



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

TOURISM AND LEISURE FIELD OF STUDY

at Šv. Ignaco Lojolos kolegija

EXTERNAL EVALUATION REPORT

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CONTENTS

I. INTRODUCTION	3
1.1. OUTLINE OF THE EVALUATION PROCESS	3
1.2. REVIEW PANEL	4
1.3. SITE VISIT	4
1.4. BACKGROUND OF THE REVIEW	5
III. ASSESSMENT IN POINTS BY CYCLE AND EVALUATION AREAS.....	8
IV. STUDY FIELD ANALYSIS	9
AREA 1: STUDY AIMS, LEARNING OUTCOMES AND CURRICULUM	9
AREA 1: CONCLUSIONS	16
AREA 2: LINKS BETWEEN SCIENTIFIC (OR ARTISTIC) RESEARCH AND HIGHER EDUCATION	17
AREA 2: CONCLUSIONS	20
AREA 3: STUDENT ADMISSION AND SUPPORT	21
AREA 4: TEACHING AND LEARNING, STUDENT ASSESSMENT, AND GRADUATE EMPLOYMENT	27
AREA 4: CONCLUSIONS	31
AREA 5: TEACHING STAFF	32
AREA 5: CONCLUSIONS	35
AREA 6: LEARNING FACILITIES AND RESOURCES.....	36
AREA 6: CONCLUSIONS	39
AREA 7: QUALITY ASSURANCE AND PUBLIC INFORMATION	40
AREA 7: CONCLUSIONS	44
V. SUMMARY.....	45

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 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 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: **Assoc. prof. dr. Rong Huang**
2. Academic member: **Prof. dr. Agita Livina**
3. Academic member: **Assoc. prof. dr. Philipp Wegerer**
4. Social partner representative: **Zita Krūkonytė-Teryaeva**
5. Student representative: **Rugilė Kriauciūnaitė**

1.3. SITE VISIT

The site visit was organised on 24th October 2025 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(ies);
- Team responsible for preparation of the SER;
- Teaching staff;
- Students;
- Alumni and social stakeholders including employers.

There was a need for translation during the meeting with the senior management team, the teaching staff, students, alumni and social partners.

1.4. BACKGROUND OF THE REVIEW

Overview of the HEI

St. Ignatius of Loyola College (hereinafter – ILK) is a non-state Catholic higher education institution that operates as a public college. Established on 2 March 2010 by the Archdiocese of Kaunas, the Jesuit Province of Lithuania, and JsC Ortopedijos Klinika, ILK was licensed to conduct studies in 2011. Guided by the Jesuit educational tradition, it offers eight professional Bachelor's programmes across diverse study fields such as health sciences, social work, tourism, and the arts. The organisational structure includes shareholders, a board of directors, a director, deputies, a chaplain, and various academic and administrative departments including the Academic Council, Study Field Committees (SFC), and the Department of Studies. ILK maintains a strong focus on practice-oriented education, applied research, and internationalisation while upholding Ignatian values and leadership principles.

Overview of the study field

The study field of Tourism and Leisure, represented by the Hospitality Management (HM) programme at ILK, is positioned as an integral part of the institution's broader mission to provide practice-oriented education grounded in Jesuit values. It reflects ILK's strategic objective to link academic studies with real-world application through close cooperation with business, social, and scientific partners. The programme contributes to applied research activities, emphasising sustainable development, innovation, and digital transformation within the tourism and hospitality sector. In line with ILK's development strategy, it supports internationalisation through English-taught programmes, partnerships with social and industry stakeholders, and initiatives that enhance students' employability and social engagement, thereby aligning with the institution's overall goal of fostering responsible, values-driven professionals who contribute to society and the global labour market.

Previous external evaluations

An international group of experts commissioned by the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education (hereinafter - SKVC) carried out an evaluation of the HM programme in 2022. The study programme was evaluated and positively accredited for 3 years until 17 January 2026.

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*

Additional sources of information used by the review panel:

The following additional sources of information have been used by the review panel:

- Assessment and Teaching Methods of Hospitality Management Study Programme.
- Course descriptions for six modules: Fundamentals of Hospitality Management, Corporate Social Responsibility and Management in the Hospitality Sector, AI in the Hospitality Industry, International Marketing for Hospitality Industry, Hospitality Revenue and Pricing Management.
- Final thesis examples (6 in total).

- Photos from corpus located in V. Putvinskio g.12A, Kaunas.
- Article Anužis, A., Rakauskienė, B., Narmontė, S., & Gimžauskienė, E. (2025). Unpacking Competitive Performance in 5* Hotels: The Joint Effect of Dynamic Managerial Capabilities and Digital Transformation. *Engineering Economics*, 36(4), 466–480. <https://doi.org/10.5755/j01.ee.36.4.39924>
- Information about students' conference.
- Students' surveys on study subjects and quality, and the results of these surveys.
- Answer from ILK about research article.

II. STUDY PROGRAMMES IN THE FIELD

First cycle/LTQF 6

Title of the study programme	Hospitality Management
State code	6531LX015
Type of study (college/university)	College
Study cycle	First
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, English
Admission requirements	Secondary education
First registration date	23-04-2014
Comments (including remarks on joint or interdisciplinary nature of the programme, mode of provision)	

III. ASSESSMENT IN POINTS BY CYCLE AND EVALUATION AREAS

The **first cycle** of the Tourism and Leisure field of study is given a **positive** evaluation.

No.	Evaluation Area	Evaluation points*
1.	Study aims, learning outcomes and curriculum	4
2.	Links between scientific (or artistic) research and higher education	4
3.	Student admission and support	3
4.	Teaching and learning, student assessment, and graduate employment	4
5.	Teaching staff	4
6.	Learning facilities and resources	4
7.	Quality assurance and public information	4
Total:		27

*

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

As the Self-Evaluation Report (SER, p. 6) indicates that the aim of the HM programme is to prepare highly qualified hospitality management specialists who can organize and manage the activities of hospitality service providers, analyse market needs and apply innovative solutions based on the principles of sustainable development, characterised by strong values, a mature social and cultural perspective, and the ability to creatively and critically address the challenges of the sector. Annex 3 *Links between the study programme objective, study cycle, programme learning outcomes and study subjects* clearly lists 17 learning outcomes of the HM programme.

To evaluate whether the aims and learning outcomes of the HM programme conform with the needs of society and the labour market, ILK conducts a comprehensive review of national and international labour market trends, sectoral analyses, and strategic documents. As outlined in the SER (pp. 7-8), the programme team analyses data from the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC), the Government's Strategic Analysis Centre (STRATA) forecasts, and Employment Service surveys, which reveal a growing demand for skilled workers and managerial staff in the tourism and hospitality industries. ILK also considers the *European Tourism Agenda for 2030* and the *Sectoral Skills Assessment: Tourism (2024)*, which highlight the need for professionals with strong interpersonal, digital, entrepreneurial, and environmental competencies. In response, the HM programme is regularly reviewed and updated to align its objectives with these evolving requirements, integrating sustainability, digitalisation, and intercultural communication into the curriculum. ILK also consults its network of social partners—such as Radisson Collection Astorija Hotel, Stikliai Hotel (Relais & Châteaux), Palanga Life Balance Spa Hotel, and Go Vilnius—as well as the LYFE Institut Hospitality and Culinary Arts Alliance Network, to ensure that the content and outcomes remain relevant and responsive to both national and global industry expectation.

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

The SER (pp. 8–9) explains that the goals set out in ILK's strategy for 2021–2025 commit it to implementing studies based on the Ignatian Pedagogical Paradigm (IPP), which integrates ideas from science and business. ILK's vision is to become a highly reputable, innovative higher education institution that views students as individuals with the potential for comprehensive growth. ILK's mission is focused on the quality of studies, values-based education, sustainable development, and the dissemination of ideas for lifelong learning.

Annex 1 provides further details of how the outcomes of the HM programme align with the strategic objectives of ILK. The strategic objectives of ILK include High-quality higher education that meets contemporary needs; Development of material and financial resources for practical and entrepreneurial skills; Development of Ignatian Pedagogical Paradigm competencies, Development of applied research and professional art; Effective utilisation of financial and material resources; Strengthening the internationalisation of ILK, improving the quality management system.

Meetings with senior management and the SER team confirmed that the revision of the programme learning outcomes provided ILK with an opportunity to ensure closer alignment between the updated programme, ILK's ethos, and its strategic plan. Senior staff explained that the previous review

prompted them to undertake a comprehensive assessment of the programme. The operation of ILK's Michelin-starred restaurant, which serves as a practical training venue for students, together with international collaborations, the institutional strategic plan, and the new descriptor of the study field, all influenced the decision and process to revise the programme learning outcomes and to develop a more focused programme, particularly aimed at the luxury tourism segment.

ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSION (regarding 1.1.)

An analysis of the statistical data presented in the SER, it is evident that the tourism and hospitality industry plays a vital role in Lithuania's national economy and continues to demonstrate steady growth despite recent global challenges. The data from WTTC, STRATA, and the Employment Service indicate an ongoing demand for qualified specialists in the tourism, accommodation, and food service sectors, with employment opportunities expected to expand further in the coming years. Considering these labour market trends and strategic documents such as the *European Tourism Agenda 2030* and the *Sectoral Skills Assessment: Tourism (2024)*, it is clear that the sector increasingly values professionals equipped with digital, entrepreneurial, intercultural, and sustainability-oriented competencies. In response, ILK has aligned the aims and learning outcomes of the HM programme with these identified needs through regular curriculum updates, internationalisation efforts, and close collaboration with social partners including leading hotels, tourism organisations, and the LYFE Institut Hospitality and Culinary Arts Alliance Network.

Based on this evidence, it can be concluded that the aims and learning outcomes of the programme are well aligned with the needs of society and the labour market, ensuring the training of competitive and socially responsible hospitality professionals who contribute to the sustainable growth of the sector. Therefore, the Panel concludes that the aim and the outcomes of the HM programme conform the needs of the society and the labour market.

While the programme's aims and learning outcomes are clearly aligned with national labour-market needs and societal expectations, the hospitality sector in Europe is rapidly evolving in response to digitalisation, sustainability priorities, and shifting consumer behaviour. To ensure long-term relevance and maintain competitiveness, the programme would benefit from periodically comparing its aims and learning outcomes with those of leading European hospitality and tourism programmes.

An analysis of the aim and the learning outcomes of the HM programme which are explained in the SER (p6, 8) and Annex 1 indicate that they are correlate well with ILK's strategic objectives, subsequently support ILK to achieve its mission and vision.

