consideration. However, the institution does not report any cases of violation, which does not allow any conclusions about the system's effectiveness to be formulated. Students may also send their concerns or complaints to the Students' Representation Council, which monitors the examination process and assists the academic staff in ensuring a fair process. The institution also has a formalised approach to dealing with intolerance, discrimination, or harassment. Specific committees (including external experts and stakeholders) are established in such cases. The institution has a well-established framework that includes all major stakeholder groups and consists of both formal and informal parts.

4.2.4. Procedures for submitting and processing appeals and complaints are effective

The application of the procedures for submitting and examining appeals and complaints regarding the study process is well-described. The students can submit an appeal to the dean of the faculty, who will establish a specific committee to consider the case. For procedural violations of the defence of Final theses, students may submit appeals to the KK Director within 24 hours after the announcement of the results. The information regarding appeals and complaints is available on the institution's website.

On the other hand, there is no information about such cases, which does not allow us to formulate any conclusions about the system's effectiveness. A lack of awareness or transparency of the procedure could cause an absence of such cases.

ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSION (regarding 4.2.)

Monitoring student study progress and feedback to students to promote self-assessment and subsequent planning of study progress is adequate. SP SM regularly receives information on graduates' employment according to the qualification acquired 12 months after graduation. Surveys were also performed to evaluate graduates' employability rates after six months of graduation and employers' views on graduates' professional readiness. Since the employability of the SPSM graduates is around 70%, more attention must be given to the reasons for unemployment.

The procedures for submitting and examining appeals and complaints regarding the study process are defined. However, no information about such cases allows the expert team to formulate conclusions about the system's effectiveness. This situation is repeated concerning the academic integrity, tolerance, and non-discrimination policy. It exists, but the expert evaluation team can't comment on its effectiveness since no cases were reported. A lack of awareness or transparency of the procedures could cause the absence of such cases.

AREA 4: CONCLUSIONS

AREA 4	Unsatisfactory - 1 Does not meet the requirements	Satisfactory - 2 Meets the requirements, but there are substantial shortcomings to be eliminated	Good - 3 Meets the requirements, but there are shortcomings to be eliminated	Very good - 4 Very well nationally and internationally without any shortcomings	Exceptional - 5 Exceptionally well nationally and internationally without any shortcomings
First cycle			X		

COMMENDATIONS

1. There is a monitorisation procedure for the student's employment and feedback
2. There are policies to ensure the appeals and complaints are addressed and to guarantee the inclusion and non-discriminating KK environment

RECOMMENDATIONS

To address shortcomings

1. More transparency and dissemination of the procedures to ensure a positive, equal and inclusive environment
2. Include in the graduate's work monitorisation the unemployed and the employed in different fields or specialisations.
3. The study program should pay more attention time dedicated to theoretical lectures.
4. The SP SM should pay more attention to the development of teams for projects presenting different tasks for every project.

AREA 5: TEACHING STAFF

5.1.	Teaching staff is adequate to achieve learning outcomes
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FACTUAL SITUATION

5.1.1. The number, qualification, and competence (scientific, didactic, professional) of teaching staff is sufficient to achieve learning outcomes

The number of academic staff members increases every year, and currently, 32 teachers work in the SP SM, but just 19 teachers have been regularly employed at least half FTE at least 3 years. This shows that a large part of teachers is quite new for the SMSP. 25% of the teaching staff have PhDs and more than 60% have 3 years of experience or higher, which means that the composition of teachers fits the requirements for the teachers of the college study program. The expert's panel considered that the academic staff complies with the requirements, however, there were some problems in calculations of percentages in SER that do not correspond to reality and should be corrected.

The expert's panel points out that several teachers are responsible for more than one course, and 9 out of 19 (47%) teachers according to presented information in SER have a workload higher than 1.0 FTE, which could limit their possibilities of running research activities in future due to burnout.

