

Assessment Report

Business and administration

Tallinn University of Technology
University of Tartu

2017

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Introduction

Quality assessment of a study programme group involves the assessment of the conformity of study programmes and the studies and development activities that take place on their basis to legislation, national and international standards and developmental directions, with the purpose of providing recommendations to improve the quality of studies.

The goal of quality assessment of a study programme group is to support the internal evaluation and self-development of the institution of higher education. Quality assessment of study programme groups is not followed by sanctions: expert assessments should be considered as recommendations.

Quality assessment of a study programme group takes place at least once every seven years based on [the regulation](#) approved by EKKA Quality Assessment Council for Higher Education.

The aim of the assessment team was the evaluation of the Study Programme Group (SPG) of Business and Administration in two universities: Tallinn University of Technology and University of Tartu.

The team was asked to assess the conformity of the study programmes belonging to the study programme group and the instruction provided on the basis according to legislation and to national and international standards and/or recommendations, including the assessment of the level of the corresponding theoretical and practical instruction, the research and pedagogical qualification of the teaching staff and research staff, and the sufficiency of resources for the provision of instruction.

Assessment panel composed of the following members:

Peter Mason (chair)	Professor, Bedfordshire University, Great Britain
Joachim Gläser	Professor, SRH University Heidelberg, Germany
Kalevi Kyläheiko	Professor, Lappeenranta University of Technology, Finland
Roger Levy	Professor, The London School of Economics and Political Science, Great Britain
Turo Virtanen	Professor, University of Helsinki, Finland
Danute Rasimaviciene	Dean, Vilnius University of Applied Sciences, Lithuania
Margus Kastein	Employers representative, Estonia
Vanessa Roosmets	Student, Estonian Business School, Estonia

The assessment process was coordinated by Joosep Raudsepp (EKKA).

After the preparation phase, the work of the assessment team started on Monday, November 21st, with an introduction to the Higher Education System as well as the assessment procedure by EKKA.

During the following days, meetings were held with the representatives of the Tallinn University of Technology (22nd-23rd of Nov) and University of Tartu (24th-25th of November).

On Saturday, November 26th, the team held an all-day meeting, during which both the structure of the final report was agreed and findings of team meetings were compiled in a initial draft of the assessment report. This work was executed in a cooperative way and the members of the team intensively discussed their individual views on the relevant topics.

In the following sections, the assessment team summarizes their general findings, conclusions and recommendations. In so doing, the team provides an external perspective on the programmes and the contexts within which they are delivered. Ultimately, the intention is to provide constructive comment and critique which may form the basis upon which improvements in the quality of the programmes may be achieved.

General findings and recommendations

Based on the self-evaluation documents and the interviews that the study visit evaluation panel (henceforth 'the panel') conducted, there are a number of important findings, key challenges and recommendations.

In terms of findings which can be considered as positive factors in both institutions, the panel found the following:

- generally popular study programmes
- generally good resources
- a variety of appropriate teaching and assessment methods deployed
- dedicated staff
- generally well-motivated students.

In addition there was evidence that both HEIs had a good awareness of the need for internationalization and generally a desire to be involved in this process.

The key challenges facing both institutions were as follows:

- a changing economic and social environment within Estonia, the Baltic region and the wider world
- a declining number of students, particularly at Bachelors level, due primarily to demographic factors in Estonia
- structural changes in Estonian universities
- a gap between theory and practice in some outcome based learning schemes
- an already high and yet increasing percentage of students who work full-time
- a relatively high student drop-out rate on a number of programmes
- the need to prepare students for the global labor market.

Following on from these findings and challenges, the general recommendations are as follows:

- a major element of the future strategy of each HEI will be the need to consider how to address the implications of demographic change in Estonia and the related declining number of students
- the HEIs must fully address the implications of the increasing number of students who work full-time
- a key element of future strategy must be to address the relatively high student drop-out rate
- the gap between theory and practice in some outcome based learning schemes needs to be closed
- both HEIs will need to ensure that they prepare students for the global labor market and not just for employment in Estonia
- both HEIs will need to ensure that their current efforts in terms of internationalization are maintained, monitored and modified if required.
- Regarding the drop-out problems, the panel was explained during both visits that most of the dropouts occur in the final stages of study and are mostly connected with the completion of the MA or BA thesis. Leaving aside the specific efforts universities are making to tackle this problem, a general recommendation from the panel would be the to consider an "exit award" below Master's level (i.e. a Certificate of completed courses) based on the completion of all taught elements. Currently students' incapability to complete their thesis also impairs learning outcomes which have already been achieved.

1. Assessment report of Business and Administration SPG at Tallinn University of Technology

Study programme group	Business and Administration
Higher education institution	Tallinn University of Technology
Study programmes	Business (TABB); International Business Administration(TVTB&TVTM); Business Administration (TAKM); Management and Marketing (TATM); Finance and Accounting(TARM); Applied Economics (TAAB& TAAM); Small Business management (SDVR); Public Administration and Governance(HAAB&HAAM); Technology Governance (HAGM); Office Administration (HAKB); Personnel and Development (HAPM); Work and organizational psychology (HVWM)

1.1. Some characteristics of Tallinn University of Technology

The academic structure of TUT consists of 8 faculties and 5 colleges, four of which are relevant to this report:

1. Tallinn School of Economics and Business Administration (TSEBA), including four departments:

- Department of Business Administration
- Department of Accounting
- Department of Finance and Economics
- Department of International Relations.

A fifth department - Department of Public Sector Economy was merged with other departments in 2013.

2. Faculty of Social Sciences, including:

- Ragnar Nurkse School of Innovation and Governance (RNS)
- Department of Industrial Psychology (DoIP)

3. Tallinn College

4. Kuressaare College.

As of spring 2016, the university strategic plans include significant changes in the organisational structure, with mergers of faculties and institutes, including the merger of TSEBA and Faculty of Social Sciences. These structural changes are aimed at strengthening academic competences in research as well as teaching.

TUT provides opportunities for acquisition of higher education in line with developments of science and technology at all cycles in the areas of natural and exact sciences, engineering, manufacturing and technology, social sciences and in related areas. TUT fosters R&D in these areas, at the same time creating a synergy between different fields and areas.

Full data about the separate study programmes can be found in ANNEX 1.

1.2. General findings and recommendations at the study programme group level

The study visit to Tallinn University of Technology (TUT) took place on November 22nd and 23rd 2016. The visit on November 22nd involved staff and other representatives from the Faculty of Economics and Business (TSEBA) and on November 23rd staff from the Ragnar Nurkse School (RNS) were involved. The evaluation panel also interviewed representatives from Kuressaare College by Skype on November 23rd.

Prior to the visit, for organisational reasons, the panel had been divided into two groups. Other than the first meeting on the 22nd with the senior managers of TSEBA and the first meeting of the 23rd with the senior managers of RNS, the two groups conducted interviews separately with representatives (programme managers, teachers, students, employers and alumni) of different programmes.

General Findings

The main issue affecting all aspects of the study visit and the material in the self-evaluation document was the planned merger of the two faculties (TSEBA and RNS) that manage the study programmes. The merger is part of the proposed structural changes that are largely the result of the TUT development plan for the years 2015-2020. However, the panel were not fully aware, from the self-evaluation document, of this planned merger before the study visit. According to information available for the panel, the Council of the University approved the new academic structure on October 11th 2016, which was slightly more than a month before the site visit. Due to those recent and also ongoing changes, there was only a small inclusion of two paragraphs in the self-evaluation report concerning this, and no panel member had realised the importance and implications of these reforms.

Nevertheless, this planned merger will bring new challenges and opportunities. One major challenge relates specifically to the RNS as some senior staff there indicated during interviews that, as far as they were aware, they had not been consulted on the merger and were clearly concerned about its implications. Although the merger has recently been decided, its aims and objectives were not made fully clear during the study visit and some staff in the RNS indicated that there was likely to be a 'culture clash' between the two merged faculties.

Teaching staff are under a good deal of stress and strain as they find themselves caught up in a state of rapid change and related uncertainty. Staff and programme

managers are particularly concerned at present with the future direction of their new faculty. At interview, staff suggest that the University is already very centralised and bureaucratic and the current re-structuring will exacerbate this. Staff need to feel that they will be able to play a pro-active part in the faculty's future and not find that they are merely reacting to change imposed from above. The panel suggests that there should be more consultation with staff and greater democratisation of decision-making

However, the merger should provide opportunities for staff from both TSEBA and RNS in terms of the creation of new study programmes, the use of different teaching and learning techniques, a focus on new research topics, as well as possible career advancement.

Strengths

- In general, the study programmes are rated highly by students, alumni and employers.
- There is a strong focus on research in both of the current faculties and research underpins teaching.
- A variety of modern teaching methods and different assessment techniques are used effectively.
- Student feedback is used to modify the study programmes
- Employers and alumni are consulted on the nature of study programmes
- The program committees are working well.
- Internationalisation of the curriculum, staff and student body is generally well advanced.
- Teaching facilities are generally good
- All teachers use digital teaching methods (Moodle etc.)
- Students appear to be generally well motivated
- Students can study beyond the faculty and appear to make good use of this opportunity.

Areas of Improvement

- The rationale for the merging of the two faculties into one needs to be clarified, especially amongst teaching staff and students.
- Although the program committees are working well, there is a need for a more strategic overview. In many cases the program committees working processes seemed more informal. More systematic and documented approach should be considered.
- The current student information system needs to be improved. Students made remarks about the illogical structure of the student information system and noted that not all course materials are available and accessible through the student information system.
- There needs to be adequate numbers of textbooks in all courses.
- The idea to use an alternative to the traditional thesis in order to decrease the dropout rate is worth considering but it needs further clarification and to alignment to learning outcomes must be ensured.
- The internship system needs to be improved. Students need more support from the university in relation to finding and completing their internships.
- Staff development, in particular for new/junior teaching staff needs to be improved. Lot of opportunities offered to the staff are voluntary, meaning

there could be more measures that would incentivise the participation in staff development courses.

- There needs to be more opportunities for staff to gain international experience. The financing of staff mobility could be improved.
- More international staff need to be involved in delivering the study programmes.
- Completion rates are of concern and need to be improved.
- There needs to be a formal system for recording reasons for drop-out.
- Weekend access for the library needs to be improved, particularly for students who work full time.

1.3 Faculty of Economics and Business Administration (TSEBA)

In this section of the report the following programs: TABB, TVTB, TVTM, TAKM are discussed together. The rationale for this is that each of the separate groups of programme managers, teaching staff, students, alumni and employers, that the panel interviewed during the study visit, contained representatives of all four programmes. This arrangement had been made prior to the visit by EKKA and TUT. However, this means that the panel did not meet representatives (programme managers, teaching staff, students, alumni and employers) of one program separately, but met groups of mixed representatives from each of the four study programme.

The same arrangements had also been made in relation to the other sets of programmes in TSEBA, as indicated by the sub-headings for programmes reviewed.

1.3.1. BA in Business (TABB); BA in International Business Administration (TVTB) and MA in International Business Administration (TVTM); MA in Business Administration (TAKM)

Study programme and study programme development

Standards

- ✓ The launch or development of the study programme is based on the Standard of Higher Education and other legislation, development plans, analyses (including labour market and feasibility analyses), and professional standards; and the best quality is being sought.
- ✓ The structure and content of modules and courses in a study programme support achievement of the objectives and designed learning outcomes of the study programme.
- ✓ Different parts of the study programme form a coherent whole.
- ✓ The study programme includes practical training, the content and scope of which are based on the planned learning outcomes of the study programme.
- ✓ The study programme development takes into account feedback from students, employers, alumni and other stakeholders.