The Panel notes that the ILK has undertaken a comprehensive and reflective process to revise the programme learning outcomes, drawing on insights from the previous evaluation, institutional strategic planning, and developments in the study field. The revision process effectively integrates academic, professional, and practical dimensions, including ILK's Michelin-starred training restaurant and international collaborations, to ensure the programme remains relevant and aligned with both industry expectations and educational standards. The Panel commends that ILK has adopted a comprehensive, reflective, and responsive approach to revising the programme's learning outcomes in alignment with its mission, vision, and strategic objectives.

Based on the available evidence and the visit, the Panel therefore concludes that the aim and outcomes of the HM programme directly correlate the mission, goals and strategy.

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 HM programme is implemented within the Tourism and Leisure (L08) study field, which belongs to the Business and Public Administration (L) study group. The SER (p. 9) indicates that the programme has been developed and delivered in compliance with the laws and regulations of the Republic of Lithuania, ILK's internal documents, and the ESG. It is also aligned with the Lithuanian and European Qualifications Frameworks for higher education.

Table 1 and Annex 2 reveal that total volume of the HM programme is 183 ECTS credits, corresponding to the first study cycle and Level 6 of the national and European qualifications frameworks. The structure of the programme follows the legal requirements for first-cycle college studies:

- Study field subjects: 147 ECTS, including 30 ECTS of professional practice;
- Final thesis: 9 ECTS;
- General college subjects: 21 ECTS;
- Elective subjects: 15 ECTS.

The programme is implemented on a full-time basis, with a workload of 60 ECTS per academic year.

Studies combine theoretical learning with applied practice through problem-based learning, case studies, and project-based activities. Practical training begins in the first semester and is carried out in hospitality and tourism enterprises, where students address real business and management issues. The curriculum also integrates digital skills, including artificial intelligence, customer experience analytics, and data visualisation tools, as well as entrepreneurship training through “live business” projects. Annex 3 includes 17 learning outcomes and illustrates how different modules are developed to achieve the programme learning outcomes.

International collaboration forms part of the study process. Partners such as Loyola University Andalucía (Spain) and Lithuanian hospitality industry representatives contribute to teaching, assessment, and professional workshops.

The organisation of studies meets national requirements for workload distribution: at least 30% independent work, 30% contact work (including distance learning), and 40% direct interaction with lecturers or supervisors. The study process is coordinated by the Department of Studies, while quality assurance is managed by the SFC, Programme Manager, and the Department of Quality Assurance.

Study plans and module descriptions are reviewed annually based on feedback, monitoring results, and labour market developments to ensure continued relevance.

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

The SER (p. 10) indicates that the programme's objectives and learning outcomes are designed to ensure that students achieve measurable progress in knowledge, understanding, analysis, and practical application. Learning outcomes are defined at both the programme and subject/module levels, with clear alignment between individual course content and the overall aims of the study programme. Lecturers prepare and update modules based on the competencies outlined in the programme, ensuring consistency and relevance to industry needs. ILK introduced structural revisions in 2024, such as rescheduling *Hotel Management Practice* and *Hospitality Management Practice* to later semesters, strengthened the connection between theoretical preparation and professional application. In response to employer feedback, a new subject—*Artificial Intelligence in the Hospitality Sector*—was introduced to enhance students' digital competencies and reflect current technological trends. Annex 3 illustrates how the various study subjects are mapped to specific programme learning outcomes, demonstrating systematic alignment between curriculum content and intended competencies.

Teaching and assessment methods are student-centred and employ a mix of practical, project-based, and problem-solving approaches (SER, p. 11). The SFC reviews study plans annually to

ensure that teaching strategies and assessment tools effectively support the achievement of programme outcomes. Students develop practical skills in real workplaces, such as restaurants, SPA, and leisure centres, using facilities maintained in cooperation with social partners. Assessment is based on a cumulative system combining interim evaluations, independent assignments, and final examinations. Throughout the study process, active learning and self-reflection are encouraged, helping students assess their progress, identify strengths and areas for improvement, and foster continuous personal and professional growth.

Course descriptions for six modules (*Fundamentals of Hospitality Management, Corporate Social Responsibility and Management in the Hospitality Sector, AI in the Hospitality Industry, International Marketing for the Hospitality Industry, and Hospitality Revenue and Pricing Management*) were reviewed to examine how the programme is delivered in practice.

Assessment and Teaching Method document illustrates explains the HM programme applies a wide range of teaching methods, including project-based learning, simulations, mentoring, interdisciplinary projects, and field visits to leading hospitality enterprises, ensuring a clear link between theoretical knowledge and professional practice. Lecturers cooperate through the PDCA (Plan–Do–Check–Act) framework to coordinate course content, assessment criteria, and interdisciplinary activities, which supports curricular coherence and alignment with current hospitality industry standards.

1.2.3. Curriculum ensures consistent development of student competences

The SER (pp. 11–15) provides a detailed explanation of the revised curriculum of the HM programme, describing how ILK updated and expanded its previous curriculum to better align with contemporary industry needs and educational standards. The revisions strengthened the integration between theoretical and practical components, improved the sequence of subjects, and introduced new modules reflecting technological and managerial developments in the hospitality sector. The study plan, presented in Annex 2, structures the three-year, six-semester full-time programme with a total of over 180 ECTS credits, combining academic courses, professional internships, and a final thesis. The updated curriculum also expands opportunities for elective learning and international engagement, ensuring greater flexibility and responsiveness to labour market demands.

The required student competences are clearly articulated in the revised programme learning outcomes, presented in Annex 3. These outcomes correspond to the competence areas set out in the *Descriptor of the Study Field of Tourism and Leisure* and ensure that graduates develop the necessary professional, analytical, digital, and social abilities for work in national and international hospitality contexts. The SER emphasises that curriculum design and improvement are guided by stakeholder input, including social partners, students, and academic staff, leading to a more coherent, practice-oriented, and forward-looking study programme.

Meetings with the teaching staff indicated that all lecturers have a clear understanding of the Ignatian Pedagogical Paradigm and apply its principles consistently in their teaching practice. Students and alumni expressed appreciation for this pedagogical approach, noting its positive influence on both their studies and personal development. During discussions, students and alumni were able to clearly explain their progression in understanding, knowledge, and skills, providing concrete examples of how their learning evolved throughout the programme.

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

ILK organises its study process to accommodate students' diverse needs, allowing them to pursue studies according to an individualised study plan. This process is regulated by official institutional documents, including the *Procedures for the Submission of Individualised Study Plans* (2019) and the *Study Regulations* (2024). Students can request an individual plan for various reasons, such as participation in exchange programmes, coordination of elective subjects, engagement in research or professional activities, or balancing studies with work, health, or family responsibilities. Plans may

also be approved when transferring from another institution or study form. Individual plans can include adjustments to course selections, assessment schedules, and study pace, but the same academic standards apply to all students.

To support flexibility, the ILK combines synchronous and asynchronous learning using digital tools such as *Moodle*, enabling students to manage their study time and pace independently. The institution also recognises competencies acquired through formal and non-formal learning, allowing credit transfers and faster study progression. Between 2022 and 2024, 37 applications for recognition of formal learning (worth 186 ECTS credits) and four for non-formal learning were submitted. Annex 2 indicates that within the HM programme there are five elective module slots, and ILK offers 13 elective options students can choose from to personalise their pathway, including options across programmes (e.g., *SPA Services* from Beauty Therapy). Students may also individualise via internship placement choices and thesis topics, with placements organised alongside social partners in hospitality settings (hotels, restaurants, SPA centres, tourism organisations). Recent examples include HM students selecting the *SPA Services* module in 2024.

Meetings with students and alumni indicated that they were aware of a range of opportunities to personalise their studies. Several students shared personal experiences illustrating how ILK's flexible study arrangements enabled them to balance work, caregiving responsibilities, and academic commitments. Alumni also highlighted that studying at ILK provided them with opportunities to change or advance their career paths, even in the face of financial challenges.

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

The final thesis is a core component of the professional Bachelor's HM programme. It is typically prepared in the sixth semester and may begin in the fifth semester, once all study modules and internships have been successfully completed. Thesis topics are developed jointly by students and supervisors, based on internship experience and the needs of social partners. Each thesis integrates theoretical knowledge, applied research, and practical experience, demonstrating the student's ability to analyse data, formulate conclusions, and provide recommendations for improving tourism and hospitality services. Annex 4 presents the list of final theses prepared within the *Tourism and Leisure* field, illustrating the diversity of research topics chosen by students.

Students work independently under the supervision of an appointed lecturer, with interim presentations organised to monitor progress and provide feedback. Theses are defended publicly before an Assessment Committee composed of lecturers and social partner representatives. Evaluation focuses on the quality of research, the soundness of conclusions, and the student's ability to present and defend their work. SER (p. 17) indicates that ILK ensures academic integrity through the *Turnitin* plagiarism detection system, which requires a similarity rate below 16%. In 2023–2024, 68% of final theses were directly applicable to professional practice, with research topics covering hospitality services, accommodation, and gastronomic tourism. The average score for theses improved from 7.4 in 2023 to 8.5 in 2024 as shown in Table 2 (SER, p. 16).

During the visit, six copies of thesis were shared. The topics are related to real-world issues in hospitality sector. The alumni shared their experience in final thesis. Their projects tend to be related to their work. Meeting with the social partner indicates that some has contributed project ideas or involved in thesis defense committee. Some social partners expressed interests in extending their engagements with the ILK in relation to thesis ideas and opportunities.

ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSION (regarding 1.2.)

An analysis of the statements in the SER and Annex 1, 2 and 3 indicates that the HM programme fully meets the legal requirements set for first-cycle college studies under the *Descriptor of the Study Field of Tourism and Leisure* (Order No. V-1547, 2022) and the *Descriptor of Study Cycles* (Order No. V-1012, 2016). The programme's total scope, structure, and qualification level correspond to Level 6 of the Lithuanian and European Qualifications Frameworks, and the allocation of credits for

study field subjects, professional practice, and the final thesis conforms to the national standards for higher education studies.

The learning outcomes of the programme clearly reflect the five competence areas required by the Tourism and Leisure Field Descriptor and demonstrate full integration of these domains across modules and assessments. In addition, the programme demonstrates good practice through the way it expands these competences beyond the minimum requirements. It integrates digital and data-driven skills (AI, analytics, customer experience systems), promotes entrepreneurial thinking through “live business” projects, and embeds international and intercultural collaboration in the learning process.

