



STUDIJŲ KOKYBĖS VERTINIMO CENTRAS

Kazimieras Simonavičius universiteto  
**STUDIJŲ PROGRAMOS *MADOS INDUSTRIJA* (valstybinis kodas  
- 612P90007)  
VERTINIMO IŠVADOS**

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**EVALUATION REPORT  
OF *FASHION INDUSTRY* (state code - 612P90007)  
STUDY PROGRAMME  
at Kazimieras Simonavičius University**

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## DUOMENYS APIE ĮVERTINTĄ PROGRAMĄ

Studijų programos pavadinimas	<i>Mados industrija</i>
Valstybinis kodas	612P90007
Studijų sritis	Socialiniai mokslai
Studijų kryptis	Komunikacija
Studijų programos rūšis	Universitetinės studijos
Studijų pakopa	Pirmoji
Studijų forma (trukmė metais)	Nuolatinė (3.5), iššęstinė (5)
Studijų programos apimtis kreditais	210
Suteikiamas laipsnis ir (ar) profesinė kvalifikacija	Komunikacijos bakalauras
Studijų programos įregistravimo data	2013-09-01

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## INFORMATION ON EVALUATED STUDY PROGRAMME

Title of the study programme	<i>Fashion Industry</i>
State code	612P90007
Study area	Social Sciences
Study field	Communication
Type of the study programme	University studies
Study cycle	First
Study mode (length in years)	Full-time (3.5), part-time (5)
Volume of the study programme in credits	210
Degree and (or) professional qualifications awarded	Bachelor of Communication
Date of registration of the study programme	1 <sup>st</sup> September, 2013

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## I. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. Background of the evaluation process

The evaluation of on-going study programmes is based on the **Methodology for evaluation of Higher Education study programmes**, approved by Order No 1-01-162 of 20 December 2010 of the Director of the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education (hereafter – SKVC).

The evaluation is intended to help higher education institutions to constantly improve their study programmes and to inform the public about the quality of studies.

The evaluation process consists of the main following stages: 1) *self-evaluation and self-evaluation report prepared by Higher Education Institution (hereafter – HEI)*; 2) *visit of the review team at the higher education institution*; 3) *production of the evaluation report by the review team and its publication*; 4) *follow-up activities*.

On the basis of external evaluation report of the study programme SKVC takes a decision to accredit study programme either for 6 years or for 3 years. If the programme evaluation is negative such a programme is not accredited.

The programme is **accredited for 6 years** if all evaluation areas are evaluated as “very good” (4 points) or “good” (3 points).

The programme is **accredited for 3 years** if none of the areas was evaluated as “unsatisfactory” (1 point) and at least one evaluation area was evaluated as “satisfactory” (2 points).

The programme is **not accredited** if at least one of evaluation areas was evaluated as “unsatisfactory” (1 point).

### 1.2. General

The Application documentation submitted by the HEI follows the outline recommended by the SKVC. Along with the self-evaluation report and annexes, the following additional documents have been provided by the HEI before, during and/or after the site-visit:

<i>No.</i>	<i>Name of the document</i>
1	2014/2015 Spring semester exams session statistics
2	Scientific publications of professors and doctors in Fashion Industry study programme (2010 – 2015)
3	Fashion Industry full-time and part-time teaching staff
4	Fashion Industry study programme students sent to partner institutions by mobility programs in 2012 – 2015
5	Fashion industry participants of international mobility programs in 2012-2015
6	Fashion industry study plan per semester

### 1.3. Background of the HEI/Faculty/Study field/ Additional information

Kazimieras Simonavičius University (hereafter KSU) is a non-state university established in 2003. In 2012 the university was reorganized: its legal form was changed, new managers were appointed and new study programmes were developed. Currently the university has three faculties/institutes: Law, the Business School, and the Creative Society and Economy Institute (hereafter CSEI). CSEI has the following study programmes accredited: five programmes of the first cycle – Creative and Cultural Industries, Fashion Industry, Political Communication and Journalism, Entertainment and Tourism Industries, Business Sociology, and two second cycle

programmes – Creative Economy and Integrated Creative Communication. The University has 573 students (April 2015).

The Fashion Industry (hereafter FI) programme that is evaluated in this report was first accredited in 2013 and has 73 full-time students and 20 part-time students. There are no graduates yet.

#### **1.4. The Review Team**

The review team was completed according *Description of experts' recruitment*, approved by order No. 1-01-151 of Acting Director of the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education. The Review Visit to HEI was conducted by the team on *28th October, 2015*.