Comments

The self-evaluation document indicates that the study programmes of TABB, TVTB, TVTM and TAKM, at TUT, comply with the standards of Higher Education in Estonia and are comparable with programmes in other EU countries.

Strengths

- Feedback from students is used to modify the study programmes
- Employers are actively involved in giving feedback on the study programmes and there is evidence that this feedback is used to modify the programmes
- Employers were very satisfied with the knowledge and skills of graduates of the study programmes.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

- Both students and employers indicated that the internship system could be improved. The university should offer more support in terms of finding internship placements. Also some of the employers noted that most of the cooperation with staff is done informally. Stronger formal procedures could enhance the sustainability of labour market cooperation.
- Business students suggested that they would like to learn at least one foreign language in addition to English. They specifically referred to: French, German, Finnish and Russian. Although there are free electives available, the number of student places is often limited. The panel encourages the faculty to seek more opportunities to offer additional language courses.
- The learning outcomes need to be continually monitored to ensure they are congruent with the assessment regimes. There was a lack of formal procedures to ensure that the assessment procedures were aligned with the learning outcomes.
- In relation to the MA programmes, currently the learning outcomes are aligned to thesis production. The learning outcomes are not aligned for the use of an exam which the panel were informed it will be possible to use in future to obtain a Master's degree.
- In general the aims, objectives and learning outcomes for all study programmes will need to be revisited following the merger of the Faculties (TSEBA and RNS).
- Following merger, there will need to be monitoring of the new structures and responsibilities and implications for the study programmes.

Resources

Standards

- ✓ Resources (teaching and learning environments, teaching materials, teaching aids and equipment, premises, financial resources) support the achievement of objectives in the study programme.
- ✓ There is a sufficient supply of textbooks and other teaching aids and they are available.
- ✓ Adequacy of resources is ensured for changing circumstances (change in

- | |
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| student numbers, etc.).
✓ Resource development is sustainable. |
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Strengths

- Evidence from the self-evaluation document and interviews suggest that resources are generally good.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

- Several students and a number of staff at interview suggested the University Student Information System (SIS) is not working well. The SIS needs to be improved
- Resource development needs to be carefully monitored following merger/restructuring
- Based on comments from a number of students, there should be a re-consideration of the opening hours of the library, particularly during weekends, including Sundays, so that those students who work can study on Sundays.

Teaching and learning

Standards

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|--|
| ✓ The process of teaching and learning supports learners' individual and social development.
✓ The process of teaching and learning is flexible, takes into account the specifics of the form of study and facilitates the achievement of planned learning outcomes.
✓ Teaching methods and tools used in teaching are modern, effective and support the development of digital culture.
✓ Practical and theoretical studies are interconnected.
✓ The organisation and the content of practical training support achievement of planned learning outcomes and meet the needs of the stakeholders.
✓ The process of teaching and learning supports learning mobility.
✓ Assessment of learning outcomes is appropriate, transparent and objective, and supports the development of learners. |
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Strengths

- The self-evaluation document and interviews suggested that practical and theoretical elements of programmes are appropriately interconnected and these elements of teaching and learning are linked well to learning outcomes
- As far as could be ascertained, all teachers make use of Moodle and other digital teaching tools

- A number of practitioners are used in programme delivery and there was evidence from the interviews that students enjoy this.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

- Based on comments made by students and employers, the internship system needs to be improved. Specifically, the University should assist in finding internship positions. This is particularly the case for those students who have trouble finding an internship, and especially international students.
- Employers should be informed about the learning outcomes of internships
- The panel were informed during interviews that student contact hours would be decreasing after merger and more emphasis will be placed on students independent work. The effects of this, following the merger, need to be carefully monitored
- The workload of students should be monitored regularly, to check if the workload is in accordance with ECTSs.

Teaching staff

Standards

- ✓ There is teaching staff with adequate qualifications to achieve the objectives and planned learning outcomes of the study programme, and to ensure quality and sustainability of the teaching and learning.
- ✓ Overall student assessment on teaching skills of the teaching staff is positive.
- ✓ The teaching staff collaborate in the fields of teaching and research within the higher education institution and with partners outside of the higher education institution (practitioners in their fields, employers, and staff members at other Estonian or foreign higher education institutions).
- ✓ Recognized foreign and visiting members of the teaching staff and practitioners participate in teaching the study programme.
- ✓ The teaching staff is routinely engaged in professional and teaching-skills development.
- ✓ Assessment of the work by members of the teaching staff (including staff evaluation) takes into account the quality of their teaching as well as of their research, development and creative work, including development of their teaching skills, and their international mobility.

Strengths

- Despite the upheaval caused by the imminent merger, the staff appeared motivated and enthusiastic.
- There was a willingness to change the content of courses and methods of teaching based on students' feedback.

- The teaching staff is engaged in professional and teaching-skills development.
- Foreign and visiting members of the teaching staff and practitioners are participating in teaching of the study programmes.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

- Teachers appear to work with external partners when creating courses. However they should collaborate more with each other in the new faculty when teaching and when designing the content of courses, in particular to reduce the possibility of overlap.
- The panel recommends that staff gain greater international experience.
- The research expertise and experience of senior professors should be made available to more students, via their greater participation in teaching, including to Bachelor's level students.
- Teachers appear to be appropriately qualified and experienced to deliver the study programmes. However, the self-evaluation document indicates that research is a key component of a teachers' job description and very important within TSEBA, but the panel was not provided with sufficient evidence during the interview to support this claim.

Students

Standards

- ✓ Student places are filled with motivated and capable students.
- ✓ The dropout rate is low; the proportion of students graduating within the standard period of study is large.
- ✓ Students are motivated to learn and their satisfaction with the content, form and methods of their studies is high.
- ✓ As part of their studies, students attend other Estonian and/or foreign higher education institutions as visiting or international students.
- ✓ Employment rate of alumni is high.
- ✓ Alumni and their employers are pleased with their professional preparation and social competencies.

Strengths

- Students seem generally well motivated despite the changes that are likely to result from the planned merger.
- Students provide comments about the possible improvements to the study programmes and teaching methods, and the staff responds to these comments appropriately.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

- There is a high drop-out rate on some study programmes and it was suggested, in the self-evaluation report and during interviews, that selecting the wrong discipline, financial factors and personal circumstances were reasons for this high drop-out rate. However, no formal procedure appears to be in place for recording the reasons for drop-out. Nevertheless, the panel were informed that after merger a new monitoring system will be set up. The panel strongly supports the introduction of this new system. It will also need monitoring once in use.
- The panel also recommend the creation of a support system to help students select the appropriate discipline to study within the university.
- The final phase of MA programs is traditionally the completion of a thesis. However the panel are aware of alternative approaches that are being introduced in HE in Estonia and these alternatives should be considered seriously.

1.3.2. MA in Management and Marketing (TATM); MA in Finance and Accounting (TARM); MA in Applied Economics (TAAB& TAAM)

Study programme and study programme development

Standards

- ✓ The launch or development of the study programme is based on the Standard of Higher Education and other legislation, development plans, analyses (including labour market and feasibility analyses), and professional standards; and the best quality is being sought.
- ✓ The structure and content of modules and courses in a study programme support achievement of the objectives and designed learning outcomes of the study programme.
- ✓ Different parts of the study programme form a coherent whole.
- ✓ The study programme includes practical training, the content and scope of which are based on the planned learning outcomes of the study programme.
- ✓ The study programme development takes into account feedback from students, employers, alumni and other stakeholders.

Comments

These four programmes are generally well designed, well maintained, and meet the standards and criteria. The interface between the programmes and practitioners is generally strong. Based on the self-evaluation documents and our site visits, the

panel have specific concerns regarding some programmes and generic comments for improvements on all programmes.

Strengths.

- The self-evaluation report and discussions showed that study programmes generally meet the needs of the labour market and are in high demand both from potential students and employers.
- The self-evaluation report and discussions with staff in Finance and Accounting provided evidenced of the importance of professional accreditation. CEEMAN recognition has been achieved, and accreditation from ACCA, which will give exemption in 9 out of 14 professional subjects, is on track for spring 2017.
- In Applied Economics, discussions with staff indicated that employers including PWC, Swedbank and the Bank of Estonia are engaged in study programme development through the programme boards.
- The self-evaluation report indicated that Applied Economics programmes are regularly benchmarked against similar programmes in other Nordic universities.
- The courses offer a variety of flexible delivery modes (e.g. open university, part-time studies), enabling students to balance study with other commitments.
- As outlined in the self-evaluation report and in discussions with staff, the Master's thesis in Applied Economics is being improved through the introduction of study and writing skills seminars, earlier supervision, RPL/APEL, and OU completion modes.
- Student feedback on the study programme in Applied Economics was very good on the relevance and updating of the programme.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

- In order to address the issue of the high rate of non-completion at the MA level described in the self-evaluation report and suggested in discussion with students and academic staff, further work is needed to support Masters' thesis candidates.
- Discussion with students and alumni indicated that areas of the syllabus in marketing need to be updated with newer more relevant case studies, and current practices and examples, e-commerce etc. in the MA in Management and Marketing.
- Discussion with students and alumni indicated that the use of RPL/APEL needs to be extended, especially in relation to students taking the management courses in the MA in Management and Marketing.
- It appears from the self-evaluation report that it is possible for students to avoid taking any marketing courses in the MA in Management and Marketing; a review is thus needed of the strategic focus and the underlining instruments of the programme.

- It should be re-considered whether the title of the MA in Management and Marketing programme matches the content of the programme at present.
- Discussions indicated that although employers' input is considered in programme development, employers do not receive feedback on their input. This situation should be rectified.
- Discussion with students showed that while the balance between theoretical and practical training is generally good, greater efforts should be made to diversify the practical placements.
- Discussions with students indicated that the availability of the range of foreign language courses, and of courses taught in a foreign language should be further developed.

Resources

Standards

- ✓ Resources (teaching and learning environments, teaching materials, teaching aids and equipment, premises, financial resources) support the achievement of objectives in the study programme.
- ✓ There is a sufficient supply of textbooks and other teaching aids and they are available.
- ✓ Adequacy of resources is ensured for changing circumstances (change in student numbers, etc.).
- ✓ Resource development is sustainable.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

- Students commented that library opening hours and those of the refectory facilities are insufficient at the weekends and need to be extended.
- From our discussions with students, the panel noted that there is an insufficient number of course textbooks available for consultation in the library in some programmes.
- Discussion with students suggested that consideration should be given to using a single staff-student communication platform.

Teaching and learning

Standards

- ✓ The process of teaching and learning supports learners' individual and social development.
- ✓ The process of teaching and learning is flexible, takes into account the specifics of the form of study and facilitates the achievement of planned learning outcomes.
- ✓ Teaching methods and tools used in teaching are modern, effective and support the development of digital culture.
- ✓ Practical and theoretical studies are interconnected.

- ✓ The organisation and the content of practical training support achievement of planned learning outcomes and meet the needs of the stakeholders.
- ✓ The process of teaching and learning supports learning mobility.
- ✓ Assessment of learning outcomes is appropriate, transparent and objective, and supports the development of learners.