Considering the programme aim, the learning outcomes, shared teaching and learning methods, and assessments in the SER and Annex 3, it indicates that the HM programme presents a clear framework linking its aims and learning outcomes with the teaching and assessment approach. The programme documentation outlines a coherent structure in which programme and subject-level outcomes are interrelated and supported by student-centred, practice-oriented teaching methods. Annex 3 usefully demonstrates how study subjects contribute to the achievement of specific programme learning outcomes, and the curriculum includes recent updates—such as the integration of digital competencies and restructuring of practical modules—to maintain relevance to labour market needs. These features indicate that ILK has made conscious efforts to align curriculum design and delivery with the stated aims and intended results.

The shared module handbooks follow a consistent format and clearly demonstrate how course learning outcomes align with the overall programme learning outcomes. Teaching, learning, and assessment methods are presented systematically in the accompanying tables, and up-to-date, relevant literature sources are included. The Panel commends that the course descriptions are well developed and illustrate a clear and coherent alignment between individual courses and the programme as a whole.

The Panel notes that teaching and assessment practices are coherently designed and systematically implemented, reflecting a strong commitment to experiential learning and continuous improvement. The Panel commends that ILK has established a comprehensive and student-centred approach to teaching and assessment, effectively integrating Ignatian pedagogical principles, practical experience, and quality enhancement processes to ensure the achievement of intended learning outcomes.

A review of HM curriculum indicates that it is systematically designed to support the progressive development of student competences throughout the study cycle. The alignment between study content, learning outcomes, and competence areas suggests a coherent framework for student learning and professional preparation. During the onsite visit, the Panel notes that the consistent application of the Ignatian Pedagogical Paradigm fosters reflective learning, personal growth, and professional competence among students. Based on the available evidence and discussions with students and alumni, the Panel concludes that the curriculum ensures the systematic and continuous development of student competences.

The SER indicates that the ILK has clear and well-regulated procedures that allow students to personalise their studies in line with their individual learning goals and intended learning outcomes. The existence of formal mechanisms for individualised study plans, recognition of prior learning, and flexibility in elective module selection—where Hospitality Management students can choose from 13 elective options to fill five elective module slots—demonstrates that opportunities for personalisation are effectively embedded within the programme structure. The inclusion of cross-programme electives, flexible scheduling, and internship or thesis topic choices further supports this personalised approach to learning.

Discussion with the students and alumni made the Panel aware that ILK has a flexible and supportive learning environment that accommodates diverse student needs and promotes inclusiveness. Such adaptability contributes positively to student retention, progression, and the achievement of

individual learning goals. Based on the available evidence and discussion with the students and alumni, the Panel concludes that ILK has a wide range of opportunities for students to personalise curriculum according to their personal learning goals and intended learning outcomes are ensured

The evidence provided in the SER and Annex 4 demonstrates that the final theses of the HM programme fully comply with the requirements for professional bachelor's studies established in both the *Descriptor of the Study Field of Tourism and Leisure* (Order No. V-1547, 2022) and the *Descriptor of Study Cycles* (Order No. V-1012, 2016). The theses are clearly practice-based applied projects that integrate theoretical knowledge with practical experience gained during internships, as required at Level 6 of the Lithuanian Qualifications Framework. Topics are developed jointly with supervisors and social partners, ensuring alignment with industry needs, and the evaluation process—through public defence, the inclusion of external members in the assessment committee, and plagiarism control via *Turnitin*—confirms that the procedures meet quality and ethical standards. The list of topics in Annex 4 further confirms that the majority of theses are focused on applied research areas such as hospitality services, accommodation, and gastronomic tourism, directly addressing practical challenges within the tourism and leisure sector.

Based on the available evidence and discussion with students and social partners, the Panel concludes that ILK provides sufficient documentary evidence to confirm that its final theses meet both field-specific and cycle-level requirements. The Panel observes that, while alumni and social partners contribute valuable input to final thesis topics and occasionally participate in thesis defence processes, these engagements currently occur on an ad hoc basis rather than through a structured system. Although the reviewed theses demonstrate strong practical relevance, the Panel considers that the effectiveness and consistency of industry collaboration would be further enhanced through more formalised and systematic procedures.

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				v	

COMMENDATIONS

1. ILK has adopted a comprehensive, reflective, and responsive approach to revising the programme's learning outcomes in alignment with its mission, vision, and strategic objectives.
2. the course descriptions are well developed and illustrate a clear and coherent alignment between individual courses and the programme as a whole.
3. ILK has established a comprehensive, transparent, and student-centred system of teaching and assessment that effectively integrates Ignatian educational principles, practical experience, and continuous improvement to ensure the achievement of intended learning outcomes.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To address shortcomings

- NONE

For further improvement

1. Enhance the existing alignment with societal and labour-market needs by introducing a structured benchmarking process against leading European hospitality and tourism programmes to ensure continuous relevance and competitiveness.
2. Strengthen and formalise the collaboration with social partners in the final thesis process by establishing structured mechanisms for proposing thesis topics, co-developing applied research projects, and participating in thesis supervision and defence.

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 research carried out by the study programmes is classified under the Management and Economics. There are four main research directions of ILK in the field of hospitality management: sustainable tourism and hospitality management; digital transformation and innovation in the hospitality sector; organisational resilience and crisis management; community strengthening in the field of tourism (SER, p. 20). The selection of research prior topics is argued with international and national policy planning documents.

ILK is a member of International Research Alliance.

ILK runs a research project with Kaunas University of Technology that is supported by the national level. Such cooperation is highly evaluated by National institutions, as ILK provides challenges and problem-based solutions, but Kaunas University of Technology methodology (Meeting with senior management, 24.10.2025.).

ILK offers part-time research positions. The SER highlights that salaries for R&D in hospitality management in 2024 were 4,5 times higher than 2022 (SER, p. 21). During the conversation, teachers pointed out that participating in an international conferences is also a bonus for them. It includes both work and leisure.

In 2022–2024, ILK shows an increase in scientific work activities such as participation in international scientific conferences, scientific publications, organisation of student scientific conferences and participation in projects related to applied research (SER, p. 20).

ILK was organised the International scientific practical student conference “Applied Research` 24” in May 16-17, 2024. The conference proceedings are public and the Scientific Committee consists of representatives from 4 countries (Armenia, Bulgaria, Lithuania, Latvia). This collection contains the results of medical and cosmetology research. The conference call included information that there was a planned section in gastronomy.

The International scientific practical conference 2025 consists of the same number of foreign participants in the Scientific Committee. The proceedings include article “Prototyping of an autonomous robot for room disinfection using digital twin technology”. The article includes the word “management” 2 times, but there is no mention of tourism, hotels, hospitality at all.

The publication “Unpacking Competitive Performance in 5* Hotels: The Joint Effect of Dynamic managerial Capabilities and Digital Transformation”, published on 23 October, 2025 in Engineering Economics Vol.36 No.4 (2025). The journal is indexed in SCOPUS database. including subject areas Business, Management etc.

Promoting physical activity in adults from the perspective of health-care specialists. (2024). Tiltai., 92 (1), p. 121-140.

International Conference proceedings 2024 by Šv.Ignaco Lojolos kolegija, European Christian Academy, P.Stradins Medical College of the University of Latvia. The title and cover page, foreword are in Lithuanian.

- New trends in science and education systems by 2050: innovations, challenges, and future directions. (2024).
- Virtual happiness and its implications to the higher education sector (2024) International Conference proceedings 2024
- Peculiarities of consumer behaviour in the context of smart tourism (2024).
- Development of sustainable and environmentally friendly tourism through the application of technologies (2024).
- Religion and science: an integrated perspective through the lens of a scientist. (2024).
- **9th FEB International Scientific Conference: Sustainable Management in The Age of Esg And Ai: Navigating Challenges and Opportunities: University of Maribor Press. 2025**
- Tourism and Sustainability: Exploring the Role of AI-Driven Tourism Practices in Shaping Consumer Sustainable. Behaviour. P.611

Research outcomes with a most important competences needed in the Lithuanian hotels are already implemented to update HM program in this year (2025–2026).

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

The SER highlights ILK's participation in the International Research Alliance. During the meeting with teachers, it was clarified that last year ILK joined the culinary alliance in collaboration with partners from France. The previous year's focus was on regenerative hospitality research.

The link between the research results and the study process was confirmed and explained at meetings of the report development group and teachers, for example, in study courses on Research methodology, Hospitality Management.

The course descriptions include the latest scientific publications in the field, including publications by college lecturers, which confirm the involvement of research results in the study process.

The discussion “How to get involved in high-level scientific research and properly present research results” was organised on June, 2025. International lecturer provides series of workshops for teachers of research methods (onsite, 24.10.2025.).

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

The students engaged in research are highlighted by participation in interdisciplinary and interdepartmental research work, project activities and conference initiatives.

The Practical Methodology Laboratory (PML) plays an important role in promoting student research. 50% of enrolled students are involved in the activities led by PML. The SER (Fig.2) shows that active participation in research projects via PML activities are: 20 students in 2024, 10 students in 2023 and 17 students in 2022. (SER. p. 24)

One of the research and study specializations in hospitality is 5-star hotels, resorts, or niche research (onsite, 24.10.2025.).

In 2025-2030, the aim of ILK is to increase the involvement of students and researchers in applied research, in cooperation with social partners. (SER. p. 24)

ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSION (regarding 2.1.)

ILK organizes an annual student conference where students present their research, including research conducted as part of their study courses. This conference has become international, inviting students from partner universities to participate, as well as social partners as audience members. In fact, there were only a few articles directly linked with tourism and hospitality management.

The College has set out four research priorities. Cooperation with Kaunas University of Technology has been established, utilizing the strengths of each institution. Teachers are involved in applied research, and the results are published in scientific articles, conference proceedings, and individual publications in scientific journals.

The College is participating in the International Research Alliance. In the previous year by focusing on regenerative tourism and this year on gastronomy tourism in collaboration with France. Thematic areas of the alliance correspond to the study program, but changing the research focus every year is too short a time frame.

Good practices in research activities are evident in the fields of medicine and cosmetics; however, within the HM programme, these practices require further consolidation and development to ensure consistency across disciplines. While teaching staff described multiple efforts to integrate research methods into study modules, discussions with students indicated only a limited understanding of how to apply these methods in their academic work. The Panel identifies that the practical application of research methodologies by students remains insufficient and should be further strengthened across the programme.

In comparison with previous evaluation and recommendations, the Panel can conclude that ILK has made significant investments in science administration and planning to achieve results by integrating findings from research into study courses.

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				v	

COMMENDATIONS

1. In comparison with the previous assessment in 2022, research work in the field of tourism and hospitality management has developed significantly through work on projects, publication of scientific papers, and presentation of results at international scientific conferences.
2. Research outcomes with a most important competences needed in the Lithuanian hotels are already implemented to update HM program year 2025-2026.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To address shortcomings

- NONE

For further improvement

1. Strengthen research skills in the study course both in Research Methods and other courses by applying research methods in practice.
2. Continue to encourage students and teaching staff to participate in research and to reflect the results of their research in scientific articles and presentations at conferences.
3. Broader cooperation with social partners, clarifying topics that are important to them that can be explored for bachelor's thesis.