Teachers are members of national and international professional associations, take part in expert working groups and committees, and serve on editorial boards of academic journals. However, some teachers have no scientific publications at all or just a minimal amount. The staff turnover corresponds to the needs and reasons for replacement. The academic staff participate in seminars, conferences, courses, and internships to improve their professional, didactic, and research competences. However, teachers actively (almost all of them) participated in the improvement of their professional competences, but only half of them upgraded research competences every year, which could have a negative impact on the increase in and quality of research output.

ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSION (regarding 5.1.) year

The number of academic staff members increases every year, and the distribution of them fits formal requirements. It's noteworthy that nearly half of teachers are managing a workload exceeding 1.0 FTE, which may pose challenges for them when it comes to pursuing research activities in the future.. The staff turnover corresponds to the needs and reasons for replacement. The academic staff participate in seminars, conferences, courses, and internships to improve their professional, didactic, and research competences.

5.2.	Teaching staff is ensured opportunities to develop competences, and they are periodically evaluated
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FACTUAL SITUATION

5.2.1. Opportunities for academic mobility of teaching staff are ensured

The International Activity Coordinator of the Business Faculty manages opportunities for academic mobility (Erasmus+, Nordplus, or other mobility programmes).

The selection of teachers participating in mobility calls, announced at least four times a year, is based on clearly defined rules and criteria. The selection criteria are transparent and accessible to

the public, thereby enhancing the relevance of the visit to KK, the Department and/or the study field group represented, and the purposefulness of the visit for the professional activities of the academic staff member and/or another employee.

The analysis of the mobility of academic staff engaged in the Sales and Marketing study programme reveals an increase in the number of incoming lecturers over the period under assessment. Furthermore, the number of outgoing lecturers increased considerably, with 16 % of the academic staff participating in mobility programmes in 2023. This has facilitated the establishment and development of cooperation with partner higher education institutions, which are the institution's main strategic partners. However, it also shows that academic mobility still needs to be improved since it represents less than half of the teachers of the study programme. There is also an effort by KK to promote online mobilities integrated into the European Alliance.

5.2.2. Opportunities for the development of the teaching staff are ensured

The heads of departments, deans of faculties, and the Human Resource Unit are responsible for planning and implementing in-service staff training, considering the goals and objectives of the HEI and its academic divisions. In this way, the needs of the academic staff are identified and defined to improve their professional, didactic, and research competencies. Academic staff are encouraged to participate in in-service training corresponding to the field of study course taught and upgrade their practical experience (e.g. trainings in well-being and emotional intelligence in academia, trainings to improve digital competences, trainings to further develop academic management activities), which contributes to the development of practice-oriented studies and quality assurance and expansion. Sometimes, training instructors are invited from inside and outside the HEI, or the academic staff express the need to participate in in-service training events outside the institution, which is financed. It covers participation fees for seminars, training courses and conferences in Lithuania and abroad, and training services for guest lecturers. During the site visit no evidences of dissatisfaction with these support and procedures were mentioned.

ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSION (regarding 5.2.)

There is no evidence of any problem regarding the mobility opportunities given to teachers or improvement of their competences since, during the visit meetings, the teachers expressed satisfaction with the opportunities. However, it is necessary to further improving the teachers' mobility engagement and recognition.

AREA 5: CONCLUSIONS

	Unsatisfactory - 1 Does not meet the requirements	Satisfactory - 2 Meets the requirements, but there are substantial shortcomings to be eliminated	Good - 3 Meets the requirements, but there are shortcomings to be eliminated	Very good - 4 Very well nationally and internationally without any shortcomings	Exceptional - 5 Exceptionally well nationally and internationally without any shortcomings
AREA 5					
First cycle				X	

COMMENDATIONS

1. The training plans are adequate for the teaching staff's needs, and there are opportunities for them to take.
2. Opportunities for mobility exist, and there are well-defined rules and criteria.