Strengths

- The demonstrated mix of theoretical classes, statistically based modelling, simulations, real life case studies, teamwork/group work and guest lectures in the evaluation document and in the discussions were strong evidence of the diversity of teaching and learning practices.
- Classes and projects with the employers and work placements with companies added to those practical experiences are highly valued by students in their comments to the reviewers.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

- In our discussions, students felt that practically focussed activities in the MA in Management and Marketing could be increased e.g. more practical tasks and assignments; this will require a re-alignment of learning outcomes, course content and teaching methods in some cases.
- From our discussions with students, opportunities for more active learning styles should be enhanced in both MA in Management and Marketing and MA Finance and Accounting.
- It was pointed out in discussions with students that timetable clashes in the MA in Management and Marketing restricted student choice.
- In the MA in Management and Marketing, there should be opportunities for more student exchanges and more input from foreign teaching staff.

Teaching staff

Standards

- ✓ There is teaching staff with adequate qualifications to achieve the objectives and planned learning outcomes of the study programme, and to ensure quality and sustainability of the teaching and learning.
- ✓ Overall student assessment on teaching skills of the teaching staff is positive.
- ✓ The teaching staff collaborate in the fields of teaching and research within the higher education institution and with partners outside of the higher education institution (practitioners in their fields, employers, and staff members at other Estonian or foreign higher education institutions).
- ✓ Recognised foreign and visiting members of the teaching staff and practitioners participate in teaching the study programme.
- ✓ The teaching staff is routinely engaged in professional and teaching-skills

- development.
- ✓ Assessment of the work by members of the teaching staff (including staff evaluation) takes into account the quality of their teaching as well as of their research, development and creative work, including development of their teaching skills, and their international mobility.

Strengths

- In discussions with Applied Economics staff, extra possibilities are provided to teaching staff for good career development through e.g. weekly feedback sessions with students, peer review of teaching and joint teaching and exchanges with foreign universities.
- The self-evaluation report for Applied Economics shows a strong international cohort in the teaching group.
- Discussions with staff indicated that the use of practitioner guest lecturers is generally strong in these programmes.
- Discussions with staff and students showed the use of self-evaluation tools by staff on these programmes is recognised and given priority.
- Written and oral evidence showed that collaboration with external partners both academic and non-academic in research and consultancy is strong in Applied Economics and Finance and Accounting.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

- Despite the recently introduced compulsory system of student evaluation, there is a need for a more structured and forceful programme of staff development in relation to pedagogical skills in areas of weakness.
- As evidenced in the self-evaluation document and in interviews with students, more foreign teaching staff are needed for the MA in Management and Marketing.

Students

Standards

- ✓ Student places are filled with motivated and capable students.
- ✓ The dropout rate is low; the proportion of students graduating within the standard period of study is large.
- ✓ Students are motivated to learn and their satisfaction with the content, form and methods of their studies is high.
- ✓ As part of their studies, students attend other Estonian and/or foreign higher education institutions as visiting or international students.
- ✓ Employment rate of alumni is high.
- ✓ Alumni and their employers are pleased with their professional preparation and social competencies.

Strengths

- The data in the self-evaluation report show that there is strong competition for places on these programmes.
- Discussions showed students were highly motivated and engaged in their programmes.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

- The drop-out rate is high, mainly a result of students failing to start - let alone complete - their Masters' thesis. While the problem is acknowledged by staff and in the self-evaluation report, it is not as yet resolved. The MA in Applied Economics team outlined some changes designed to support students, including skills development and mode change (i.e. an open university model). More work is needed to: a) help students find suitable topics b) re-balance theoretical and practical elements in the thesis and c) enhance technical skills.
- The suggestion in the MA Management and Marketing self-evaluation report of developing the MA thesis from the student's Bachelor's thesis is worth further consideration.
- As set out in the self-evaluation report, there is a greater role for RPL/APEL in the thesis process, so that it may be incorporated into the assessment of the final output.
- As outlined in the self-evaluation document and articulated by students, opportunities for foreign placements and student exchanges could be enhanced in the MA in Management and Marketing.
- Discussions with students indicated that the diversity of work placement experiences should be enhanced.

1.4. RAGNAR NURKSE SCHOOL OF INNOVATION AND GOVERNANCE

1.4.1. BA in Public Administration and Governance (HAAB); MA in Public Administration (HAAM), MA in Technology Governance (HAGM)

Study programme and study programme development

Standards

- ✓ The launch or development of the study programme is based on the Standard of Higher Education and other legislation, development plans, analyses (including labour market and feasibility analyses), and professional standards; and the best quality is being sought.
- ✓ The structure and content of modules and courses in a study programme support achievement of the objectives and designed learning outcomes of the study programme.
- ✓ Different parts of the study programme form a coherent whole.
- ✓ The study programme includes practical training, the content and scope of which are based on the planned learning outcomes of the study programme.
- ✓ The study programme development takes into account feedback from students, employers, alumni and other stakeholders.

Comments

The current study programmes will be reviewed following merger, the panel were informed during interviews, but it is not clear what changes will be made to programmes.

Strengths

- Programme managers and teachers indicated during interviews that student feedback is used to modify courses.
- Feedback from employers is used to modify courses.
- Study programmes are generally well regarded by employers.
- Employers and alumni regard the RNS programmes as having one of the most international perspectives of such programmes within Estonia.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

- Several RNS staff indicated that they had not been consulted on the planned merger and the implications of this for the study programmes that they currently offer. The future of the current programmes needs to be clarified as

soon as possible. Staff should be consulted and actively involved in discussions about the programmes.

- There is a relatively high drop-out rate on some programmes in the RNS. Staff suggested that 'managing expectations' of students was the key solution to this problem. The merged faculty needs to consider ways it can manage student expectations and then put into action appropriate measures to attempt to reduce the drop-out rate.

Resources

Standards

- ✓ Resources (teaching and learning environments, teaching materials, teaching aids and equipment, premises, financial resources) support the achievement of objectives in the study programme.
- ✓ There is a sufficient supply of textbooks and other teaching aids and they are available.
- ✓ Adequacy of resources is ensured for changing circumstances (change in student numbers, etc.).
- ✓ Resource development is sustainable.

Strengths

- The evidence during the interviews and from the self-evaluation report indicated that resources are appropriate.
- Programme managers suggested that all staff use Moodle to support their teaching.
- Based on the interviews with staff and students, it would appear that textbooks and related learning resources are up-to date.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

- The current centralised IT system (SIS) is not user-friendly and, according to staff and students, frequently fails to work properly. This system needs to be improved or replaced.
- Following merger of the faculties, there will need to be monitoring of the resources in terms of their use and appropriateness for any changes that have taken place in the curriculum.

Teaching and learning

Standards

- ✓ The process of teaching and learning supports learners' individual and social development.
- ✓ The process of teaching and learning is flexible, takes into account the specifics of the form of study and facilitates the achievement of planned learning outcomes.

- ✓ Teaching methods and tools used in teaching are modern, effective and support the development of digital culture.
- ✓ Practical and theoretical studies are interconnected.
- ✓ The organisation and the content of practical training support achievement of planned learning outcomes and meet the needs of the stakeholders.
- ✓ The process of teaching and learning supports learning mobility.
- ✓ Assessment of learning outcomes is appropriate, transparent and objective, and supports the development of learners.

Strengths

- As far as could be ascertained during interviews and from the self-evaluation report teaching methods are modern, varied and appropriate.
- Teaching and learning are flexible.
- There is significant mobility of learning both within Estonia and through the opportunity to study overseas.
- Students reacted positively during interviews to the fact much teaching is research based.
- Programme managers and teachers indicated at interview that some of the funding gained from research is used to support teaching.
- A variety of different forms of assessment is used. This includes the assessment of group work/team work which is referred to in the self-evaluation report as an important teaching/learning technique.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

- During the interviews, students requested more of a focus on quantitative research techniques.
- Following merger, it was indicated by senior staff and programme managers, that the amount of teaching contact time will decrease and student independent study time will increase. However, students during interviews, requested that there should be more teaching time. Discussions need to take place between staff and student representatives to find a solution to this issue.

Teaching staff

Standards

- ✓ There is teaching staff with adequate qualifications to achieve the objectives and planned learning outcomes of the study programme, and to ensure quality and sustainability of the teaching and learning.
- ✓ Overall student assessment on teaching skills of the teaching staff is positive.
- ✓ The teaching staff collaborate in the fields of teaching and research within the higher education institution and with partners outside of the higher education institution (practitioners in their fields, employers, and staff

- members at other Estonian or foreign higher education institutions).
- ✓ Recognised foreign and visiting members of the teaching staff and practitioners participate in teaching the study programme.
 - ✓ The teaching staff is routinely engaged in professional and teaching-skills development.
 - ✓ Assessment of the work by members of the teaching staff (including staff evaluation) takes into account the quality of their teaching as well as of their research, development and creative work, including development of their teaching skills, and their international mobility.

Strengths

- Students indicated at interview that teaching staff are approachable and generally helpful.
- Senior staff, programme managers and teaching staff indicated at interview that the RNS has a significant reputation in research and that research output is much greater per staff member than the University average. It was also suggested that research significantly underpins teaching.
- The programmes have managed to recruit staff from various countries and academic backgrounds who make about 40% of faculty.
- The staff represent balanced age and gender structure and diversity of ethnic groups.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

- Teaching needs to have greater recognition and significance in the newly merged faculty, and staff need to be suitably rewarded for their teaching work.
- Senior researchers/professors should share their research expertise and experience with both Bachelor's and Master's students, through more contact via teaching and supervision.
- Teaching staff do not find the centrally organised staff development courses useful. Their views can be summarised as: "the best way to learn how to be a teacher is to 'learn on the job' ". During interviews teachers suggested that less experienced members of staff 'would learn more about teaching from more experienced professors in the department'. The University should review its centralised staff development courses and, as necessary, provide more appropriate staff development courses.
- There appears to be some form of performance management of staff, but currently this is an informal process. More consideration should be given to the future use of performance management, and whether this should be a more formalised process, following faculty merger.

Students

Standards

- ✓ Student places are filled with motivated and capable students.
- ✓ The dropout rate is low; the proportion of students graduating within the standard period of study is large.
- ✓ Students are motivated to learn and their satisfaction with the content, form and methods of their studies is high.
- ✓ As part of their studies, students attend other Estonian and/or foreign higher education institutions as visiting or international students.
- ✓ Employment rate of alumni is high.
- ✓ Alumni and their employers are pleased with their professional preparation and social competencies.

Strengths

- Students appear to be generally well motivated, despite the uncertainty around the planned merger.
- There was evidence from the interviews that students provide comments about the possible improvements to the curriculum and staff respond to these comments appropriately.
- Alumni and employers suggest that students graduate with useful knowledge and a good skill set.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

- Based on information gained during the interviews, students have been informed about the planned merger, but have not been consulted. The panel suggests that students should be invited to play a more active role in decision-making concerning the merger.
- There is a relatively high student drop-out rate on some study programmes. Reasons for this were not provided during interviews. No formal procedure appears to be in place for recording the reasons for drop-out. Nevertheless, the panel were informed that after merger a new monitoring system will be set up, which the panel strongly support.
- The panel also recommends the creation of a system to help students select an appropriate discipline to study.

1.5. DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL PSYCHOLOGY

1.5.1. Office Administration (HAKB); Personnel and Development (HAPM); Work and organization psychology (HVWM)

Study programme and study programme development

Standards

- ✓ The launch or development of the study programme is based on the Standard of Higher Education and other legislation, development plans, analyses (including labour market and feasibility analyses), and professional standards; and the best quality is being sought.
- ✓ The structure and content of modules and courses in a study programme support achievement of the objectives and designed learning outcomes of the study programme.
- ✓ Different parts of the study programme form a coherent whole.
- ✓ The study programme includes practical training, the content and scope of which are based on the planned learning outcomes of the study programme.
- ✓ The study programme development takes into account feedback from students, employers, alumni and other stakeholders.