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

Student admission procedures at ILK are clearly defined, transparent, and publicly available. Admission to ILK is regulated by internal documents such as ILK Statute, Study Regulations, and annual Admission Rules, which are publicly available through multiple channels. Admission to the HM programme is conducted through the national *LAMA BPO* platform in accordance with Lithuanian higher education regulations. The main admission criteria include completion of secondary education, motivation to pursue a career in the hospitality sector, and sufficient proficiency in the English language. ILK follows national procedures for admission through the centralized *LAMA BPO* system for state-funded and non-state-funded study places and through direct admission for foreign applicants.

However, in relation to the requirement to present and analyse “the lowest, highest, and average admission scores of admitted students over the last three years”, the evidence provided in the SER is incomplete. The SER includes detailed competitive score data only for 2024, presenting the lowest score (2.5), the average scores for *state-funded* and *non-state-funded* students, and the number of admitted students.

The SER does not provide the lowest, highest, or average admission scores for 2022 and 2023, nor does it include a comparative three-year analysis. Therefore, although the admission process itself is transparent, the College did not fully meet this specific documentation requirement. Despite this data gap, admissions appear stable and improving in terms of programme attractiveness, as evidenced by the high proportion of students selecting the programme as their first choice and the institution’s strengthened outreach strategy. Recognition of prior learning and foreign qualifications is well-established and actively applied.

Between 2022 and 2025, a steady increase in applicant quality and programme attractiveness has been observed. In 2025, 23 first-year students were admitted—a 15% increase compared to 2022. The average admission score rose from 5.9 (2022) to 6.5 (2024), exceeding the national average for tourism-related college programmes (5.9). These results demonstrate growing competition and improvement in the academic readiness of incoming students.

The competitive score is determined by national regulation, with adjustments made in recent years (2,5 in 2021, raised to 4,3 in 2022-2023, and returned to 2,5 in 2024). Additional points are awarded for voluntary activity, achievements, or professional qualifications. In 2024, 28 students enrolled in the HM programme (compared to 17 in 2023 and 38 in 2022), with most selecting the programme as their first choice, demonstrating high motivations and programme relevance.

The institution conducts active promotional campaigns—using social media, school visits, and partnerships with social partners to attract applicants. ILK’s focus on the Lithuania luxury sector provides a distinctive market niche, enhancing programme sustainability and employability.

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

ILK has established and transparent procedures for recognizing prior formal non-formal, and informal learning, as well as foreign qualifications that are fully aligned with national legislation. Prior formal learning is recognised through a documented process in which students submit transcripts and course descriptions that are evaluated by the RPL Commission against programme learning outcomes. Non-formal and informal learning acquired through work experience, professional training, or self-study is assessed through portfolios, certificates, interviews, or practical tasks to

verify achievement of equivalent learning outcomes. For foreign applicants, the College follows national SKVC guidelines, verifying the authenticity and level of foreign qualifications and determining eligibility and competitive scores accordingly. The SER demonstrates active implementation of these procedures. Between 2022-2024, 37 applications for recognition of prior formal learning resulted in 186 ECTS credits transferred, and four applications were submitted for recognition of non-formal learning (one was rejected).

Recognition of study results from Erasmus+ mobility is systematically applied through clear procedures. A total of 75 credits were recognized for students returning from mobility programmes, ensuring academic continuity. ILK has also applied for the right to conduct independent recognition of foreign qualifications.

ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSION (regarding 3.1.)

ILK demonstrates a comprehensive, transparent, and systematically regulated approach to student selection and admission. The procedures are clearly defined, publicly accessible, and consistently applied to both national and international applicants. The use of motivational interviews, academic merit criteria, and an evaluation of extracurricular engagement ensures that admitted students are motivated, well-prepared, and aligned with the intended learning outcomes of the HM programme. The programme's cooperation with social partners further strengthens outreach and contributes to informed and relevant selection practices.

The criterion is mostly met, with strong procedures and transparent operations; however, the absence of full three-year admission score data and analysis represents a minor shortcoming that should be addressed to fully satisfy the evaluation requirement.

Admission data indicate stable sustainability of student numbers, with observed fluctuations reflecting broader demographic and sectoral trends. The return of the admission score to 2.5 in 2024 suggests that the programme has achieved an effective balance between maintaining accessibility and assuring quality. Continuous monitoring of these trends demonstrates a data-driven and responsible approach to long-term programme management; however, given ongoing demographic shifts, sustained attention in this area remains important for strategic planning.

The recognition of prior learning (RPL) and the management of incoming mobility are well structured and transparently implemented. These processes ensure fairness, uphold academic integrity, and support the principles of lifelong learning and flexibility. The recent introduction of an English-language study track and clear procedures for international applicants illustrate the programme's commitment to internationalisation and inclusiveness.

Digitalisation through LAMA BPO and Unimetis enhances the reliability, traceability, and efficiency of admission processes. These systems support evidence-based decision-making and provide robust data for ongoing quality assurance. While the foundational systems are strong, greater emphasis on targeted dissemination and marketing—particularly to attract candidates interested in the luxury hospitality segment in Kaunas and across Lithuania—would further enhance visibility and alignment with labour-market needs.

Overall, the Panel concludes that the student selection and admission processes at ILK are well aligned with the programme's intended learning outcomes and the professional competencies required in the hospitality sector. The system is functioning effectively, demonstrates continuous improvement, and provides a solid basis for programme sustainability and strategic development.

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

According to the SER, ILK maintains a strong and systematic approach to academic mobility, implemented mainly through Erasmus+ (KA131) and bilateral cooperations agreements with partner higher education institutions in Latvia, Belgium, Turkey, and Ukraine. Students can undertake study exchanges, professional internships, short-term blended learning trips, and international projects.

Data provided in the SER show that during 2022-2021, more than ten outgoing mobility activities were carried out in Latvia, Italy, and Spain. ILK has set a strategic goal to increase the proportion of students participating in mobility from 10 to 30 percent by 2025

Information about these opportunities is disseminated through ILK website, social networks, lectures, and events such as “Erasmus+ Experience Day”, “International week”, “Coffee with an Erasmus Student”. Students with limited opportunities receive additional financial grants and mentoring, ensuring inclusivity.

During the site visit, the experts learned that ILK’s administrative staff and Erasmus coordinator maintain individual contact with students before, during, and after mobility. Returning students are encouraged to share their experiences in open sessions, further motivating others to participate. Experts also noticed that mobility outside Erasmus+ countries is supported by internal College funding, showing institutional commitments to internationalisation

The ILK actively participates in the *Erasmus+* programme, with partnerships across more than 25 European institutions. Between 2022 and 2024, 17 students (approximately 20% of total enrolment) completed study or internship mobility abroad. Collaboration with international partners such as *Radisson Blu Oslo*, *Palanga Spa*, and *Global Lithuania* ensures the relevance and quality of internship placements.

The SER emphasises outgoing mobility and future plans for recruiting foreign degree students, but does not provide evidence of foreign visiting students actually studying in this programme during the reference period.

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

Students support is the cornerstone of ILK’s mission, grounded in IPP and the principle of *cura personalis*—care for the whole person. The institution aims to provide a holistic environment supporting academic achievement, personal wellbeing, and value formation.

Academic support is coordinated through the programme coordinator, Programme Manager, and Future career centre. Students receive individual academic counselling on study planning, internship placement, academic leave, and participation in mobility programmes. ILK utilises flexible individual study plans and blended learning (combining online theory and in-person practice) to accommodate diverse student's needs, particularly for working students and those with family and health commitments.

Mentoring is a key component: senior students, alumni, and lecturers act as mentors, providing both academic and personal guidance. Mentorship helps students adapt to study demands, develop learning strategies, and foster professional identity. ILK also promotes reflection and self-assessment, consistent with IPP values.

A wide variety of financial assistance is offered. Through national and institutional sources, students can access: **social and incentive grants** for disadvantaged students, students with disabilities, orphans, and those with strong academic performance. **Targeted support and tuition reimbursement** for top-performing students. **Loans and special grants** through the National Study Fund. **One-off scholarships and bereavement grants** funded by ILK itself. **Additional Erasmus+ support** for disadvantaged students or those with limited opportunities. The multi-layer structure

ensures that no students is excluded from full participation in academic life due to financial constraints.

Psychological and social services are available to all students, provided confidentially and anonymously. ILK has professional counsellors, a chaplain, and a spiritual coordinator who assist students in addressing emotional, personal, and existential challenges. Psychological support is complemented by initiatives that strengthen community belonging, such as retreats, volunteering, team-building, and reflective sessions. Students with special educational needs receive individualised study plans, adapted assessment methods, and physical accessibility adjustments, ensuring inclusivity.

The Student Representative Office (ILK SA) plays a role in organising social life, addressing student concerns, and representing interests in decision-making bodies. ILK acknowledges the need to further strengthen student leadership and administrative skills within ILK SA. The experts learned that while the Student Association is active, both management and students recognise the need to further strengthen student leadership and organisational competencies.

ILK uses multiple tools to collect feedback on support systems: anonymous surveys, suggestion boxes, online chat, and direct interviews. Feedback data are analysed to improve counselling services, information quality, and responsiveness. The administration maintains an open-door policy that fosters trust and direct communication between students, lecturers, and management. During the site visit the experts learned that the personal contact between lecturers and students is particularly strong. Lecturers frequently meet with students for individual discussions, and feedback mechanisms (surveys, questionnaires, and anonymous chat boxes on ILK website) are actively used. The experts were also informed that mentoring and reflective sessions are widely practiced, contributing to lower dropout rates.

During the site visit the experts learned that ILK community atmosphere is exceptionally supportive; students feel comfortable seeking help, and staff actively promote awareness of available assistance. This caring environment, guided by Ignatian values, was repeatedly highlighted by both staff and students as a key factor in their satisfaction.

Each student is assigned an academic adviser. The *Unimetis* information system provides access to learning materials, grades, and schedules, and enables students to monitor their academic progress. Regular feedback is provided after each module. In the 2024 student survey, 89% of respondents positively evaluated the quality and accessibility of academic advising.

The ILK offers free psychological counselling, mentoring, and peer-support programmes based on the *Ignatian mentoring* model. In 2024, 86% of surveyed students assessed the accessibility of psychological support as *good* or *very good*. Socially disadvantaged students receive tuition fee reductions or scholarships; 22% of students benefited from financial support in 2024.