1. **Prof. Dr. Peter Neijens (team leader)**, *Professor of Persuasive Communication, Department of Communication, The Amsterdam School of Communication Research, ASCoR, University of Amsterdam, Netherlands.*
2. **Dr. Kathleen Virginia Donnelly**, *Senior Lecturer, Birmingham City Business School and School of Media, Birmingham City University, United Kingdom.*
3. **Dr. Viktors Freibergs**, *Head of Communication Studies Department, University of Latvia, Latvia.*
4. **Dr. Tim Smits**, *Lecturer and researcher, KU Leuven, Institute for Media Studies, Belgium.*
5. **Mr. Mindaugas Grajauskas**, *Consultant and manager of gamified products, OVC Consulting, Lithuania.*
6. **Mr. Giedrius Žilinskas**, *graduate of Groningen university study programme International Business and Management, Lithuania.*

**Evaluation coordinator – Ms. Dovilė Stonkutė.**

## **II. PROGRAMME ANALYSIS**

### **2.1. Programme aims and learning outcomes**

Fashion Industry (hereafter FI) is a new programme at KSU that started in September 2013, after accreditation in January 2013. This FI programme is not only unique for the Lithuanian Communication studies field, but it also is unique in a much larger perspective given that only few Higher Education Institutions exist that academically focus on Fashion Industry.

The Self-Evaluation Report (hereafter SER) defines the fashion industry as pertaining to four different levels: the production of materials, fashion goods, retail trade, and publicity/communication. Given that the programme belongs to a Communication study field but that the programme covers more than just the last level in this four-levelled field, the Review Team (hereafter RT) first had difficulty in determining the exact positioning of this programme. It could be interesting to be more transparent with regard to the fact that the programme (and the staff) is predominantly focused on communication and business perspectives as applicable to the domain of fashion industry. For instance, in the meeting with the staff responsible for the SER, the RT learned that the basic idea of the programme still is to train communication specialists especially for the fashion industry and that these specialists should also know how to manage fashion related projects, how marketing communication works etc. This is a much more specific view on the programme than what the more general objectives in the SER convey.

The key objective of the FI programme is: “to develop high-level expert fashion industries professionals who are able to take advantage of acquired creativity, building a well-educated society consuming creative-production products”. This key objective is further specified. For instance, it is said that the programme aims to provide “systematic methodological knowledge” to enable students to “start economic activity in the market”. Furthermore, students will acquire a lot of knowledge that is presented in the SER through a number of rather abstract, timely, but at the same time vague concepts. These more specific objects are thus listed, but lack the amount of specificity to really grasp the essence of this programme. The programme aims and learning outcomes are publicly accessible.

The SER further specifies the key objective and the additional aims in five programme objectives (see SER p. 8 & 9 for a full description): providing knowledge, developing practical skills pertaining to the fashion industry, providing the capacity to analyse trends, develop a worldview based on sustainable development, providing systematic methodological knowledge. Additionally, professionals will have to comply with three requirements (SER, p.9): use modern competencies, understand the industry, and develop integrated communication skills. On page 9 and 10 of the SER (Table 3), these objectives and requirements are then translated into learning outcomes and they are matched with modules covering these outcomes. The SER also details the relationships between the learning outcomes of the programme, the learning outcomes of each study subject (‘results of the study subject’), and assessment of the students in each subject (Annex 1). For some of the matches between subjects and learning outcomes, the RT has the opinion that the link is not really clear and straightforward. For instance, for Objective 4, Learning Outcome 1 (“able to communicate effectively and professionally in multicultural environments”), the list of relevant subjects includes two language courses and a Communication Psychology course that are well-placed here, but also courses titled “Indication of Creative Lifestyle” and “Emotional Marketing”.

The Review Team believes that the objectives of the programme are rather ambitious with a diverse set of aims being included: systematic methodological knowledge combined with an in-depth insight in the structure and structural changes of the fashion industry, pertaining to economic, cultural and technological environments, etc. At the same time, this myriad of aims seems to obscure the true core of the programme such that external observers (or prospective students, or prospective employers of the programme’s alumni) might be confused as to what the core of the programme’s contribution is to the academic and professional development of the students. The RT therefore advises to align the key objective more to the actual study fields that are most prominent in the programme. Next to highlighting the core aims of the programme, the RT also believes that the rest of the objectives that are listed in the SER most probably make sense in light of the current perspective of the management on the Fashion Industry in Lithuania and Europe, but that the general and abstract level at which these objectives are formulated makes it rather problematic, if not impossible, to judge to what extent the programme and the graduates fulfil these objectives.