RECOMMENDATIONS

For further improvements:

1. Research quality and quantity should be improved in an equal opportunity environment, not having some teachers overloaded with work.
2. Teachers' engagement in mobilities still could be improved.

AREA 6: LEARNING FACILITIES AND RESOURCES

6.1.	Facilities, informational and financial resources are sufficient and enable achieving learning outcomes
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FACTUAL SITUATION

6.1.1. Facilities, informational and financial resources are adequate and sufficient for an effective learning process

The HEI presents modern buildings with fully equipped classrooms and a library with a system of access and loans to request on-site or at home. The Sales and Marketing study programme is implemented in lecture rooms equipped with digital projectors, screens, lecturer computers, audio speakers, whiteboards, and video cameras for hybrid teaching. It has a set of software that is important for the study programme in different modules or courses. However, more technology and software can be used in marketing, particularly in marketing control (CRM software, dashboards and roadmaps), extended reality, and metaverse marketing. As said in the visit meeting, there is a need for more technology use in the classrooms, which means that some of the technologies or software available are not fully incorporated into the courses.

According to SER and as admitted in the visit meeting, the inclusive conditions of use of the space, buildings, and access to the different resources are a work in progress since there are still some difficulties to overcome. The situation is analysed case by case – “on demand and to improve the accessibility of studies for students with special needs, individual consultations are organised to determine the need for assistance”, as stated in SER - and a solution is developed. This is not sufficient, and it is necessary to reflect further in the KK policy support in these situations and to understand what are the procedures to KK’s incorporation of these new cases in their policy definition.

The KK website is accessible to individuals with disabilities in accordance with the relevant legislation. Students with visual impairments have access to special keyboards and software in library self-study rooms provided by the State Studies Foundation through the Enhancing Access to Studies project, funded by the European Social Fund. The available tools include the Victor Reader e-book player, the Freedom Scientific image magnifier for reading printed materials, and the SARA CE device for scanning and reading text. In addition, the Bellman Audio Domino FM system is available for students with hearing impairments. These actions are positive and can be further developed.

6.1.2. There is continuous planning for and upgrading of resources.

The relevance and renewal of methodological resources are analysed in accordance with the nature and content of the SPSM modules/their components to ensure that the modules are prepared for certification. Student and staff surveys are regularly carried out at department meetings to help assess the current situation and identify needs, ensuring that the needs of the KK community are fully met.

The upgrade planning of the resources is done one year in advance by request of the teachers or department, sent to the Faculty Administration, and included in the annual Faculty Action Plan. The need for scientific literature, textbooks, methodological resources, and other publications is discussed at the beginning of each year, and the needs are sent to the Library to be decided accordingly with the budget. The expert’s panel believes that these are good procedures and could confirm it in the site visit.

ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSION (regarding 6.1.)

Even though KK's physical condition is modern and adequate, some issues must be addressed. The institutional strategy regarding the conditions of inclusion and accessibility must be more well-implemented even though there are not many cases of students, teachers, or staff needing those infrastructures or technologies. The technology available must be applied in the courses since marketing-specific technologies are rapidly developed to be acquired and implemented in the different modules.

AREA 6: CONCLUSIONS

AREA 6	Unsatisfactory - 1 Does not meet the requirements	Satisfactory - 2 Meets the requirements, but there are substantial shortcomings to be eliminated	Good - 3 Meets the requirements, but there are shortcomings to be eliminated	Very good - 4 Very well nationally and internationally without any shortcomings	Exceptional - 5 Exceptionally well nationally and internationally without any shortcomings
First cycle				X	

COMMENDATIONS

1. The space is modern and adequate to the needs of the teaching and learning process
2. There is a good method of analysis and discussion for the upgrade of the different resources
3. There is equipment adequate to allow inclusion in learning

RECOMMENDATIONS

To further improvement:

1. The marketing-specific technologies and tools should be acquired and incorporated into the different modules and courses
2. The inclusion strategy followed by the institution should be better implemented to guarantee accessibility from the start.