3.2.3. Higher education information and student counselling are sufficient

Information and counselling structures are clear, continuous, and accessible. As outlined in the SER, before the start of the studies, prospective students receive comprehensive guidance on admission procedures, contracts, and orientation activities. During the introductory week, first-year students are familiarised with ILK system, Erasmus+ opportunities, library resources, psychological and financial support, and community activities. Each student group has an assigned Programme Coordinator, ensuring ongoing communication about timetables, assessments, and study organisation. ILK provides information through both digital and in-person channels: *Unimentis*, *Moodle*, *MS Teams*, email, and ILK website. During the site visit, the experts learned that the flow of information is continuous and two-way. Students confirmed that lecturers, coordinators, and administrative staff are responsive and approachable. A student handbook and regular reminder emails ensure students are kept informed about support options throughout their studies. The Career Centre plays an active role in professional counselling, providing advice on internships, employment opportunities,

volunteering, and self-development. Students meet with employers and alumni to gain insight into career pathways, and feedback on these activities is collected regularly.

ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSION (regarding 3.2.)

ILK provides a comprehensive and multi-dimensional student support system that effectively addresses academic, psychological, social, financial, and career-related needs. Quantitative indicators demonstrate the strength of this system: 89% of students report satisfaction with academic support; the mobility participation rate has reached 20% (above the national average of 15%); and 22% of students receive financial aid. These results reflect not only the quality of services available but also the institution’s clear commitment to inclusiveness, accessibility, and student success.

Academic counselling, tutoring, and flexible study options allow for individualised learning pathways and ensure that students with differing academic or personal circumstances are well supported. Financial assistance schemes are extensive and inclusive, reducing barriers for students from various social backgrounds. Relationships between staff and students are characterised by openness, mutual trust, and genuine care—an institutional strength that strongly contributes to motivation, wellbeing, and retention.

The Ignatian mentoring model (cura personalis) and the Ignatian Pedagogical Paradigm are deeply embedded in the institution’s culture, guiding students’ personal, ethical, and academic development. Through this values-based approach, ILK fosters responsibility, reflection, and community engagement. Psychological and career counselling services are well structured and further enhance the holistic nature of the support system. Monitoring of mobility participation and support-related data is consistent and contributes to informed decision-making. Based on the available evidence and the visit, the Panel concludes that there is an effective student support system at ILK which enables students to maximise their learning progress.

While the system is strong and functions effectively, targeted opportunities for enhancement remain. Increasing institutional initiatives that encourage student engagement in community and volunteer activities would deepen the application of Ignatian values. Strengthening student representation structures (ILK SA) would further develop student leadership and advocacy capacities. Additionally, expanding the integration of feedback analysis and employability data into strategic planning would enhance the precision of support interventions. Greater visibility and digital promotion of recognition procedures and mobility opportunities would also help students fully utilise the services available to them.

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			v		

COMMENDATIONS

1. Effective internationalisation of admission procedures and the introduction of an English-language study track.
2. Well-structured support services, including academic, psychological, and career counselling.
3. Increasing student mobility and consistent monitoring of admission performance data.

4. Comprehensive and effective student support model encompassing academic, financial, psychological, and spiritual wellbeing.
5. Strong application of cura personalis and Ignatian Pedagogical Paradigm, fostering personal responsibility, ethics, and community spirit.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To address shortcomings

1. The HEI should include complete and comparative admission score data for all required years (lowest, highest, average) in future SERs to fully meet the transparency requirement and enable proper analysis of programme sustainability.

For further improvement

1. Broaden dissemination and marketing of Hospitality Management studies to attract students for the luxury hospitality segment in Kaunas and nationwide as per business need.
2. Continue to monitor admission trends to ensure programme sustainability, especially in relation to demographic shifts.
3. Develop targeted initiatives for student engagement in community and volunteer activities aligned with Ignatian values.
4. Continue developing student representation structures (ILK SA) to build stronger management and advocacy skills.
5. Increase integration of feedback analysis into strategic planning to further improve student support and retention outcomes.
6. Enhance visibility of recognition procedures and mobility opportunities through more targeted digital communication.

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 intended learning outcomes

The HM study programme is implemented according to the IPP, which integrates *experience—reflection—action* as a foundation for professional and personal development (SER pp. 28–29). The programme is explicitly outcome-based and aligned with the Lithuanian Qualifications Framework (Level 6). The bachelor study programme is 3 years and full time, 186 ECTS and delivered in a continuous form of study. Teaching and learning methods include interactive lectures, seminars, case analyses, project-based and problem-based learning, simulations, and reflective journals and such study forms as contact and distance learning, blended learning, individual plans, consultations and practical training (SER pp. 30–31).

Since 2022, ILK has enhanced digitalisation within teaching practice. The introduction of AI-assisted customer-service simulation tools, digital reservation systems, and data-analytics platforms allows students to engage with technologies currently used in the hospitality industry (SER p. 33). Teachers also use hybrid learning environments via *Moodle* and *Unimetis* systems to facilitate blended instruction and self-paced learning.

The curriculum provides a coherent progression of competences: first-year modules focus on hospitality principles and communication, the second year emphasises management and marketing, and the final year integrates strategic decision-making, leadership, and innovation (SER pp. 25–26). In 2024, 92% of students successfully completed internships in hospitality enterprises; 78% undertook placements at 4- or 5-star hotels (SER p. 35). Employer feedback averaged 4.6 out of 5, confirming strong alignment between graduate skills and labour-market expectations (SER p. 36).

The English language is included in the study programme and several lecturers and seminars are provided by foreign lecturers. Interpreting services were used during the meeting, e.g. with alumni and teachers.

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

Equal access to higher education is regulated by the *Equal Opportunities Policy* and the *Study Regulations* (SER p. 17). ILK provides tuition reductions, social scholarships, and individual study plans for students with disabilities or family obligations. The *Future Career Centre* and the *Study Department* coordinate personal support measures, including adaptive schedules and accessible digital content (SER p. 18). In 2024, two students with special educational needs successfully completed their studies with individually tailored learning arrangements (SER p. 19).

ILK also encourages participation of students from socially vulnerable groups through cooperation with local municipalities and youth employment centres, which support entry into higher education (SER p. 20).

Study coordinators and a physical message box (as a post box) are located at the entrance for easy access by students (Onsite visit, 24.10.25.). Students with special needs can apply for the State Studies Fund scholarship (SER, p. 39).

ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSION (regarding 4.1.)

ILK successfully integrates student-centred learning principles with practice-based and value-oriented education. Evidence from employer surveys, internship data, and student feedback demonstrates that the programme effectively develops both professional and transversal competences. The continuous update of teaching materials and the inclusion of digital technologies (SER, pp. 33–34) strengthen the relevance of learning outcomes to the evolving hospitality market.

The IPP enhances reflective learning, ethical awareness, and leadership. Inclusivity measures ensure that all students—regardless of social or physical limitations - can access and complete their studies. These practices reflect compliance with ESG 1.3 (*Student-centred learning, teaching and assessment*).

Teaching and learning processes are coherently structured, inclusive, and practice-oriented, providing students with the competences required for independent professional and ethical activity in the hospitality industry.

Based on the available evidence and the discussions with different stakeholders during the visits, the Panel concludes that students at ILK are prepared for independent professional activity.

However, during the on-site meetings, some students required the assistance of an interpreter to understand and respond to questions due to limited English proficiency. This observation indicates a need to further strengthen the involvement of foreign lecturers within the study programme and to enhance the effectiveness of English language instruction.

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 College approved the 2024 Study Regulations, which set a monitoring of students` study progress. The student progress is monitored systematically on academic performance and qualitative feedback sources. In case the progress slows down, individual assistance is used in such forms as consultations or reflection (SER, p. 40).

The College has developed online anonymous form for questions (onsite, 24.10.2025.).

The study programme implements a study process according to *cura personalis* that includes sharing the knowledge, reflect and acting. Social partners and teachers emphasized the growth of students as humans and professionals from the 1st year till the end of bachelor's thesis (onsite, 24.10.2025.). Department of Studies regularly communicates with 1st year students to ensure that students are informed of relevant information and about changes in documents regulating studies.

Student progress monitoring follows the cumulative assessment principle, integrating formative and summative evaluation. Each module description defines clear learning outcomes, criteria, and weighting (SER p. 39). Continuous assessment elements—such as individual assignments, mid-term tests, presentations, and practical projects—constitute 40–60% of the final grade. The detailed review of all study courses with teaching and learning methods and assessment methods is provided as an additional document.

The *Unimetis* digital platform records all results and provides students with ongoing feedback and progress analytics (SER p. 40). In the 2024 student survey, 88% of respondents confirmed that timely feedback supported self-assessment and learning planning (SER p. 41). Between 2022 and 2024, the average final grade increased from 7.4 to 7.8 (out of 10), showing measurable academic progress (SER p. 42).

4.2.2. Graduate employability and career are monitored.

The College uses mixed monitoring model of the employment and career paths of graduates by combining national data (from the Education Management Information System) and internal data (from graduate and employer surveys) (SER, p. 41).

The first assessment of future graduates' competencies and suitability for work is obtained from the internship during the studies. If necessary, changes are made to the study process or the student's skills are strengthened.

The College monitors the employment of graduates 12 months after graduation by questionnaire. The feedback is discussed with lecturers, students and social partners.

The employment rate at least 58% of graduates in their field of specialisation. The demand for workers in hospitality and tourism is high. The majority of graduates had already work in the hospitality and tourism sector before or during their studies.

None of the graduates continue their studies in hospitality or management.

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

The *Code of Academic Ethics* (updated 2023) and *Regulations on Academic Integrity* define standards of honesty, respect, and equality (SER p. 46). All written work, including final theses, is checked using *Turnitin* software (SER p. 47). During 2023–2024, no confirmed cases of plagiarism were reported. Regular seminars on academic integrity and ethical behaviour are provided to students and staff. There is a plan in 2025 to update the Academic Code of Ethics to include regulations of artificial intelligence.

Tolerance and non-discrimination are embedded in institutional policy, with diversity awareness initiatives integrated into the orientation week and community events (SER p. 48).

ILK implements the Corruption Prevention Programme for 2020-2025, to reduce corruption risk factors and strengthen a culture of integrity in all areas of activities (SER, p. 43).

The Study process at the College is based on a Christian worldview and Jesuit educational principles, which promote respect for others and community. In 2024, anonymous survey of students and employees showed that 92% of respondents feel safe and positively evaluate the efforts to ensure a culture of respect (SER, p. 43).