The RT has the opinion that the programme aims and learning outcomes are based on the academic and professional requirements, public needs and the needs of the labour market. The needs of the labour market were shown through several studies and discussions with stakeholders. Moreover, at the onset of the programme, the staff based its decision to start up the programme on an analysis of the market and there are strong ties between some of the staff and the fashion industry. A prior market analysis among prospective students was not carried out, but given that the programme seems to attract a decent amount of students each year, it shows that there is a market for this programme among prospective students. Also, during the site visit, students and stakeholders expressed their appreciation of the goals of the programme and

teachers showed to be very much involved with the specific industry concerned in this programme.

The RT has the opinion that learning outcomes, content and the qualifications offered are compatible with each other. Given that the programme does not have graduates yet, it remains difficult to assess the mapping between what is offered in this programme and the actual needs of the industry. Given the specific focus, the FI's programme unique positioning and the size and growth of the fashion industry, the RT believes that such a match between the programme's alumni and the industry should certainly exist. At the same time, students appeared to be aware of the fact that their specific knowledge could also be used in other disciplines (e.g., fashion journalism).

The RT suggests to define the learning outcomes more *specific* and *measurable* and to relate the learning outcomes of the programme and the intended results of the study subjects more clearly and directly. That would make it possible that they really guide the development and evaluation of the programme. At the same time, in further evaluating the programme internally and communicating about the programme, the RT has the opinion that an international comparative perspective might be wise. One of the planned improvements (SER, p.12) was to ensure the uniqueness of the programme. While that can be a sustainable strategy at the national level, it is more dubious at the international level given that academic research and education pertains to a discipline that due to a more general embedding with other academics guarantees some degree of reflection and peer evaluation. Comparing oneself with other institutions furthers the understanding of oneself and others about what the programme aims for. Also with respect to enhancing international contacts for teacher and student mobility, a clear description of the main focus of the programme can be of interest.

## **2.2. Curriculum design**

The curriculum design meets the legal requirements. The scope of the programme is 210 ECTS and takes 3.5 years (7 semesters) for full-time students and 5 years for part-time students. The programme starts with fundamental courses of general university subjects, communication science subjects, later moving to the particular fashion industry subjects. During the studies, student knowledge and expertise is expanded with additional knowledge and skills that provide practical expertise and train future undergraduates for work in a professional environment.

The study subjects are spread evenly. The scope of the study subjects varies from 3, 4, 5, 6, 9, 12, 15 to 21 ECTS which suggest a rather high level of precision. It is not clear to the RT why the university chose for this high variety. The descriptions of the study subjects and the explicitly stated relationships between learning outcomes of the programme and the 'intended results' (learning outcomes) of the study subjects aim to prevent overlap between study subjects and to guarantee that the combination of study subjects cover the programme aims. Also, student evaluations, teacher meetings and the Study Programme Committee examine the consistency of the programme. Some students mentioned during the site visit that they experienced overlap between the courses, but that they believed that this overlap sometimes is functional rather than troublesome. The formal and informal meetings between the teachers (in a KSU context, but also on campuses of other universities – due to the fact that many are part-time at KSU) are said to prevent non-functional overlap.

The RT concludes that the content of the subjects and/or modules is consistent with the type and level of the studies and are appropriate for the achievement of the learning outcomes. The curriculum of the programme covers theory and research methods and combines literature study with practical work, and an extensive thesis (21 ECTS). The RT also believes that the description

of the study subjects show that the methods of the subjects are appropriate for the achievement of the intended learning outcomes. In the programme a wide variety of methods are applied, including literature study, case studies, discussion, individual consultations, and (individual and group) assignments.

At the same time there is enough attention devoted to both the academic underpinnings of the programme aims (i.e., the aims as they are now apparent for the RT) and a focus on the specifics of the fashion industry. Students have a number of courses that cover basic principles and insights in communication, marketing communication, languages, and business studies. They also have academic and more practical courses on fashion industry. Students also explicitly expressed their appreciation for some of these fashion-related courses such as Fashion History and Fashion Portfolio Management. This shows that the programme succeeds in combining academic education and a very specific focus. At the same time, the RT concludes that there is actually very little academic research available on the topic of fashion (despite the books written by the staff itself) such that the typical evidence-based or research-based nature of academic education is compromised for these more specific courses. The RT certainly suggests to include more references to the few international fashion/communication academic journals that exist (and it urges the staff to be more involved in publications in these journals, cf. *infra*). In the meeting with the teachers, the same tension between empirical academics and academic opinions emerged, further demonstrating the RT's conclusion. Still, it is laudable that the staff tries to tie these two strands together in a programme that reflects this tension rather than suffering from that same tension.

The first wave of students just began to think about their thesis, which can be seen as the keystone of a programme. The staff will thus have to closely monitor this thesis process in the upcoming period such as to evaluate whether students are indeed capable of demonstrating the learning objectives attached to a thesis and, conversely, whether the programme fulfils the requirements such that students can actually be expected to demonstrate these competencies. The RT believes that there might be a lack of methodological and scientific reflection (cf. *infra*) in the programme that could show itself in said theses, but time will tell.