Comments

These programmes are currently based in the Faculty of Social Sciences, and will be integrated into the new Faculty of Business and Administration as of January 2017. They are generally well-designed and well-managed, meet standards, and cater to specific niches in the Estonian labour market. The future of one of the programmes (BA Office Administration) is uncertain.

Strengths

- The self-evaluation report points out that the MAs in Personnel Management and Work and Organisational Psychology are unique offerings in Estonia and fill specialist niches in the market.
- From the self-evaluation report and our discussions, international collaboration in the development of the MA in Work and Organisational Psychology is very strong (via the EAWOP consortium), and the programme offers a double degree with Vilnius MR University
- Discussions with staff and students revealed that because of small numbers, the MA programmes have been able to respond quickly to student feedback
- According to the self-evaluation report, RPL/APEL is used routinely in the MA programmes

- The self-evaluation report showed that on the MA programmes, there are close relationships between academic staff and professionals in the field e.g. through consultancy and practically focussed research projects.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

- Interviews with students and alumni indicated a lack of financial knowledge of the graduates in the MA Personnel and Management programme. It should be remedied through the introduction of budgeting and financial planning elements to the programme.
- Students expressed a desire for more teaching of more foreign languages.
- Discussions with staff and students revealed that no advantage is being taken of the opportunity for the double degree award with Vilnius MRU.
- Discussions with employers indicated that there was further scope for collaboration on programme development.
- Students indicated that some of the content on programmes needs to be updated e.g. specific IT courses on software including Excel in the BA in Office Administration and digital security in personnel data management in the MA in Personnel Management.
- The situation regarding the future of Office and Administration (BA) programme is very confusing. The overview and vision which the panel received from the management of TUT and from the staff of this study programme were conflicting to say the least. The biggest problem seemed to be a lack of proper communication about the upcoming reforms and lack of shared understanding about the future of this program. The staff deserves more clarification and explanation about the future actions and plans regarding this study programme.

Resources

Standards

- ✓ Resources (teaching and learning environments, teaching materials, teaching aids and equipment, premises, financial resources) support the achievement of objectives in the study programme.
- ✓ There is a sufficient supply of textbooks and other teaching aids and they are available.
- ✓ Adequacy of resources is ensured for changing circumstances (change in student numbers, etc.).
- ✓ Resource development is sustainable.

Strengths

- For the MA programmes, staff and students noted the strong back office coordination and good student study services, delivering professional administration and good support for the students

- The evidence during the interviews and from the self-evaluation report indicated that resources are appropriate

Areas of improvement and recommendations

- Our discussions with staff indicated that given the uncertainty surrounding the position of all these programmes in the new Faculty structure, assurance is needed that current levels of resourcing will be continued.

Teaching and learning

Standards

- ✓ The process of teaching and learning supports learners' individual and social development.
- ✓ The process of teaching and learning is flexible, takes into account the specifics of the form of study and facilitates the achievement of planned learning outcomes.
- ✓ Teaching methods and tools used in teaching are modern, effective and support the development of digital culture.
- ✓ Practical and theoretical studies are interconnected.
- ✓ The organisation and the content of practical training support achievement of planned learning outcomes and meet the needs of the stakeholders.
- ✓ The process of teaching and learning supports learning mobility.
- ✓ Assessment of learning outcomes is appropriate, transparent and objective, and supports the development of learners.

Strengths

- The self-evaluation report and discussions with staff and students showed that active teaching and learning methods are being used with a particular emphasis on the development of digital tools for the MA programmes.
- Programme leaders pointed out that reforms to the thesis process focussing on more supervisory support are starting to improve MA completion rates.
- In discussions, staff referred to practically focussed document management tasks in the BA Office Administration which are co-ordinated with employers to ensure theory-practice synergies.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

- Despite the progress already made, the self-evaluation report data on completions show that thesis supervision and management need further improvement.

Teaching staff

Standards

- ✓ There is teaching staff with adequate qualifications to achieve the

<p>objectives and planned learning outcomes of the study programme, and to ensure quality and sustainability of the teaching and learning.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Overall student assessment on teaching skills of the teaching staff is positive.✓ The teaching staff collaborate in the fields of teaching and research within the higher education institution and with partners outside of the higher education institution (practitioners in their fields, employers, and staff members at other Estonian or foreign higher education institutions).✓ Recognised foreign and visiting members of the teaching staff and practitioners participate in teaching the study programme.✓ The teaching staff is routinely engaged in professional and teaching-skills development.✓ Assessment of the work by members of the teaching staff (including staff evaluation) takes into account the quality of their teaching as well as of their research, development and creative work, including development of their teaching skills, and their international mobility.
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Comments

- The teaching staff are anxious about the structural changes happening in TUT. The future of the professional group underpinning the psychology and personnel programmes is in flux. It is to be disbanded and the staff reallocated to three different entities.

Strengths

- The staff supporting the MA programmes are recognised as the experts in their field in Estonia
- The self-evaluation report indicated that an external consultant has been used to advise on staff development needs in the MA programmes
- From our discussions with students, teachers are judged to be very approachable
- The self-evaluation report and discussions with staff indicated that staff have strong links with practice and practically-oriented research, particularly in the MA programmes
- The self-evaluation report shows that the MA staff have good international standing and linkages.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

- Our discussions with programme managers and staff indicated a strong emphasis on the top down management of staff development, and a lack of a systematic/formal processes for estimating staff needs. This can be rectified via a) a closer matching of student evaluations with staff development, b) more self-directed staff development and, c) the strengthening of the formal annual appraisal process.

Students

Standards

- ✓ Student places are filled with motivated and capable students.
- ✓ The dropout rate is low; the proportion of students graduating within the standard period of study is large.
- ✓ Students are motivated to learn and their satisfaction with the content, form and methods of their studies is high.
- ✓ As part of their studies, students attend other Estonian and/or foreign higher education institutions as visiting or international students.
- ✓ Employment rate of alumni is high.
- ✓ Alumni and their employers are pleased with their professional preparation and social competencies.

Strengths

- The self-evaluation report and our discussions with staff and students indicate a highly motivated student intake.
- Students were satisfied with content of the of their studies. Students also reported good support from the MA programme co-ordinator.
- The self-evaluation data show that completion rates are above average.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

- In our discussions with students and alumni, some of the international students had struggled with Estonian culture and language. There is further work to be done regarding the integration of these students into TUT.
- In particular, discussions with students and alumni indicated that there needs to be a change in attitude in the hiring of foreign students in the local labour market, as it is difficult to find internships or working places for them currently.
- Students indicated that they would like more opportunities for a variety of placements on the BA Office Administration programme.

1.6 KURESSAARE COLLEGE

1.6.1. Small Business management (SDVR)

Study programme and study programme development

Standards

- ✓ The launch or development of the study programme is based on the Standard of Higher Education and other legislation, development plans, analyses (including labour market and feasibility analyses), and professional standards; and the best quality is being sought.
- ✓ The structure and content of modules and courses in a study programme support achievement of the objectives and designed learning outcomes of the study programme.
- ✓ Different parts of the study programme form a coherent whole.
- ✓ The study programme includes practical training, the content and scope of which are based on the planned learning outcomes of the study programme.
- ✓ The study programme development takes into account feedback from students, employers, alumni and other stakeholders.

Comments

The College and the small business programme are important for the region and its development. The College's mission, to offer flexible study programmes and lifelong learning opportunities, fits well with local demographics, travel logistics and specific local needs and social-economic conditions.

Strengths

- Discussions with students and alumni indicated that distance learning / open university mode is "fit for purpose" enabling flexibility of studies
- The data in the self-evaluation report shows that the programme is strong in providing access to disadvantaged groups and adult returners
- The self-evaluation report showed that the study programme is also "fit for purpose" taking into account the regional aspects of the economy and local business opportunities
- The self-evaluation report showed that the programme provides access to other faculties and courses at TUT.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

- As documented in the self-evaluation report, that it might be likely that the KCs Tourism and Catering Management study programme will be added to the Small Business Management programme and the focus of the study programme will be on customer-driven services design and marketing, change in program title might be worthy of consideration, to be more aligned with all the content. Discussions with staff and alumni also supported this claim.

- Discussion with students suggested that some topics/courses were too easy. Further benchmarking of programme courses against TUT equivalents is necessary to ensure that the level stretches and challenges students
- The self-evaluation report suggested that it was difficult to find suitable work placements locally
- Discussions with students and alumni suggested that strengthening the elements of IT skills and book-keeping would be highly relevant.

Resources

Standards

- ✓ Resources (teaching and learning environments, teaching materials, teaching aids and equipment, premises, financial resources) support the achievement of objectives in the study programme.
- ✓ There is a sufficient supply of textbooks and other teaching aids and they are available.
- ✓ Adequacy of resources is ensured for changing circumstances (change in student numbers, etc.).
- ✓ Resource development is sustainable.

Strengths

- The self-evaluation report indicates that resourcing per student is generous.
- The merger with the Maritime Academy of TUT is viewed positively by staff and will create synergies.

Teaching and learning

Standards

- ✓ The process of teaching and learning supports learners' individual and social development.
- ✓ The process of teaching and learning is flexible, takes into account the specifics of the form of study and facilitates the achievement of planned learning outcomes.
- ✓ Teaching methods and tools used in teaching are modern, effective and support the development of digital culture.
- ✓ Practical and theoretical studies are interconnected.
- ✓ The organisation and the content of practical training support achievement of planned learning outcomes and meet the needs of the stakeholders.
- ✓ The process of teaching and learning supports learning mobility.
- ✓ Assessment of learning outcomes is appropriate, transparent and objective, and supports the development of learners.

Strengths

- Discussions with students and staff suggested that the distance/ flexible learning and open university modes were working well and met student needs.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

- Discussions with students suggested that the interaction process between some of the part-time teaching staff and students could be improved.
- Discussions with students indicated that feedback from part-time staff on assignments could be speeded up and improved in terms of detail.

Teaching staff

Standards

- ✓ There is teaching staff with adequate qualifications to achieve the objectives and planned learning outcomes of the study programme, and to ensure quality and sustainability of the teaching and learning.
- ✓ Overall student assessment on teaching skills of the teaching staff is positive.
- ✓ The teaching staff collaborate in the fields of teaching and research within the higher education institution and with partners outside of the higher education institution (practitioners in their fields, employers, and staff members at other Estonian or foreign higher education institutions).
- ✓ Recognised foreign and visiting members of the teaching staff and practitioners participate in teaching the study programme.
- ✓ The teaching staff is routinely engaged in professional and teaching-skills development.
- ✓ Assessment of the work by members of the teaching staff (including staff evaluation) takes into account the quality of their teaching as well as of their research, development and creative work, including development of their teaching skills, and their international mobility.

Strengths

- The self-evaluation report shows a diverse and flexible staffing group including full-time, part-time, visiting lecturers and practitioners.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

- Discussions with programme managers indicated that the diversity of the group creates challenges for quality assurance, staff development planning and motivation of staff.
- The self-evaluation report suggests that finding suitably qualified local staff and practitioners can be difficult.
- The self-evaluation report data shows that foreign teaching staff make a very small input to this programme, and discussions indicated that English language skills among staff need improvement.