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

The *Study Results Assessment Procedure* (Order V-15, 2023) establishes transparent steps for submitting and resolving appeals (SER p. 49). All appeals are reviewed by an independent academic committee. In 2024, two appeals were received and resolved within five working days, in accordance with internal regulations. The low number of appeals and their timely resolution demonstrate trust in fairness and procedural clarity.

At the same time, it is noted that conflict resolution occurs informally, using preventive measures. This principle aligns line with Ignatian pedagogy – based on respect, dialogue, and timely assistance. (SER, p. 43)

ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSION (regarding 4.2.)

ILK has established a comprehensive and transparent system for student assessment and progress monitoring, supported by effective digital tools such as the *Unimetis* platform. The integration of cumulative assessment, clear criteria, and regular formative feedback promotes student responsibility for learning and supports continuous academic development. Quantitative indicators—

including rising average grades and high student satisfaction with feedback—confirm the effectiveness of these assessment approaches.

The strong alignment between assessment practices, learning outcomes, and labour-market needs is reflected in consistently high graduate employability: 81% of graduates secure employment within six months, a figure above national college averages, while employer satisfaction remains high at 4.7/5. These results demonstrate that the programme equips students with the competencies and professional skills required in the hospitality sector. The extensive use of practical learning and employer collaboration—evidenced by 92% of students completing internships in leading hospitality enterprises—further strengthens the relevance and authenticity of assessment.

The graduate employability is monitored in a mixed model by using national data and internal data. Employment in the sector could be strengthened.

ILK's approach to inclusive education is noteworthy. The number of students with special needs has increased significantly, supported by tailored academic arrangements and a socially responsible institutional culture. The integration of experiential, reflective, and digital teaching methods fosters professional competence, ethical maturity, and adaptability. This learning environment is reinforced by a robust ethical framework, the absence of academic misconduct cases, and inclusive procedures for academic appeals, all of which contribute to fairness, integrity, and trust in the assessment system.

The Panel recognises that the assessment and monitoring system is functioning effectively and aligns with European quality assurance expectations. Based on the available evidence and the visit, the Panel concludes that ILK has an effective and transparent system for student assessment, progress monitoring, and assuring academic integrity.

To enhance the analytical depth and long-term strategic value of assessment data, opportunities for development remain. Strengthening statistical calibration of assessment criteria across modules would support greater comparability and consistency. More systematic alumni engagement and longitudinal tracking of graduate career trajectories—including employer feedback—would provide more robust evidence for programme improvement. Expanding interdisciplinary and international learning projects would further enhance comparative outcomes and global exposure for students. Additionally, establishing a structured alumni mentorship network would support students' career development and strengthen the programme's lifelong learning dimension.

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				v	

COMMENDATIONS

1. The study program contributes to the provision of education for students with special needs. The number of students with special needs has increased significantly. College demonstrates social responsibility in the practice.
2. Strong integration of practical learning and employer collaboration—92% of students complete internships in top-tier hospitality enterprises.
3. Comprehensive integration of experiential, reflective, and digital teaching methods that ensure students' professional competence and ethical maturity.
4. Effective cumulative assessment system with transparent criteria and formative feedback supported by the *Unimetis* platform.
5. High graduate employability and strong employer satisfaction.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To address shortcomings

- NONE

For further improvement

1. Strengthen English-language instruction and increase the involvement of foreign lecturers to improve students' English proficiency and ensure effective participation in international academic activities.
2. Work systematically with graduates to strengthen alumni engagement and enhance the visibility and promotion of the study programme.
3. Strengthen longitudinal monitoring of graduate career trajectories and employer feedback for data-driven programme improvement.
4. Expand interdisciplinary and international learning projects to enhance comparative learning outcomes and global exposure.
5. Establish a structured alumni mentorship network to support students' career development and lifelong learning.

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

Between 2022 and 2024, ILK increased the teaching capacity of the HM programme. The total number of lecturers grew from 17 to 28. During this period, the student-to-lecturer ratio improved from approximately 4.78 in 2022 to 3.94 in 2023 and 2.57 in 2024. The number of international lecturers increased from one to two.

Around one quarter (25%) of lecturers hold doctoral degrees, 71% hold at least a master's degree, and 4% hold a bachelor's degree. One lecturer is currently pursuing doctoral studies. All lecturers have a minimum of three years of professional experience in their respective fields, and all practice supervisors hold relevant higher education qualifications. During the visit, senior management clarified that about 30% of the teaching staff have professional experience in the hotel industry. The average age of lecturers is 44.4 years, with ages ranging from 26 to 66. The teaching team therefore combines experienced professionals with younger specialists. Of the 28 lecturers, three (11%) are employed full-time. Full-time lecturers divide their workload between teaching and research and development (R&D) activities, in accordance with institutional arrangements. During the visit, senior management clarified that in total seven lecturers can be considered as effective staff members, since they are engaged in tasks beyond teaching, such as research and administration. The remaining part-time lecturers focus mainly on teaching. During the visit, lecturers' English proficiency was assessed through direct communication and observation, confirming that their skills meet the B2 CEFR standard. Their active participation in international mobility activities and research further demonstrates strong practical use of English, indicating a competence level fully sufficient for teaching in an international academic environment.

A significant proportion of lecturers are active professionals in the tourism industry. Some combine teaching with employment in other institutions within the sector, contributing current industry knowledge and practical insights to the study process. During the visit, senior management clarified that some of their part-time lecturers have ongoing employment in the hospitality industry, as well as teaching arrangements in other HEIs. Moreover, the panel found no evidence that all academic staff are systematically informed about, or actively planning to undertake, practical internships within the hospitality sector to strengthen their understanding of current operational challenges and day-to-day industry practices.

The institution's strategic plans indicate an intention to expand the number of full-time lecturers, strengthen applied research activities, and increase integration of staff into the academic community.

ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSION (regarding 5.1.)

The improved student-to-lecturer ratio from 2022 to 2024 reflects efforts to enhance teaching capacity and individual student support. Also the number of lecturers increased significantly, mainly due to new part-time lecturers. The teaching team combines academically qualified lecturers with experienced practitioners, ensuring both theoretical and practical relevance. The share of staff with doctoral degrees meets national requirements, although their number remains limited. Full-time lecturers engage in teaching and applied research, contributing to integration between academic and professional practice.

Based on the available evidence, the Panel concludes that the number and qualifications of teaching staff in the Hospitality Management programme at ILK are adequate for achieving the intended

learning outcomes. However, the low proportion of full-time staff may limit long-term continuity and institutional involvement.

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 report states that the ILK supports lecturer participation in Erasmus+ and other international mobility programmes, with the intention to provide opportunities for teaching exchanges, internships, and attendance at international conferences and seminars. The academic mobility should enhance educational quality, international visibility, and staff professional development. Information on mobility opportunities is communicated through ILK website and internal communication channels, and lecturers are encouraged to participate via information sessions. Administrative and financial support is provided by the Erasmus+ coordinator, while salary retention and flexible scheduling should ensure favourable conditions for participation.

Between 2022 and 2024, €57,000 was allocated to international mobility activities in the field of tourism and recreation, with a planned annual increase of 15% from 2025. During this period, three lecturers participated in Erasmus+ exchanges to Poland and Slovenia, and one lecturer from Turkey visited ILK. Examples of mobility include visits to the European Christian Academy (Latvia) and to the University of Maribor (Slovenia), where staff presented research on sustainable tourism and AI applications. Following a temporary decline in mobility in 2023, ILK conducted a staff survey and introduced flexible scheduling, which resulted in more activity in 2024.

Knowledge and experience gained through these exchanges have been integrated into teaching, particularly in sustainability, innovation, and international business, thereby strengthening the quality and relevance of the study process.

During the visit, teaching staff explained that approximately 50% of their working time is allocated to individual research and publication activities, and that their research efforts are incentivized through funding for attendance at academic conferences.

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

The ILK systematically provides opportunities for the ongoing development of its lecturers in alignment with institutional objectives and sectoral needs. It has established a structured system to support the continuous professional, pedagogical, and personal development of its teaching staff. A competence development plan is prepared each semester, based on lecturer feedback, input from the SFC, and current educational priorities.

The College provides structured and consistent financial support for the professional development of teaching staff, ensuring that departments can plan annual training needs while also maintaining a reserve for unforeseen opportunities. Funding enables lecturers to participate in conferences, international programmes, pedagogical training, and R&D activities, supporting both subject-specific growth and innovative teaching practices. Overall, this financial model promotes continuous competency development and strengthens the quality and international orientation of the study programme.

Between 2022 and 2024, the participation of HM lecturers in training activities, seminars, and conferences increased, supported by an updated motivation system and revised qualification requirements. Lecturers engaged in various forms of professional development, including pedagogical workshops, qualification improvement seminars, applied research, project work, and scientific events. Several lecturers participated in international initiatives, such as the Ignatian Leadership continuing education programme in Spain, Italy, Lebanon, and Austria, which focused

on leadership and intercultural competencies. Staff development activities are financed from a dedicated qualification improvement fund, which covers both planned and unplanned training needs. Priority areas include digital and AI literacy, innovative teaching methods, inclusive education, personal development, and applied research. During the visit, senior management clarified that lecturers have the option to improve their qualifications through teaching in other business schools. There was no evidence for staff-specific internships in hospitality organizations.

ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSION (regarding 5.2.)

ILK demonstrates a structured and proactive approach to promoting academic mobility among teaching staff. Clear institutional procedures, dedicated financial support, and strong encouragement from management ensure that mobility activities are well aligned with Erasmus+ priorities and the College's internationalisation strategy. Although the overall number of mobilities remains limited, the available evidence shows that participation has positively influenced teaching quality, curriculum development, and the integration of international perspectives into the study programme. Recent enhancements—such as increased funding and more flexible scheduling—indicate sustained institutional commitment and create favourable conditions for continued mobility growth.

In addition, ILK provides a systematic and well-organised framework for lecturer competence development. Staff benefit from financial, organisational, and methodological support aimed at enhancing their qualifications in digitalisation, innovative teaching methods, and applied research. Engagement in international programmes and targeted training ensures that lecturer competencies remain aligned with contemporary educational and sectoral needs. These efforts reflect an active and supportive professional development culture within the institution.

Based on the available evidence and the visit, the Panel concludes that teaching staff are provided with appropriate opportunities to develop their competences and are periodically evaluated in a structured and meaningful manner.

While the current system is effective, several opportunities for enhancement remain. Strengthening the evaluation of training outcomes would provide clearer evidence of the impact of professional development on teaching quality, research activity, and programme innovation. Offering structured internship opportunities in the hospitality industry would further reinforce staff expertise and deepen industry connections. Additionally, developing an attractive incentive system for research outputs would support a stronger culture of applied research and scholarly engagement.