AREA 7: QUALITY ASSURANCE AND PUBLIC INFORMATION

7.1.	The development of the field of study is based on an internal quality assurance system involving all stakeholders and continuous monitoring, transparency and public information
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FACTUAL SITUATION

7.1.1. Internal quality assurance system for the programmes is effective

The institution has an internal quality system based on the quality assurance policy and the institutional strategy expressed in a Quality Manual. It covers all levels of implementing studies in the field and provides for the related processes regulated by a set of pertinent documents.

The management and decision-making of the Sales and Marketing studies are performed at several levels (Institutional, Faculty, and Department). The institutional approach to quality management encompasses all requisite domains, including the study programme, assessment, study course/module, internships, distance education, plagiarism detection, and the examination observation process.

The Department of Communication and the Study Field Committee initiate the modifications in the study programme after evaluating the proposals and needs of social partners, academic staff, students, and other stakeholders. The Department of Communication, according to the Institutional Department Regulations, is responsible for implementing and monitoring the Sales and Marketing study programme. Quality management encompasses the analysis of pertinent data about student enrolment, graduation and employment rates of those students, the outcomes of the internationalisation process, and feedback from social partners and students.

KK's internal quality assurance model is based on a cyclical process incorporating annual self-assessment and benchmarking. This approach ensures public accountability and community involvement in achieving KK's goals. Self-assessment entails gathering and analysing reliable data. In accordance with the academic staff activity planning and assessment procedure, faculty members establish their objectives for the academic year and provide an account of their progress at the end of the year in self-assessment reports, which are then reviewed and approved by the Department Head.

The expert panel considered this process effective.

7.1.2. Involvement of stakeholders (students and others) in internal quality assurance is effective

The quality of studies is guaranteed by continuous feedback from students and other relevant stakeholders. By the Procedure for Managing Feedback from Stakeholders in KK, students are periodically invited to evaluate the quality of teaching study modules and studies and participate in other targeted surveys. A survey is conducted of graduates to ascertain their preparedness for professional activities and integration into the labour market, the quality of their studies, and their employment status. The academic staff assesses the quality of the studies, while employers evaluate specialists' theoretical and practical preparedness.

There is a focus on cooperation and networking through joint meetings and round-table discussions with academic community members, external stakeholders, employers, and Assessment Committee members to share information, good practices, and new insights. A cordial invitation is extended to all graduates of the study field to participate in surveys about their employability and preparedness

for their chosen careers. The survey's findings on the employability of Sales and Marketing graduates were used to evaluate students' professional preparedness, the necessity for professionals, and the demand for the study programme. The survey findings were presented to the academic staff at departmental meetings and submitted to the study programme. The results of these meetings are then incorporated into the Sales and Marketing study programme, as exemplified in SER and confirmed in the visit meetings, which is very positive.

7.1.3. Information on the programmes, their external evaluation, improvement processes, and outcomes are collected, used and made publicly available

The accessibility of the evaluation results conducted on the study programme by the different stakeholders is now published in reports on the faculty's website and updated periodically. The data about sales and marketing studies and quality are subject to regular review at department meetings (held every month), SFM meetings (held biannually), and Dean's Office meetings (held every month). The annual reports on the performance of the Department, Faculty, and KK are used to formulate action plans designed to address the results from the previous year. The data is accessible on the KK website and encompasses Sales and Marketing study programme descriptions, study module particulars, admission prerequisites, pathways for further studies, career trajectories, external assessments, progress reports, and survey outcomes concerning teaching quality, study quality, student motivation, and graduate feedback. This information was confirmed in the visit meetings. However, there is some information that raises concerns, like the low number of answers in the student's surveys, the awareness of the informal procedures to solve their problems than the formal ones, and the amount of information they receive through social media and emails that makes them unaware of what is critical.