Students

Standards

- ✓ Student places are filled with motivated and capable students.
- ✓ The dropout rate is low; the proportion of students graduating within the standard period of study is large.
- ✓ Students are motivated to learn and their satisfaction with the content, form and methods of their studies is high.
- ✓ As part of their studies, students attend other Estonian and/or foreign higher education institutions as visiting or international students.
- ✓ Employment rate of alumni is high.
- ✓ Alumni and their employers are pleased with their professional preparation and social competencies.

Strengths

- Discussions with students and alumni showed appreciation of the opportunities and learning methods offered by the college.
- The student profile in the self-evaluation report demonstrates success in attracting mature students.
- The data in the self-evaluation report show a high demand and competition for student places.
- In discussions with students, raised self-confidence and a desire to shape their own destinies were consistent motivational outputs from studying on the programme.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

- The life experiences of students with these profiles could be put to good use in the wider learning process for all students at TUT.

2. Assessment report of Business and Administration SPG at University of Tartu

Study programme group	Business and Administration
Higher education institution	University of Tartu
Study programmes	Culture Management (Prof.HE); Entrepreneurship and Project Management (Prof.HE); Economics and Business Administration (BA); Business Administration (BA); Entrepreneurship and Technology Management (MBA); Business Administration (MBA); Strategic Management (MBA); Service Design and Management (MBA); Economics and Business Administration (MA); Cultural Management (MA); Educational Management (MA); Wellness and Spa Service Design and Management (MA)

2.1. Some characteristics of University of Tartu

The University of Tartu (UT) is Estonia's leading center of research and education, and as the national university, is vested by law with the task of preserving Estonian culture and society.

The UT as a national university of Estonia bears the responsibility for solving problems faced by the society by ensuring the continuity of Estonian intellectuals and language and culture and by contributing to the development of education, research and technology and other creative activities throughout the world.

Ten curricula out of 12 in the Business and Administration Study Programme Group (hereafter, SPG) is conducted by the Faculty of Social Sciences, two (Cultural Management Prof. HE and MA) are based in The Faculty of Arts and Humanities. Both faculties were formed following the structural reform that came in effect 1 January 2016. In the case of social sciences this meant the merge of eight institutes and colleges.

Faculty of Arts and Humanities constitutes of seven institutes and one regional college.

As of November 2015 there were 6145 students studying the the Faculty of Social Sciences, which was more than twice as much as the next biggest Faculty of Science and Technology (3006 students).

Full data about the separate study programmes can be found in ANNEX 2

2.2. General findings and recommendations at study programme group level

The study visit to University of Tartu took place on November 24th and 25th, 2016. The visit involved interviews with staff and other representatives from the School of Economics and Business and additionally from Pärnu College, Narva College and Viljandi College.

General Findings

- The self-evaluation report was well written, informative and genuinely self-critical. This report and the interviews conducted with various representatives of the programmes, indicated that University of Tartu (UT) School of Business and Economics has a shared mission amongst its staff.
- There is a diverse range of programmes, and although these are located in different places, they are nevertheless unified by the common themes of business, management and leadership.
- It would appear that the Faculty has the ability to adapt programmes to changing societal needs.
- The physical resources are currently adequate and soon to be improved.
- Staff appear well qualified and generally dedicated.
- Students seem to be well qualified at admission and motivated.

Strengths

- The School has responded to changing societal and academic needs and designed appropriate study programmes.
- Program committees are generally working well. The procedures and the working methods of program committees were formal, documented and understandable to all stakeholders. Focus group interviews are used to collect feedback from students on programmes.
- A variety of appropriate assessment methods are being used.
- Teachers provide feedback to students and respond to student feedback
- Students are able to study beyond their School and appear to make good use of the opportunity to do this.
- Teachers are generally approachable and available when required.
- Appropriate staff development courses are in place and generally found useful by staff.
- Students are generally highly motivated.

- Students are not solely studying to obtain the degree but clearly value the content of their courses.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

- The panel was made aware that in order to tackle the problem of dropouts, the idea of replacing the thesis with an exam is currently being considered. Although the panel supports the need to tackle this problem, this proposed measure needs clarification and consideration, especially whether the current learning outcomes are appropriate in relation to the use of an exam rather than a thesis.
- Consideration should be given to introducing more foreign languages courses as part of the study programmes.
- There should be greater internationalisation of the student body. Only three study programs (Economics and Business Administration, BA; Business Administration, BA; Wellness and Spa Service Design and Management, MA) had considerable numbers of student mobility.
- Weekend access to the library and learning resources needs to be improved.
- There should be greater internationalisation of teaching and learning with local staff having more opportunities to gain international experience and additionally there should be greater use of foreign visiting teaching staff
- The internship system should be further monitored to ensure it is working appropriately and the learning outcomes of the internships are properly achieved.
- The incentive/reward system for staff requires clarification and further development.
- The recruitment and management of part-time staff, particularly practitioners, needs further development. There is a need to ensure that their pedagogical skill are meeting the universities standards.
- Staff supervising MA dissertations should be suitably experienced. There should be more staff development courses targeted towards thesis supervisions.
- Programme managers should be given a better time allowance and an appropriate financial reward.
- Completion rates need to be improved, particularly in the Master's programmes.
- Communication of APEL/RPL opportunities should be improved. Although there are formal procedures in place for APEL/RPL, the students lacked to knowledge how to use and benefit from these processes.
- It seemed unusual during the interviews that senior staff failed or forgot to mention that University of Tartu has an important role in the national

development of Estonia. Furthermore as it is stated also in the University's strategy, the staff ought to be encouraged to embrace - and reminded, if necessary - the importance of national university.

2.3. School of Economics and Business Administration

2.3.1. BA in Economics and Business Administration (2442) and MA in Economics and Business Administration (2565), BA in Business Administration (80995); MBA In Business Administration (3257)

In this section of the report the following programs: 2442, 2565, 80995 and 3257 are presented and discussed together. The rationale for this is that each of the separate groups of staff, students, alumni and employers, that the panel met during the study visit and interviewed, contained representatives of all four programmes. This arrangement had been made prior to the visit by EKKA and TU. However, this means that the panel did not meet representatives from just one programme but met groups of mixed representatives from each study programme.

Study programme and study programme development

Standards

- ✓ The launch or development of the study programme is based on the Standard of Higher Education and other legislation, development plans, analyses (including labour market and feasibility analyses), and professional standards; and the best quality is being sought.
- ✓ The structure and content of modules and courses in a study programme support achievement of the objectives and designed learning outcomes of the study programme.
- ✓ Different parts of the study programme form a coherent whole.
- ✓ The study programme includes practical training, the content and scope of which are based on the planned learning outcomes of the study programme.
- ✓ The study programme development takes into account feedback from students, employers, alumni and other stakeholders.

Comments

During interviews with senior managers the panel were informed that the School faces three major challenges: 1) demographic factors, 2) the changing global environment and 3) the need to serve society.

Strengths

- The panel received feedback from teaching staff, students and alumni that the programmes are of the appropriate standard.
- The content and structure of the study programme are consistent with its objectives and learning outcomes.
- Different parts of the study programme form a coherent whole.
- The launch or development of the study programme is based on relevant analyses and necessary legislation.
- Feedback from students, employers, alumni and other stakeholders is taken into account when developing study programmes.

Resources

Standards

- ✓ Resources support the achievements of the study programmes.
- ✓ There is a sufficient supply of textbooks and other teaching aids and they are available.
- ✓ Adequacy of resources is ensured for changing circumstances (change in student numbers, etc.).
- ✓ Resource development is sustainable.

Comments

The panel were informed that in the near future the current building will be replaced.

Strengths

- The current resources are adequate, although they are soon to be replaced.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

- Given that the current resources will be replaced soon, it was good to see that they are currently being maintained well, but it is important to ensure that they are not allowed to deteriorate before they are replaced.
- When the current building is replaced there will need to be careful monitoring of the suitability and use of the proposed new resources.

Teaching and learning

Standards

- ✓ The process of teaching and learning supports learners' individual and social development.
- ✓ The process of teaching and learning is flexible, takes into account the specifics of the form of study and facilitates the achievement of planned learning outcomes.
- ✓ Teaching methods and tools used in teaching are modern, effective and support the development of digital culture.
- ✓ Practical and theoretical studies are interconnected.
- ✓ The organisation and the content of practical training support achievement of planned learning outcomes and meet the needs of the stakeholders.

- ✓ The process of teaching and learning supports learning mobility.
- ✓ Assessment of learning outcomes is appropriate, transparent and objective, and supports the development of learners.

Comments

The self-evaluation report, and responses given during the interviews, both indicate that a variety of teaching and learning methods are used and appropriate forms of assessment are employed.

Strengths

- Teaching and learning methods are modern and flexible. Variety of different learning methods is used.
- Teachers seem to have the freedom to innovate and appear to make good use of student feedback in their courses.
- Interviews with programme managers, teaching staff and students indicate that the assessment regime is suitably varied. In particular, this includes assessment of group work.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

- There were some complaints about class scheduling system, which still has its flaws.

Teaching staff

Standards

- ✓ There are teaching staff with adequate qualifications to achieve the objectives and planned learning outcomes of the study programme, and to ensure quality and sustainability of the teaching and learning.
- ✓ Overall student assessment on teaching skills of the teaching staff is positive.
- ✓ The teaching staff collaborate in the fields of teaching and research within the higher education institution and with partners outside of the higher education institution (practitioners in their fields, employers, and staff members at other Estonian or foreign higher education institutions).
- ✓ Recognised foreign and visiting members of the teaching staff and practitioners participate in teaching the study programme.
- ✓ The teaching staff are routinely engaged in professional and teaching-skills development.
- ✓ Assessment of the work by members of the teaching staff (including staff evaluation) takes into account the quality of their teaching as well as of their research, development and creative work, including development of their teaching skills, and their international mobility.

Comments

The self-evaluation document indicates that teachers are generally well qualified and experienced in relation to their particular teaching role.

Strengths

- Staff appear to be dedicated and generally enthusiastic.
- Staff appear to have regular annual appraisal, which is, in part, based on student feedback of their teaching, and additionally on their research output.
- Staff appear to regularly attend the centrally organised staff development activities and indicated at interview that these are generally very worthwhile.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

- A number of teachers suggested, during the interviews, that being labelled a 'good teacher' may not actually benefit that person's career, as such a compliment would very likely lead to that teacher being given more teaching, hence restricting opportunities to conduct research. Although senior managers suggested that the School is 'becoming more teaching- orientated', staff believe that research is much more likely to benefit one's career. The panel recommends that the School/University should ensure that teaching is suitably rewarded in relation to career development.
- Programme managers play an important role in the work of the School, but do not seem suitable rewarded. At interview the panel were informed that there is a (small) financial incentive in relation to the role, but no time allocation is provided. Serious consideration should be given to providing a suitable time allowance for the programme manager role (e.g., by diminishing teaching load), as well as a re-evaluation of the financial incentive.
- Staff do not appear to team teach or even collaborate in relation to teaching. The panel recommends that staff should work more closely in designing and teaching the curriculum.
- There appeared to be some confusion over the significance of the annual appraisal in terms of its effects on salary, with some staff indicating that it could have a marked effect on their pay, while others indicating it would only have a minimal impact. The effects of this appraisal system need to be clarified and the system made more transparent.
- The additional comments from the University emphasized that all teaching staff have active research roles, which is acknowledged by the panel. Yet, despite the importance of research in the School, there was little discussion of this during interviews and no evidence provided of collaboration between staff in the school on research. Hence, the panel stands by its recommendation that staff within the School should collaborate more in the area of research.
- The programmes have opportunities to use visiting lecturers from abroad, but this is clearly a challenge already recognized by the programmes, as there is clearly a need for more. The panel encourages the programmes to increase the attractiveness of the university and programmes for foreign scholars. More attention should be paid to proactive use of the Erasmus staff exchange.