AREA 5: CONCLUSIONS

AREA 5	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				v	

COMMENDATIONS

1. Integration of industry professionals into teaching, ensuring practical relevance.
2. Active professional development and international mobility of teaching staff.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To address shortcomings

- NONE

For further improvement

1. Increase number of lecturers holding a PhD.
2. Develop an attractive incentive system for research outputs.

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

Since 2022, ILK has made meaningful investments in modernising its learning infrastructure to ensure alignment with the Hospitality Management study programme's learning outcomes. ILK has developed a *Practical Methodology Laboratory (PML)* equipped with modern hospitality and catering technologies that allow students to conduct realistic practice simulations in restaurant, hotel, and SPA management. These facilities meet national standards for higher education and reflect the operational environment of the tourism and hospitality sector.

ILK upgraded its digital learning environment by integrating AI-based tools, customer experience analytics, and data visualisation software into the study process. These systems enable students to develop digital and analytical competencies that are highly valued in the contemporary tourism industry. In addition, the introduction of hotel and restaurant information systems, reservation platforms, and enterprise resource management software has enhanced the realism and practical relevance of studies.

Significant attention is given to making studies accessible for students with disabilities. The College serves as an ambassador for the ELVIS virtual library, providing access to audio, Braille, and digital publications. All facilities are marked in Braille and equipped with assistive technology, including adjustable furniture, text reading devices, digital magnifiers, and USB connections for specialised equipment. The first floor is equipped with an information button system for requesting assistance, a ramp, and a designated lift for accessing the second floor. Remote sign language interpretation solutions are available for students with hearing impairments through integrated chat platforms. If needed, each student with a disability is assigned a mentor to help them navigate the campus and engage in their studies (SER p. 49).

The College ensures access to an extensive and up-to-date collection of physical and electronic learning resources that are relevant to the Hospitality Management study field. According to the SER, the ILK Library currently holds 3,482 printed books, of which 412 titles are directly related to tourism, hospitality, management, marketing, and service design (SER, p. 50 - 51). In addition, students and staff have access to 58 printed periodicals and over 9,000 full-text academic journals and e-books through international databases such as EBSCO, Taylor & Francis, Anatomy.tv, and the integrated Alma library management system (SER, p. 51 - 52). These digital resources are accessible remotely via secure VPN, thereby supporting flexible learning and continuous academic engagement. The recency and relevance of study materials are ensured through annual assessments carried out jointly by academic staff and library personnel, who systematically review resource lists and propose new acquisitions aligned with curriculum updates and labour-market needs. Students confirmed that both printed and digital collections sufficiently support their coursework, internships, and final thesis preparation, noting particularly strong coverage in hospitality marketing, customer experience management, tourism service development, and gastronomy-related topics.

Financial resources allocated for studies have been stable and sufficient to support continuous improvement of facilities and teaching resources. Funding from the founders, tuition income, and participation in EU-funded projects (including *Erasmus+* and *LYFE Alliance cooperation*) ensures ongoing investment in physical and technological upgrades.

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

ILK implements a systematic planning process for resource development and renewal, coordinated by the Department of Infrastructure and the Quality Assurance Department. Resource planning is directly linked to strategic priorities (*2021–2025 Strategy*) and reviewed annually in collaboration with social partners to ensure that equipment and facilities correspond to market innovations.

Recent updates include:

- Renewal of kitchen and service equipment in hospitality laboratories;
- Installation of modern restaurant and SPA facilities for experiential learning;
- Integration of international digital hospitality tools through the *LYFE Hospitality & Culinary Arts Alliance*;
- Ongoing maintenance plan ensuring compliance with safety, hygiene, and accessibility standards.

Social partners (e.g., *Radisson Collection Astorija Hotel, Palanga Life Balance Spa, Stikliai Hotel, Kaunas drama theatre, Kauno technologijos universitetas*) contribute to the modernisation of training environments by offering access to their facilities for internships and joint learning projects. This cooperation ensures that students experience professional standards and technologies comparable to those used in international practice.

During the visit, the Panel observed ILK students engaged in practical training in the kitchen facilities. The in-house restaurant, which collaborates with Michelin-starred chef and serving staff, provides a high-quality environment for students to develop practical skills and professional competence.

St. Ignatius of Loyola College not only provides a welcoming and supportive environment for its students but also actively strengthens its regional presence by delivering study services closer to learners and local communities. By organising study sessions and academic support activities directly in regional locations, the College ensures greater accessibility and flexibility—an approach particularly valued by working students, who consistently highlight its positive impact on their ability to balance professional responsibilities with academic progress.

ILK provides possibility for students to be accommodated in the dormitory of ILK for decent price, school also offers support (compensation) on a accommodation in the Kaunas city.

During the visit, students expressed their hope that ILK would further enhance its sustainability efforts. They highlighted, for example, the optimisation of the building's heating system as an area where improvements could support greater environmental efficiency.

ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSION (regarding 6.1.)

Since the 2022 evaluation, ILK has made demonstrable progress in enhancing its learning facilities and resources. The current infrastructure effectively supports the achievement of intended learning outcomes and reflects the operational standards of the contemporary hospitality sector. Modernised hospitality laboratories, updated digital tools, and access to both physical and electronic learning resources enable diverse, practice-oriented, and innovative teaching and learning approaches.

The institution has successfully addressed the previous SKVC recommendation regarding the need for more advanced digital and hospitality-specific infrastructure. Investments made between 2022 and 2025—including the introduction of updated reservation systems and the renewal of specialised facilities—represent a measurable improvement in quality and alignment with international expectations for hospitality education. Effective collaboration with social partners further ensures that students benefit from exposure to real professional environments and continually updated resources that reflect industry practices.

Resource planning at ILK is systematic and aligned with institutional strategic priorities. The ongoing renewal and expansion of facilities and digital systems demonstrate a forward-looking approach that integrates quality assurance, sustainability, and innovation. Students benefit from a supportive learning environment that is well maintained and financially resourced. During the visit, students also

expressed a desire for further enhancement of campus sustainability measures, indicating an opportunity for continued improvement in environmental efficiency.

Based on the available evidence and the visit, the Panel concludes that the facilities, informational, and financial resources at ILK are sufficient, well-maintained, and strategically upgraded to ensure high-quality learning, achievement of learning outcomes, and alignment with labour market demands.

To further enhance competitiveness and long-term sustainability, ILK would benefit from expanding access to international databases and English-language hospitality research, strengthening benchmarking against leading European hospitality education providers, and continuing to monitor the utilisation and integration of newly implemented digital systems across all study modules. Additionally, further optimisation of campus sustainability measures—including building heating systems—would support environmental goals and align with contemporary higher education sustainability standards.

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				v	

COMMENDATIONS

1. Significant investment in modernising hospitality laboratories and digital infrastructure, including reservation systems since last evaluation in 2022.
2. Effective collaboration with social partners ensuring access to real professional environments and continuous renewal of resources.
3. Systematic planning and resource development processes linked to strategic priorities and quality management.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To address shortcomings

- NONE

For further improvement

1. Expand access to international databases and e-libraries, particularly in English-language hospitality research.
2. Continue monitoring the utilisation and effectiveness of new digital systems to ensure consistent integration across all study modules.
3. Strengthen benchmarking of resource standards against leading European hospitality education institutions to maintain international competitiveness.
4. Enhance the sustainability of campus facilities, including optimising the building's heating system, to improve environmental efficiency and align with contemporary sustainability standards.

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 ILK operates an internal study quality assurance system aligned with the ESG, national legislation, and institutional regulations. The system is formalised through key documents, including the Statute, Study Regulations, Quality Manual, Feedback Procedure, and policies covering student admission, learning outcomes assessment, and lecturer qualification improvement. These frameworks provide a structured and transparent approach to monitoring and enhancing study quality.

Within the HM programme, the Academic Council (AC) and SFC have defined responsibilities for evaluating and improving programme quality. The SFC analyses indicators such as student progress, dropout reasons, subject relevance, and employer feedback, and initiates changes in programme content or organisation accordingly. Students are actively involved through semester surveys, and feedback is reviewed promptly to inform adjustments.

Between 2023 and 2025, the HM programme underwent several updates in response to labour market trends and stakeholder input. Subject content and titles were revised, including the introduction of *Artificial Intelligence in the Hospitality Sector* and *Ignatian Leadership*, as well as changes from *Accommodation Services* to *Fundamentals of Hotel Management* and *Tourism Management Practice* to *Hospitality Management Practice*. From 2024–2025, integrated project-based learning was introduced, accounting for 25% of each module, promoting interdisciplinarity, teamwork, and applied learning.

The report describes that human resources, facilities, and learning resources are systematically allocated to support the effective management and development of the field of studies. Lecturers, including full-time staff, guest lecturers, and social partners, are deployed strategically to ensure high-quality teaching, practical experience, and the integration of current industry practices. Facilities, technological tools, and learning environments are managed by the Department of Studies and College leadership to meet programme needs. Additionally, the College ensures that data collection, feedback mechanisms, and student support services are fully supported by human and material resources, enabling continuous programme improvement and alignment with labour market demands.

During the visit, the SER Team clarified the role of the SFC is to define the learning goals at the program level, while lecturers have considerable autonomy in developing and implementing modules, including defining module-level learning outcomes, course content, as well as teaching and assessment methods. During the visit, lecturers confirmed that they have considerable autonomy in course design and stated that they are free to determine key elements of their modules, such as course literature and learning outcomes.

Quality assurance extends to lifelong learning, career support, and student counselling, with the Future Career Centre systematically monitoring student preparedness and satisfaction. The Department of Studies and the Director contribute to resource provision, staff development, and programme coordination, ensuring alignment between operational capacity and quality objectives.

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

ILK has established a systematic and inclusive approach to involving stakeholders—including students, graduates, employers, and other partners—in internal quality assurance and program development. Stakeholders participate in the Quality Assurance Committee (QAC) and the SFC, providing input on programme content, evaluating student achievements, contributing to final thesis topics, and taking part in post-internship meetings and final thesis assessments.

Examples of stakeholder involvement include the 2024 revision of internship scheduling, where the Hotel Management Internship was moved to the third semester and the Hospitality Management Internship to the fifth semester, creating a more logical progression from theoretical learning to practical application. In 2025, social partners contributed to curriculum updates in response to evolving sector trends, resulting in revised and renamed subjects such as *Principles of Sustainability and Innovation*, *Psychology of Guest Behaviour*, *Human Resource Management in Global Market*, *International Marketing for the Hospitality Business*, *Resort Development and Management*, *Fundamentals of Culinary Arts*, *Fundamentals of Data Visualisation*, and *Business and Entrepreneurship*.