7.1.4. Student feedback is collected and analysed

The students participate in the processes of assessing and improving the quality of the study programme, such as the surveys on the quality of organising studies and teaching modules.

Student feedback is collected, but a representative number of answers is insufficient to analyse. The students stated that it was their fault for not being engaged and interested in completing the surveys. Still, more effective measures must be developed to help students understand its importance, mainly if it is only to say good things. If the students have complaints, they will answer the surveys, if not they do not fill them. They have a greater awareness of informal problem-solving procedures than formal ones.

Even though the quantity of student feedback needs improvement, the data collected through this process is analysed and incorporated in the SP or KK's Moodle system. The VLE Moodle, SMS, and email are used to give students feedback, and the academic staff provide contact consultations, which is good practice.

ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSION (regarding 7.1.)

There is a clear quality assurance system in the institution. Still, only the stakeholders with a presence in the Assessment Committee are engaged in the discussion since, as the students stated, they often do not answer the surveys because they are not interested in doing it. Therefore, there is a clear need for a community engagement process to be developed because without forcing the students to answer, they must understand the importance of the results, even if it is to say good things. There must be evidence that the students are satisfied, which wasn't presented, perhaps because of the insignificant percentage of answers collected.

AREA 7: CONCLUSIONS

AREA 7	Unsatisfactory - 1 Does not meet the requirements	Satisfactory - 2 Meets the requirements, but there are substantial shortcomings to be eliminated.	Good - 3 Meets the requirements, but there are shortcomings to be eliminated	Very good - 4 Very well nationally and internationally without any shortcomings	Exceptional - 5 Exceptionally well nationally and internationally without any shortcomings
First cycle				X	

COMMENDATIONS

1. A Quality Assurance system is applied in the institution, which is well-defined and structured.
2. There is a transparent process of the stakeholder's feedback.

RECOMMENDATIONS

For further improvement:

1. There is a need for student and community engagement development to ensure students are willing to answer the surveys since they want their teaching and learning process to be recognised and improved.

V. SUMMARY

The analysis of the Sales and Marketing Study Program (SPSM) at KK highlights both commendable aspects and areas for improvement. The program effectively aligns its curriculum, teaching, and assessment methods with legal requirements and market needs, fostering student achievement of study aims and learning outcomes. However, it requires greater emphasis on developing students' social and personal competencies and practical training, which should constitute at least one-third of the program. Integration of necessary technologies across courses is essential to better equip students for real-world applications.

The program is lauded for its alignment with institutional goals, student involvement in academic planning, and systematic scientific activities. Despite these strengths, research quality needs enhancement through strategic guidelines, technological integration, and broader journal selection. Expanding the focus on sales research and ensuring the final thesis topics reflect recent advancements are also recommended.

Student support systems are well-implemented, offering academic, social, and financial aid. International mobility programs are growing, but further promotion is required. Employability monitoring reveals a 70% graduate employment rate, necessitating an analysis of unemployment causes and field mismatches. Transparent procedures for appeals and ensuring an inclusive environment require broader dissemination to promote awareness and trust.

Robust training plans and mobility opportunities benefit the teaching staff, yet engagement in these areas should increase. Research productivity and equitable workload distribution among staff are also critical.

While KK's physical infrastructure is modern and adequate, the institution's inclusion strategies and accessibility initiatives need improvement. Marketing-specific technologies should be integrated into curricula to reflect industry advancements.

Finally, the quality assurance system is transparent and structured, but student engagement in feedback processes remains limited. Building a culture of participation and demonstrating the value of feedback to students can enhance the program's continuous development and alignment with stakeholder expectations.

The evaluation team appreciates the meeting developments during the site visit. It was possible to openly discuss and brainstorm KK's and SPSM's reality. The self-evaluation report was well structured and written despite the difficulty of always having a complete description of a study programme.

VI. EXAMPLES OF EXCELLENCE

Examples of excellence should include examples exhibiting exceptional characteristics that are, implicitly, not achievable by all.

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