Students

Standards

- ✓ Student places are filled with motivated and capable students.
- ✓ The dropout rate is low; the proportion of students graduating within the standard period of study is large.
- ✓ Students are motivated to learn and their satisfaction with the content, form and methods of their studies is high.
- ✓ As part of their studies, students attend other Estonian and/or foreign higher education institutions as visiting or international students.
- ✓ Employment rate of alumni is high.
- ✓ Alumni and their employers are pleased with their professional preparation and social competencies.

Comments

Students appear to be, in general, suitably qualified for, and well-motivated in relation to, their courses.

Strengths

- Students appeared to be generally satisfied with their study programmes.
- Alumni indicated that they were generally happy with the programmes at both Bachelor's and Master's level.
- There is the flexibility to enable students to attend optional courses within other parts of the University. Students who took up the opportunity to study these courses indicated that they found them very useful.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

- There is a relatively high drop-out rate amongst students. Several reasons were provided by senior managers and staff concerning this drop-out rate. In particular the following were suggested: choosing the wrong discipline to study, financial factors and family reasons. The scheduling of "difficult courses" at the start of the year was also cited as a reason for this drop-out rate. The panel suggests that more formal records of the reasons that students drop-out should be kept. The panel also recommends that consideration should be given to rescheduling the 'difficult classes' to a time later in the year, when students have become more aware of the demands placed upon them as well as knowing their own abilities better.
- Alumni suggested that given the importance of team work/group work and the need for oral presentations which are assessed, there should be a course focusing on 'Public Speaking'.
- No employers attended the interviews. The panel recommends that the School regularly communicates with employers to share information on e.g. planned curriculum change. The panel also recommends the School ensures that

employers provide formal feedback on programmes that can be used to modify courses if necessary. The panel is fully aware of the fact that each programme has a program council, yet the existence of the council does not automatically guarantee active participation and contribution from the employers.

2.3.2. Entrepreneurship and Technology Management (MBA) Strategic Management (MBA)

Study programme and study programme development

Standards

- ✓ The launch or development of the study programme is based on the Standard of Higher Education and other legislation, development plans, analyses (including labour market and feasibility analyses), and professional standards; and the best quality is being sought.
- ✓ The structure and content of modules and courses in a study programme support achievement of the objectives and designed learning outcomes of the study programme.
- ✓ Different parts of the study programme form a coherent whole.
- ✓ The study programme includes practical training, the content and scope of which are based on the planned learning outcomes of the study programme.
- ✓ The study programme development takes into account feedback from students, employers, alumni and other stakeholders.

Comments

While very different in their target audience and intake characteristics, these two established programmes comprise two thirds of the MBA level suite delivered by the Faculty from Tartu campus.

Strengths

- Discussions with staff and employers' representatives showed a very strong and positive interaction between the MBA Strategic Management programme and the world of practice.
- The self-evaluation report showed the exceptional focus of the MBA Strategic Management programme.
- in discussions with students and employers, the programmes were judged to be strong in taking into account the needs of the local labour market.
- Discussions with all groups showed that the programmes enjoy high prestige with students and employers and demand is strong.
- The MBA Entrepreneurship and Technology Management fills a niche in the market and is also well supported by employers.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

- Considering the rapid growth in the proportion of international students at University of Tartu and the almost zero international student numbers on these programmes as detailed in the self-evaluation report and in our discussions with staff, there is great scope for internationalization of the MBA in Strategic Management, in terms of recruiting international students and offering more courses in English.
- According to the self-evaluation report, neither programme is as yet accredited with an MBA accreditation body (EQUIS, AACSB or AMBA). While this is not relevant to the Entrepreneurship and Technology Management programme, accreditation for the MBA Strategic Management should be actively pursued, especially if it is offered on the international market.
- Discussions with students suggested that some course materials need to be updated in the finance and management course elements.
- The designation of the MBA in Entrepreneurship and Technology Management as an MBA needs review, as its structure is quite diverse for an MBA and lacks international perspective or dimension.

Resources

Standards

- ✓ Resources (teaching and learning environments, teaching materials, teaching aids and equipment, premises, financial resources) support the achievement of objectives in the study programme.
- ✓ There is a sufficient supply of textbooks and other teaching aids and they are available.
- ✓ Adequacy of resources is ensured for changing circumstances (change in student numbers, etc.).
- ✓ Resource development is sustainable.

Comments

The move from the present building to a new building in 2019 is very much to be welcomed. It is essential that a project management group is established now to ensure a smooth transition, including interim arrangements, and to reassure staff.

Strengths

- The new building opening in 2019 will provide a new company incubation resource which will enhance the delivery and development of the programmes, particularly the MBA in Entrepreneurship and Technology Management.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

- Discussions with students mentioned that access to library facilities is restricted at the weekends.

Teaching and learning

Standards

- ✓ The process of teaching and learning supports learners' individual and social development.
- ✓ The process of teaching and learning is flexible, takes into account the specifics of the form of study and facilitates the achievement of planned learning outcomes.
- ✓ Teaching methods and tools used in teaching are modern, effective and support the development of digital culture.
- ✓ Practical and theoretical studies are interconnected.
- ✓ The organisation and the content of practical training support achievement of planned learning outcomes and meet the needs of the stakeholders.
- ✓ The process of teaching and learning supports learning mobility.
- ✓ Assessment of learning outcomes is appropriate, transparent and objective, and supports the development of learners.

Strengths

- An example of good practice and innovative teaching and learning in the MBA Strategic Management self-evaluation and in discussions with staff and employers, was the use of the permanent case company.
- The self-evaluation report gives weight to the RPL/APEL of students in learning and assessments.
- The self-evaluation report and discussions with staff and students indicate a high level of active learning experiences on these programmes (role plays, presentations, simulations, consultancy projects, brainstorming).
- The strong links between theory and practice were evident in the application of student knowledge to work-based projects, the appreciation of the usefulness of theoretical knowledge by employers, and the practice focussed inputs of business practitioners to the programmes.
- Discussions with students indicated the strength and popularity of the flexible study modes offered on the programmes.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

- Discussions with students indicated that updating of teaching and learning to more active modes in finance subjects should be actively explored.
- Discussions with students indicated that teaching materials need to be updated in some subject areas.

Teaching staff

Standards

- ✓ There is teaching staff with adequate qualifications to achieve the

- objectives and planned learning outcomes of the study programme, and to ensure quality and sustainability of the teaching and learning.
- ✓ Overall student assessment on teaching skills of the teaching staff is positive.
 - ✓ The teaching staff collaborate in the fields of teaching and research within the higher education institution and with partners outside of the higher education institution (practitioners in their fields, employers, and staff members at other Estonian or foreign higher education institutions).
 - ✓ Recognised foreign and visiting members of the teaching staff and practitioners participate in teaching the study programme.
 - ✓ The teaching staff is routinely engaged in professional and teaching-skills development.
 - ✓ Assessment of the work by members of the teaching staff (including staff evaluation) takes into account the quality of their teaching as well as of their research, development and creative work, including development of their teaching skills, and their international mobility.

Strengths

- The self-evaluation report and particularly discussions with staff and students showed a high regard for staff expertise and authority.
- Discussions with staff and employers showed a strong staff commitment to the idea of service to society.
- The diversification of the staffing group to include prominent businesspeople amongst lecturers is seen as an additional value by students and programme leaders.
- The discussions with staff indicated the use of a great variety of staff performance and appraisal feedback systems (e.g. invitations to consultations, regular students feedbacks in addition to the compulsory system, peer comments/ peer review of teaching).
- Discussions indicated that good staff development systems are in place and that staff make regular use of staff development courses offered by the University.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

- Looking at the demographics of the staffing profile in the self-evaluation report and in discussion with senior staff, priority needs to be given to succession planning on the MBA in Strategic Management.
- The self-evaluation report and discussions with students indicated that the number of international staff is too low and needs to be raised.

Students

Standards

- ✓ Student places are filled with motivated and capable students.

- ✓ The dropout rate is low; the proportion of students graduating within the standard period of study is large.
- ✓ Students are motivated to learn and their satisfaction with the content, form and methods of their studies is high.
- ✓ As part of their studies, students attend other Estonian and/or foreign higher education institutions as visiting or international students.
- ✓ Employment rate of alumni is high.
- ✓ Alumni and their employers are pleased with their professional preparation and social competencies.

Strengths

- The self-evaluation report shows that demand continues to be strong for these programmes when measured against the generally adverse demographic trends, and intakes into the other MBA programme.
- The discussions highlighted the high calibre, focus and motivation of applicants to the MBA in Strategic Management.
- The self-evaluation report and discussion with students showed very high rates of satisfaction with these programmes.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

- Discussions with staff and students indicated that the diversity of student recruitment into the MBA in Entrepreneurship and Technology Management created challenges in terms of common levels of knowledge and experience. In this case, there is an enhanced role for the use RPL/APEL to exempt some students from base level courses.
- The completion rate of the Master's thesis continues to be an issue. The adjustments to the credit rating of the thesis in overall assessment and the rebalancing of theoretical and case specific elements are partial solutions .
- The idea of replacing the thesis with an examination is a step towards with the 'taught Masters' model common elsewhere. However, to follow this model more closely, the number of taught courses would need to be raised to make up for the credit points allocated presently to the thesis, rather than simply inserting an exam to substitute for the thesis.

3. Pärnu College and Narva College

3.1 Wellness and Spa Service Design and Management (MA) Service Design Management (MA) Entrepreneurship and Project management (Prof. HE)

Study programme and study programme development

Standards

- ✓ The launch or development of the study programme is based on the Standard of Higher Education and other legislation, development plans, analyses (including labour market and feasibility analyses), and professional standards; and the best quality is being sought.
- ✓ The structure and content of modules and courses in a study programme support achievement of the objectives and designed learning outcomes of the study programme.
- ✓ Different parts of the study programme form a coherent whole.
- ✓ The study programme includes practical training, the content and scope of which are based on the planned learning outcomes of the study programme.
- ✓ The study programme development takes into account feedback from students, employers, alumni and other stakeholders.

Comments

The two MA programmes were originated in Pärnu and Narva Colleges, but are nevertheless awards of University of Tartu, and come under the nominal jurisdiction of the Faculty of Social Sciences. The colleges form part of the vital strategic infrastructure for the economic and social development of their respective regions, and these programmes were designed to help meet local development needs.