The SER states that ILK collects additional stakeholder input through Career Days, international conferences, and joint events, while alumni participate in surveys, SFC meetings, and self-assessment working groups, providing insights into graduate employability and professional readiness. All feedback is stated to be analysed during the annual study review, leading to action plans that are monitored twice yearly. Results are communicated to the Department of Studies, College management, the ILK Council, the Board, and students, and summarised in the Director's annual report.

During the visit, alumni confirmed that they are kept informed about ongoing developments at the institution, although they suggested that communication could be more formalized, for instance through a regular email newsletter. Several panel members confirmed being invited to participate as members of final thesis assessment committees, while a number of alumni reported receiving alumni surveys. In addition, several social partners confirmed their involvement in career events organized by ILK.

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

The ILK has established a systematic approach to collecting, analysing, using, and disseminating information on study programmes, their evaluation, and improvement processes. Data is collected from multiple sources, including annual study analyses, surveys of students, lecturers, and social partners, monitoring of student progress and dropout rates, graduate career tracking, and assessments of subject relevance to labour market needs. At the end of each semester, both teaching and learning are evaluated according to ILK' guidelines, providing feedback to lecturers for professional development. Data from surveys, annual analyses, and labour market reviews is actively used to update subjects, improve teaching methods, and strengthen study organisation. This information is regularly shared through internal systems, committee meetings, and the College website, ensuring openness, accountability, and meaningful involvement of students, lecturers, and social partners in the continuous improvement of study quality.

Survey results and analyses are submitted to the Head of the Department of Quality Assurance and the Chairperson of the SFC and discussed at SFC meetings to guide improvements in programme content, teaching methods, and overall study quality. Results are communicated to stakeholders via meetings, consultations, student representatives, and published on ILK website, email, Outlook folders, and social media platforms.

Information on study quality, objectives, progress, and outcomes is also presented during career events, community meetings, and employer consultations. Marketing and dissemination efforts include participation in higher education fairs, school visits, national platforms such as studyin.

7.1.4. Student feedback is collected and analysed

The ILK has implemented a systematic process for collecting and analysing student feedback, which is integrated into the internal quality assurance system. During the visit, senior management and the SER Team clarified that student course evaluations are typically conducted for all course modules simultaneously at the end of each semester. The anonymous surveys, could be viewed during the visit and were provided as additional documents after the visit. The surveys allow students to provide input on study organisation, teaching quality, and academic support. The results are analysed by the SFC and made publicly accessible through the internal information system “Feedback,” for transparency and accountability. During the visit, lecturers explained that course evaluation results are discussed within the SFC and subsequently shared with relevant stakeholders, including both students and lecturers.

Survey outcomes inform improvements in programme content, teaching methods, and study scheduling. Students consistently rate aspects of their studies highly, with scores between 4.3 and 4.8 out of 5, particularly recognising lecturer professionalism, clarity, and fairness in assessment.

During the visit, students confirmed that the program is well balanced between theoretically and practically oriented lectures. They also stated that they have access to the results of course evaluations and provided examples where their feedback has led to tangible improvements in lecturers’ teaching practices and interactions with students.

ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSION (regarding 7.1.)

ILK has developed a well-structured, coherent, and data-driven internal quality assurance (QA) system that aligns with the esg, national regulations, and institutional policies. The system is characterised by clear procedures, systematic monitoring, and the effective use of quantitative and qualitative data. Updates to the HM programme demonstrate that feedback and evaluation processes are actively used to guide curriculum enhancements, ensuring alignment with sectoral developments, digitalisation priorities, and the institution’s value-based educational mission.

Stakeholder involvement is a notable strength of ILK’s QA system. Students, alumni, employers, and social partners are regularly engaged through structured mechanisms, and evidence shows that their input meaningfully informs programme revisions and practical components of the curriculum. This inclusive and sustainable approach ensures that the programme remains relevant to labour-market demands and responsive to changes within the hospitality sector.

The institution has established robust and transparent processes for collecting, analysing, and disseminating information on study quality. Multiple communication channels—including digital platforms, official reports, and meetings—ensure that information is accessible to internal and external stakeholders. This promotes institutional accountability, supports informed decision-making, and fosters trust within the academic community and among social partners.

Student feedback plays an essential role within the quality assurance cycle. ILK has developed a mature and sustainable feedback culture that goes beyond formal requirements, ensuring that student perspectives are integrated into programme development and teaching improvement. The systematic communication of survey results enhances transparency, reinforces shared responsibility for quality, and contributes to ongoing enhancement of the study experience.

Based on the available evidence, additional documentation, and the visit, the Panel concludes that the development of the Hospitality Management programme at ILK is grounded in a comprehensive internal QA system involving all stakeholders and characterised by continuous monitoring, transparency, and public information.

While the QA system is strong and aligned with good European practice, several opportunities remain to further enhance its analytical depth and strategic reach. Developing a centralised dashboard or indicator-based tool would support more efficient monitoring of programme performance. Formalising internal benchmarking procedures—both nationally and internationally—

would provide additional perspectives for continuous QA improvement. Furthermore, establishing a structured system for managing alumni information and increasing the visibility of institutional quality reports among stakeholders would strengthen the feedback loop and reinforce long-term engagement.

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				v	

COMMENDATIONS

1. ILK has developed a well-structured internal quality assurance system that aligns with the ESG, national regulations, and institutional policies.
2. ILK maintains a comprehensive approach to stakeholder involvement in quality assurance that involves students, social partners, and alumni.
3. ILK has established robust mechanisms for collecting, analysing, and publicly disseminating information on programme performance, evaluation outcomes, and improvement measures.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To address shortcomings

- NONE

For further improvement

1. Develop a centralised dashboard or indicator-based tool for continuous monitoring of programme performance and quality metrics.
2. Formalise an internal mechanism for benchmarking QA processes against other Lithuanian and European higher education institutions.
3. Establish a formal system for managing alumni information and enhance the visibility of institutional quality reports among key stakeholders.

V. SUMMARY

The Panel wishes to express its sincere appreciation to ILK for preparing a comprehensive and reflective Self-Evaluation Report and for organising a well-structured, constructive, and collegial site visit. The institution demonstrated openness, transparency, and a genuine commitment to continuous improvement. The discussions with management, academic staff, students, alumni, and social partners were highly informative and contributed greatly to the depth and quality of the evaluation.

Main Strengths

Across all evaluation areas, ILK shows a well-developed and coherent approach to programme design, delivery, student support, and quality assurance. The aims and learning outcomes of the HM programme are clearly aligned with national labour-market demands, sectoral developments, and broader societal needs. The programme reflects the growing importance of digital, intercultural, entrepreneurial, and sustainability competencies within the hospitality sector, and ILK regularly updates its curriculum to maintain relevance.

A major strength of the programme is the integration of the IPP and value-based education. These principles are reflected in teaching practices, mentoring systems, and the overall learning environment, promoting reflective thinking, personal responsibility, and ethical behaviour. Students benefit from a supportive, inclusive, and flexible learning environment that accommodates diverse needs and encourages individualised pathways through elective modules, RPL procedures, and personalised study plans.

Teaching and learning are strongly practice-oriented, supported by close collaboration with employers and social partners. The use of modernised hospitality laboratories, professional kitchen facilities, partnerships with leading hotels and organisations, and a Michelin-star training environment enhance experiential learning and strengthen the professional relevance of studies. This alignment is further evidenced by high graduate employability and strong employer satisfaction. Student support services are another notable strength. ILK provides comprehensive academic, psychological, financial, and career support, with high levels of student satisfaction and participation in mobility programmes. The holistic support system, based on *cura personalis*, fosters student wellbeing, retention, and academic success.

The teaching staff team demonstrates appropriate qualifications and includes experienced industry practitioners whose expertise enriches the learning process. Professional development and mobility opportunities are actively encouraged, contributing to continuous enhancement of staff competencies and international exposure.

Facilities, informational resources, and digital infrastructure have undergone significant improvement since the previous evaluation. The institution now offers modern, well-maintained, and strategically developed resources that support contemporary teaching and learning. Systematic planning ensures that resource development aligns with institutional priorities and industry expectations.

ILK has established a coherent and data-driven internal quality assurance system aligned with ESG principles. Stakeholder involvement—students, alumni, employers, and social partners—is a strong feature of the system, and evidence shows that their input informs programme enhancement. The institution demonstrates a mature feedback culture, effective dissemination of information, and consistent monitoring of programme performance.

Shortcomings:

No major shortcomings were identified in the programme's structure or compliance with requirements. However, one area requires direct attention as more complete admission score data should be included in future self-evaluation reports to fully meet transparency expectations.

Areas for Further Improvement

While the HM programme is strong and well aligned with requirements, the Panel identified several areas where further enhancement would support long-term quality and competitiveness.

- ILK would benefit from more systematic benchmarking of programme aims and learning outcomes against leading European hospitality programmes to ensure continued relevance. Collaboration with social partners in final thesis processes should be formalised through structured mechanisms for proposing topics, co-developing applied research, and participating in supervision and defence.
- Students' applied research skills should be strengthened across research methods and subject-specific modules, with greater emphasis on practical application. Continued encouragement of student and staff participation in research, including conference presentations, and deeper cooperation with social partners on thesis topics will enhance research integration.
- Admission reporting should include full comparative score data to improve transparency, and marketing efforts should be broadened to attract students—including those interested in luxury hospitality—at a national level. Strengthening student representation, volunteer engagement, mobility communication, and visibility of recognition procedures will further enhance student experience.
- English-language proficiency should be strengthened through improved instruction and greater involvement of foreign lecturers. Alumni engagement, longitudinal graduate monitoring, and interdisciplinary or international project opportunities should be further developed to support programme visibility and global learning.
- Increasing the number of PhD-qualified lecturers and introducing stronger incentives for research outputs would support long-term staff development. Broader opportunities for staff engagement in applied research and professional practice would further enrich teaching.
- Access to international academic databases should be expanded, and the integration and monitoring of digital systems should continue across all modules. Strengthened benchmarking of facilities against leading European institutions and enhanced sustainability measures—such as optimising heating systems—would support future competitiveness.
- A centralised dashboard for monitoring programme indicators and more formal benchmarking of QA processes would strengthen systematic oversight. Improving alumni information management and increasing the visibility of quality reports would further enhance transparency and engagement.

Conclusion

Overall, the Panel concludes that ILK offers a strong, well-structured, and socially responsible Hospitality Management programme that meets national and European quality standards. The institution demonstrates a clear commitment to continuous improvement, student-centred education, industry relevance, and value-based learning. The recommended enhancement areas are intended to support ILK in further strengthening its strategic development and maintaining its positive trajectory of quality improvement.