Strengths

- It is evident from the self-evaluation and in discussions with students and staff that the programmes are well targeted to meet local needs and fill niches (i.e. spa management, sports services, tourism services).
- The self-evaluation clarified that the MA in Wellness and Spa Service Design and Management has a strong unique selling proposition (USP) which has a wider international currency. This has great potential for further development.
- Given the low rate of business start-ups in the Narva region, as outlined in our discussions with staff and leaders, and the national government objective of creating an vigorous entrepreneurial cadre, the Prof HE in Entrepreneurship and Project Management delivered at Narva and Pärnu is a strategically vital programme for regional development.
- The self-evaluation report and our discussions with all groups showed that there is strong demand from students and employers for these programmes.
- The self-evaluation report indicates that the Prof HE in Entrepreneurship and Project Management has been modified and adapted over the years by the colleges to meet specific local needs.
- The self-evaluation report shows that the MA programmes have extensive international partnership links via ERASMUS and bi-lateral partnerships.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

- The self-evaluation report detailing of programme content indicates that the role of entrepreneurial subjects, in the Prof HE in Entrepreneurship and Project management programme, needs to be strengthened to further differentiate it from a standard 'business studies' programme.
- Discussions with students reported that there were some overlapping elements in the Prof HE in Entrepreneurship and Project Management, and that some content could be updated.
- Discussions with students indicated that a more flexible and imaginative approach to work experience elements on the MA Service Design Management is needed, fully taking into account RPL/APEL and developing placement choices.
- In discussion it was reported that owing to the narrow employer base in the region, there is a lack of employer engagement in developing the Prof HE in Entrepreneurship and Project Management at Narva.
- Discussions with staff and students, and the data in the self-evaluation report, indicated that the thesis element of the MA programmes continues to cause concern in terms of its lack of integration into the whole programme. An idea worth exploring would be to make thesis writing as an ongoing process throughout the whole study cycle. In addition to single courses targeted towards academic writing and research methods, a guided seminar from the beginning to the end of studies might help to keep more students on track.
- The programmes in Wellness and Spa Service Design and Management and Service Design Management need clearer objectives.

Resources

Standards

- ✓ Resources (teaching and learning environments, teaching materials, teaching aids and equipment, premises, financial resources) support the achievement of objectives in the study programme.
- ✓ There is a sufficient supply of textbooks and other teaching aids and they are available.
- ✓ Adequacy of resources is ensured for changing circumstances (change in student numbers, etc.).
- ✓ Resource development is sustainable.

Strengths

- In discussions with all groups there were comments on the general excellence of the state of the art facilities and the building fabric at the colleges, in particular at Narva, which has recently opened its new campus.
- The self-evaluation report and discussions with students indicated that there was full access to resources at University of Tartu.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

- Students and alumni from Pärnu College remarked on the poor ventilation in summer at the building stemming from no air conditioning system and windows which do not open.
- Discussions with students at Pärnu College also indicated the short library opening hours at the weekends and an insufficiency of computer lab spaces.

Teaching and learning

Standards

- ✓ The process of teaching and learning supports learners' individual and social development.
- ✓ The process of teaching and learning is flexible, takes into account the specifics of the form of study and facilitates the achievement of planned learning outcomes.
- ✓ Teaching methods and tools used in teaching are modern, effective and support the development of digital culture.
- ✓ Practical and theoretical studies are interconnected.
- ✓ The organisation and the content of practical training support achievement of planned learning outcomes and meet the needs of the stakeholders.
- ✓ The process of teaching and learning supports learning mobility.
- ✓ Assessment of learning outcomes is appropriate, transparent and objective, and supports the development of learners.

Strengths

- The self-evaluation report and discussions showed the development and use of a varied range of active learning techniques, including the entrepreneurship lab at Narva College.
- The self-evaluation report shows a high level of international cross-fertilisation of teaching and learning in the MA Wellness and Spa Service Design and Management programme.
- The self-evaluation report and discussions with staff and students on the MA in Wellness and Spa Service Design and Management programme showed a very strong practical emphasis with varied work placement experiences, role plays, simulations and inter-personal skills development.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

- Discussions with students indicated on some overly didactic approaches to teaching and learning in finance subjects.
- Discussions with students indicated poor quality of teaching in some management and accounting subjects which needs to be remedied via new staff or the development of existing staff.

Teaching staff

Standards

- ✓ There is teaching staff with adequate qualifications to achieve the objectives and planned learning outcomes of the study programme, and to ensure quality and sustainability of the teaching and learning.
- ✓ Overall student assessment on teaching skills of the teaching staff is positive.
- ✓ The teaching staff collaborate in the fields of teaching and research within the higher education institution and with partners outside of the higher education institution (practitioners in their fields, employers, and staff members at other Estonian or foreign higher education institutions).
- ✓ Recognised foreign and visiting members of the teaching staff and practitioners participate in teaching the study programme.
- ✓ The teaching staff is routinely engaged in professional and teaching-skills development.
- ✓ Assessment of the work by members of the teaching staff (including staff evaluation) takes into account the quality of their teaching as well as of their research, development and creative work, including development of their teaching skills, and their international mobility.

Strengths

- Discussions with staff and students revealed an exceptionally well-motivated group of core staff with a clear sense of their social and educational missions.
- The self-evaluation report and discussions with staff indicated staff development opportunities locally and at Tartu were varied, relevant, readily available, and used extensively by some.
- Discussions with staff indicated that because of the compact size of the staff communities in the colleges, rather informal staff development was taking place – *ad hoc* development teams to tackle specific problems, peer consultations etc.
- Discussion with programme leaders indicated that the use of short term teaching contracts in the colleges enables relatively swift replacement of inadequate staff.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

- The self-evaluation report and discussions with programme leaders indicated that it was sometimes difficult to get suitably qualified staff, particularly in Narva. Although the panel was made aware of the regional imbalances which makes it challenging to find qualified staff in the specific region, there are alternatives worth exploring – i.e incorporating more online learning courses and video lectures etc.
- Discussions indicated that here is a need for more formality and compulsion in the development of staff pedagogical and professional needs than at present.

- Discussions with students indicated that there needs to be greater checks on part-time staff to ensure they are suitably qualified staff and have up to date subject knowledge.
- Discussions with students and the self-evaluation report showed a very low number of international staff on two of the programmes. Given the apparent extensiveness of the ERASMUS network, this can and should be remedied.

Students

Standards

- ✓ Student places are filled with motivated and capable students.
- ✓ The dropout rate is low; the proportion of students graduating within the standard period of study is large.
- ✓ Students are motivated to learn and their satisfaction with the content, form and methods of their studies is high.
- ✓ As part of their studies, students attend other Estonian and/or foreign higher education institutions as visiting or international students.
- ✓ Employment rate of alumni is high.
- ✓ Alumni and their employers are pleased with their professional preparation and social competencies.

Strengths

- Discussions with students showed a strong appreciation for the flexible modes of study offered which fitted in well with their work and family commitments.
- Discussions with students and alumni indicated a high level of opportunities for foreign work placements and exchanges on the MA Wellness and Spa Service Design and Management.
- Students indicated that they valued the practical applications for the content of their study programmes in their work environments.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

- The self-evaluation report and discussions with staff and students indicate a high rate of non-completion in all programmes, mainly due to the failure to either engage initially with the thesis element, or the failure to complete it once started.

4. Institute of Education

4.1. Educational Management

As stated in the self-evaluation document in 2017 a new Master's curriculum will be launched on the basis of the three existing curricula – Educational Management, Early Years Educator, and Educational Sciences. Due to the merger of this programme, the panel decided to discard the division of strengths and weaknesses by five sub areas and combined all of the strengths as one list. Same approach is also applied to areas of improvement and recommendations.

The representatives of the programme were combined with those representing 'Cultural Management' during the panel interviews. However, there were relatively few representatives at the group interviews from the Educational Management programme.

Strengths

- The study programme has been popular over a number of years recruiting both practising teachers and newly qualified graduates.
- Resources are generally acceptable and support the achievement of objectives in the study programme, but see below (Areas of improvement) for one particular issue needing improvement.
- Teaching and learning are flexible.
- Staff is suitably qualified and experienced in relation to the study programme.
- Staff are regarded as generally approachable by students.
- Staff attend staff development activities and find these useful.
- Students seem well motivated, although relatively few students attended the interviews, so it was difficult for the panel to obtain a detailed, clear picture of students' views on the current study programme, or their attitudes to the new, proposed course.
- Student feedback is used in relation to course design and modification.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

- It was noted during the interview with students that there is a lack of suitable textbooks, particularly in English. The panel recommends the acquisition of new texts relevant to the proposed programme.
- Learning mobility is difficult to achieve as many students work full-time. This issue needs to be considered in relation to the proposed programme.

- Internationalisation in relation to the curriculum needs to be given more consideration in the proposed course and this should include more use of foreign staff.
- Evidence from the interviews suggests that staff need to gain more international perspectives.
- Staff feel the pressure to conduct more research, but indicated that they do not have sufficient time to do this.
- Programme managers have an important role in the School, but feel somewhat undervalued.
- There will need to be careful monitoring of students' attitudes towards and progress in the proposed course.

5. Cultural Management

5.1. Cultural Management (professional HE 80287) and MA in Cultural Management (2583)

Study programme and study programme development

Standards

- ✓ The launch or development of the study programme is based on the Standard of Higher Education and other legislation, development plans, analyses (including labour market and feasibility analyses), and professional standards; and the best quality is being sought.
- ✓ The structure and content of modules and courses in a study programme support achievement of the objectives and designed learning outcomes of the study programme.
- ✓ Different parts of the study programme form a coherent whole.
- ✓ The study programme includes practical training, the content and scope of which are based on the planned learning outcomes of the study programme.
- ✓ The study programme development takes into account feedback from students, employers, alumni and other stakeholders.

Comments

Representatives from both the Professional HE and the MA course were present in each of the different interview groups (programme managers, teaching staff, students, alumni) but the representatives of each of the two courses were mixed together at interview.

The following commendations and recommendations are applicable to both of the Cultural Management study programmes if not stated otherwise.

Strengths

- The MA programme is an innovative and interesting study programme, which appears to be popular, based on comments made during interview and from evidence seen in the self-evaluation report.
- Based on interviews with students and alumni there is a high degree of satisfaction with the programmes.
- Employers indicated during interviews that they are happy with the knowledge component of the programmes and the skill set of graduates.
- Alumni and employers indicated during interviews that the programmes have a very good reputation.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

- Although the programme has been developed in the recent five years, it is still necessary to ensure that content of professional HE programme is relevant and regularly updated, as some of the course materials and cases used in the seminars – as brought up by the students – were quite old and outdated.

Resources

Standards

- ✓ Resources (teaching and learning environments, teaching materials, teaching aids and equipment, premises, financial resources) support the achievement of objectives in the study programme.
- ✓ There is a sufficient supply of textbooks and other teaching aids and they are available.
- ✓ Adequacy of resources is ensured for changing circumstances (change in student numbers, etc.).
- ✓ Resource development is sustainable.

Comments

During interviews with academic staff, the panel were informed that resources for delivery of the programme were adequate.

Strengths

- During interviews the panel were assured that the SIS works well for both of the study programmes.
- Also there are good e-learning materials and equipment, especially in the professional HE programme, where around 80% of the subjects are at least partly based on e-learning or have electronic support.
- Moodle is used regularly to support learning processes.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

- As the size of student groups in Viljandi is rather large, there is a need for large auditoriums. As the panel was informed currently this situation is covered in cooperation with various partner organisations, yet these solution might not be sustainable in the longer future. Therefore the panel encourages the College to seek additional and permanent solutions to satisfy the need for larger auditoriums.

Teaching and learning

Standards

- ✓ The process of teaching and learning supports learners' individual and social development.
- ✓ The process of teaching and learning is flexible, takes into account the

- specifics of the form of study and facilitates the achievement of planned learning outcomes.
- ✓ Teaching methods and tools used in teaching are modern, effective and support the development of digital culture.
 - ✓ Practical and theoretical studies are interconnected.
 - ✓ The organisation and the content of practical training support achievement of planned learning outcomes and meet the needs of the stakeholders.
 - ✓ The process of teaching and learning supports learning mobility.
 - ✓ Assessment of learning outcomes is appropriate, transparent and objective, and supports the development of learners.

Strengths

- A variety of appropriate teaching methods is used: seminars, group work, special projects etc.
- The self-evaluation document and the interviews indicated that the programmes have flexible learning. Furthermore in the Master's programme there is an opportunity to use an exam instead of thesis, which as the panel was informed, is helping to prevent dropping out in the final phase of studies.
- The interviews with students suggest that internships are working well and practical and theoretical studies are interconnected.
- A varied, but appropriate assessment regime is used.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

- More could be done in the area of student mobility. As understood from the additional comments from the University, the panel was later made aware that program manager and Erasmus coordinator have recently made an action plan for fostering students mobility. The panel acknowledges and welcomes this approach.
- The programmes have been aimed, to date, largely at Estonian students with a focus on Estonian culture. In future, more consideration will need to be given to greater internationalisation of teaching and learning.

Teaching staff

Standards

- ✓ There is teaching staff with adequate qualifications to achieve the objectives and planned learning outcomes of the study programme, and to ensure quality and sustainability of the teaching and learning.
- ✓ Overall student assessment on teaching skills of the teaching staff is positive.
- ✓ The teaching staff collaborate in the fields of teaching and research within the higher education institution and with partners outside of the higher education institution (practitioners in their fields, employers, and staff members at other Estonian or foreign higher education institutions).
- ✓ Recognised foreign and visiting members of the teaching staff and

- practitioners participate in teaching the study programme.
- ✓ The teaching staff is routinely engaged in professional and teaching-skills development.
 - ✓ Assessment of the work by members of the teaching staff (including staff evaluation) takes into account the quality of their teaching as well as of their research, development and creative work, including development of their teaching skills, and their international mobility.

Comments

Teaching of the study programmes is carried out by a mixture of those with formal teaching qualifications, who have a background in University teaching, and a significant number of practitioners.

Strengths

- Most of the teaching staff are practitioners who play a key role in the delivery of the programmes. These practitioners are, generally, very highly regarded by students.
- Teachers are regarded by students as very approachable.
- Annual appraisals take place and are regarded by staff as an important part of the evaluation of their work, and they feel required to respond to comments made by their line-manager, following the evaluation process.
- Feedback from students is used in the evaluation of a teacher's performance. In extreme cases, this could result in a refusal to renew the contract of a poorly performing teacher.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

- Teaching staff, especially in the MA programme, feel the pressure to do more research. The management needs to carefully consider the balance between research and teaching in terms of a staff member's career progression.
- Programme managers feel undervalued. The management of both programmes needs to ensure that programme managers are given an adequate level of support in terms of time and appropriate financial reward.
- A number of staff who are practitioners do not have formal teaching qualifications. Incentives should be provided to encourage such staff to gain a teaching qualification. The panel is aware that practitioners are offered the possibility to take part in pedagogical in-service training, yet as already mentioned these courses tend to be on a voluntary basis. Unless the practitioner has a strong motive to improve his or her teaching skills, there seemed to be no additional incentives for the practitioner to engage in the courses offered.
- In relation to comparable programmes in other countries, the programme management might reconsider whether the share of teaching staff having a doctoral degree in the MA programme is sufficient to make research-related learning outcomes achievable and whether their capacities of supervision are

adequate, especially when students see the large amount of independent work as challenging.

Students

Standards

- ✓ Student places are filled with motivated and capable students.
- ✓ The dropout rate is low; the proportion of students graduating within the standard period of study is large.
- ✓ Students are motivated to learn and their satisfaction with the content, form and methods of their studies is high.
- ✓ As part of their studies, students attend other Estonian and/or foreign higher education institutions as visiting or international students.
- ✓ Employment rate of alumni is high.
- ✓ Alumni and their employers are pleased with their professional preparation and social competencies.

Strengths

- Competition for places on both the Prof HE and Master's programme is high.
- Based on interviews and the self-evaluation document, students admitted to the programmes are particularly able.
- Based on interviews, students appear highly motivated.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

- Students suggested that the programmes need to have a greater degree of internationalisation.
- Students suggested that more of the courses within the programmes should be delivered in English.

ANNEXES

Annex 1. Student numbers and data in Tallinn University of Technology Business and Administration SPG

No	Title of a study programme	Study programme code	Study (PHE, BA, MA)	The year when the study programme was launched	Responsible department / division	Academic year	2015/2016	2014/2015	2013/2014	2012/2013	2011/2012	2010/2011
1	Small Business Management	SDVR	PHE	2004	Kuressaare College of TUT	No of students	64	61	50	49	53	54
						No of admission	23	25	15	9	6	5
						No of drop-outs		15	10	7	6	2
						No of graduation		6	4	7	9	5
2	Accounting and Business Management	BDMR	PHE	2002	Tallinn College of TUT	No of students	241	302	345	413	440	434
						No of admission	86	26	26	66	85	65
						No of drop-outs		112	40	59	29	40
						No of graduation		49	44	47	61	52
3	Office Administration	HAKB	BA	2002	Faculty of Social Sciences	No of students	105	108	105	103	98	101
						No of admission	20	17	20	17	14	16
						No of drop-outs		18	7	9	5	7
						No of graduation		14	7	13	12	15

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4	Public Administration and Governance	HAAB	BA	2002	Faculty of Social Sciences	No of students	172	217	273	305	368	365
						No of admission	43	20	71	55	64	75
						No of drop-outs		46	30	57	61	23
						No of graduation		45	48	49	56	44
5	Public Administration.	HAAM	MA	2002	Faculty of Social Sciences	No of students	60	71	67	55	66	65
						No of admission	20	16	30	15	16	12
						No of drop-outs		9	9	14	17	3
						No of graduation		21	4	5	9	10
6	Technology Governance	HAGM	MA	2009	Faculty of Social Sciences	No of students	55	48	44	49	34	26
						No of admission	15	17	9	20	8	16
						No of drop-outs		5	3	7	0	2
						No of graduation		3	11	8	6	3
7	Personnel and Development	HAPM	MA	2010	Faculty of Social Sciences	No of students	287	255	189	149	64	
						No of admission	86	90	65	85	64	
						No of drop-outs		19	13	13	4	
						No of graduation		36	13	9		
8	Work and Organizational Psychology	HVWM	MA	2011	Faculty of Social Sciences	No of students	22	21	17	6		
						No of admission	9	6	10	8		
						No of drop-outs		3	1	2		

						No of graduation		5	1			
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No	Title of a study programme	Study programme code	Study (PHE, BA, MA)	The year when the study programme was launched	Responsible department / division	Academic year	2015/2016	2014/2015	2013/2014	2012/2013	2011/2012	2010/2011
9	Business	TABB	BA	2002	School of Economics and Business Administration of TUT	No of students	412	563	658	755	858	867
						No of admission	90	108	94	138	174	194
						No of drop-outs		222	108	111	188	73
						No of graduation		92	94	94	117	128
10	International Business Administration	TVTB	BA	2003	School of Economics and Business Administration of TUT	No of students	352	296	259	197	127	89
						No of admission	123	100	105	108	63	54
						No of drop-outs		35	54	40	24	7
						No of graduation		43	30	6	9	24
11	International Business Administration	TVTM	MA	2003	School of Economics and Business Administration of	No of students	64	66	67	71	51	27
						No of admission	36	32	23	31	29	14
						No of drop-outs		19	16	9	11	2

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					TUT	No of graduation		26	16	18	13	5
12	Applied Economics	TAAB	BA	2002	School of Economics and Business Administration of TUT	No of students	150	173	192	209	246	247
						No of admission	59	34	59	51	63	59
						No of drop-outs		50	30	21	30	15
						No of graduation		34	30	40	55	49

No	Title of a study programme	Study programme code	Study (PHE, BA, MA)	The year when the study programme was launched	Responsible department / division	Academic year	2015/2016	2014/2015	2013/2014	2012/2013	2011/2012	2010/2011
13	Applied Economics	TAAM	MA	2002	School of Economics and Business Administration of TUT	No of students	50	57	50	58	69	75
						No of admission	24	24	14	20	21	24
						No of drop-outs		18	7	12	21	14
						No of graduation		17	7	10	11	15
14	Business Administration	TAKM	MA	2002	School of Economics and Business Administration of TUT	No of students	91	167	174	222	258	268
						No of admission	30	35	21	52	45	70
						No of drop-outs		82	36	44	107	36
						No of graduation		26	18	29	28	31

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15	Finance and Accounting	TARM	MA	2002	School of Economics and Business Administration of TUT	No of students	206	311	321	326	351	323
						No of admission	63	63	73	80	98	90
						No of drop-outs		109	47	39	79	22
						No of graduation		65	47	33	51	44
16	Management and Marketing	TATM	MA	2002	School of Economics and Business Administration of TUT	No of students	191	210	217	226	237	228
						No of admission	83	63	63	69	51	68
						No of drop-outs		55	36	33	52	16
						No of graduation		52	38	41	43	27

**Annex 2. Student numbers and data in University of Tartu
Business and Administration SPG**

Study program	Year of opening	Institute	No of students				
			2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Culture Management (Prof. HE)	2002	Viljandi Culture Academy	135	130	119	113	106
Entrepreneurship and Project Management (Prof. HE)	2002	Pärnu College Narva College	324	340	301	291	280
Economics and Business Administration (BA)	2002	School of Economics and Business Administration (until 2013 also Pärnu College)	462	431	415	323	278
Business Administration (BA)	2007	School of Economics and Business Administration	17	36	49	60	64
Entrepreneurship and Technology Management (MBA)	2003	School of Economics and Business Administration	130	120	130	125	120
Business Administration (MBA)	2004	School of Economics and Business Administration	310	271	220	167	140
Strategic Management (MBA)	2004	School of Economics and Business Administration	50	56	59	61	69
Service Design and Management (MBA)	2011	Pärnu College and School of Economics and Business Administration	16	36	53	54	64
Economics and Business Administration (MA)	2002	School of Economics and Business Administration	160	165	139	116	101
Cultural Management (MA)	2002	Institute of Cultural Research and Arts	42	44	24	11	28
Educational Management (MA)	2006	Institute of Education	94	106	105	95	88
Wellness and Spa Service Design and Management (MA)	2009	Pärnu College	23	38	38	26	12

Study programme	No of graduates					No of drop-outs					Av. dropout rate 2011-2015, (%)
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	
Culture Management (Prof.HE)	37	14	18	22	12	19	20	21	16	18	15.6
Entrepreneurship and Project Management (Prof.HE)	25	29	33	40	38	63	81	96	74	69	25.0
Economics and Business Administration (BA)	122	93	86	69	74	100	83	76	96	53	21.6
Business Administration (BA)	-	-	-	10	15	1	1	6	4	6	7.4
Entrepreneurship and Technology Management (MBA)	10	20	12	13	21	14	25	20	22	13	15.1
Business Administration (MBA)	49	48	41	34	25	28	35	44	45	28	17.8
Strategic Management (MBA)	2	9	6	6	3	9	9	8	11	6	14.9
Service Design and Management (MBA)	-	-	1	6	7	-	-	2	8	7	5.9
Economics and Business Administration (MA)	43	27	36	43	37	19	25	26	21	16	15.9
Cultural Management (MA)	9	13	14	10	6	3	5	7	6	2	21.9
Educational Management (MA)	3	8	17	16	24	12	9	11	14	6	10.6
Wellness and Spa Service Design and Management (MA)	4	3	4	15	12	2	2	5	7	6	20.8