The RT is of the opinion that the scope of the programme is sufficient to ensure the learning outcomes. Compared to some of the other KSU programmes, the FI programme also benefits from being very specific such that the integration of different approaches seems to be much more straightforward. Students also seemed to confirm this observation because even for very general subject courses, the focus was still on its applicability for the fashion context. They also pointed out that while they were unsure at the beginning of the programme what it would exactly lead up to, the programme felt more and more integrated as they advanced. While the feelings of the first-year students seem to tap into a universal phenomenon (that many freshman are unsure about the objectives or learning outcomes of their programme), the RT does want to stress that a more specific version of the objectives could help students in feeling more aligned with the programme. For instance, one could be more specific from the beginning about the learning outcomes and in each course one could try to start with explaining how the course contributes to those outcomes.

The reading lists of the various study subjects are adequate and up-to-date. The literature that is prescribed to the students combines classic texts with recent books and articles. The RT, therefore, is of the opinion that the content of the programme reflects the latest achievements in science and art. The mandatory literature is made available through the Moodle system. The RT understands from the site visit discussions that it is not always the intention that the students read the books mentioned under the heading 'mandatory literature' from cover to cover, but that they only need to read selected chapters. This was not clear from Annex 1 of the SER ('Description of



Study Subjects’). Moreover, some courses seem to duplicate the mandatory materials from other courses, with the same books thus occurring in different syllabi. At the same time, when asked about these books, students did not remember having seen these books. Students also mentioned that they actually do not like to read the books physically and preferred to have online materials. This was also evidenced in the library with some of the mandatory books still being available in impeccable condition (which suggests that students do not study them intensively).

Internships are part of the programme, but the management is not satisfied with the current place of the internship in the programme. The management considers to change the programme in order to have more but shorter internships. The RT is not yet convinced of the desirability of this intention as a serious and academic internship is in general better guaranteed in longer internships. Also, the social partners were not in favour of such a practice with shorter internships. So, the RT suggests to keep the longer internships as they are now scheduled.

A real concern for the RT is the relative absence of research methods subjects in this academic programme. Research training is almost non-existent. This is true both for the more passive version of research training, where one is trained in critically evaluating research and the more active version where one is trained to do actual research. The first, passive, type is critical because it will train students to deal with, for instance, market analyses that will inspire their future professional decisions. If one is not properly trained in discerning good research from bad research or appropriate conclusions from inappropriate ones, then the students are not capable of making research-based decisions. The absence of the second, more active, version of research training is a problem, also for the final thesis, as the final thesis must demonstrate the ability to choose the right data collection methods and the ability to properly analyse the collected material. When the RT asked the students during the site visit what they believed they should do for their thesis in terms of actual research to confirm hypotheses or test research questions, they also were very vague in what they believed were necessary competences. Students of the FI programme did not see the lack of research methods as problematic but the RT believes that this is more due to the students’ biased expectations about the thesis (which they seemed to conceive more as an extended literature review paper mixed with opinions). Based on these observations, the RT advises the management to consider adding more research subjects to the programme.

### ***2.3. Teaching staff***

The study programme is provided by competent staff meeting legal requirements. Additional information provided to the RT during the site visit showed that the programme is taught by 4 full-time teachers and 25 part-time teachers. Many teachers have a doctorate degree and there is a strong motivation to level-up to PhD for those who did not yet achieve that. Since KSU does not (yet) have third-cycle education this implies collaboration with other (often international) universities. The full-time teachers teach 98 ECTS (33%) and the part-time teachers 199 ECTS (67%) of the credits of the bachelor’s programme. This shows that the number of teachers is adequate to ensure learning outcomes.

Also, the qualifications of the teaching staff are adequate to ensure learning outcomes. The university has brought together a competent team of professionals and researchers. The group of teachers reflects the interdisciplinary and intersectorial nature of the programme. The staff composition encompasses both theoretical and practical expertise and includes all major topics of the programme. The university mentioned in the SER that the small number of full-time faculty is one of the weaknesses in the programme and that they want to take action to improve the working conditions. Since the programme has only started in 2012, teaching staff turnover has not been an issue for the adequate provision of the programme.

KSU as a private university has little opportunities to create good research conditions for the teachers. The teaching staff is highly motivated to conduct research. A substantial number of teachers is also affiliated to other universities where they have research opportunities. Documents provided to the evaluation team showed that many teachers published on topics pertaining to the KSU bachelor programmes and some of these are specific to the fashion industries. Some publications are in English, most publications are in Lithuanian. Given that only a minority of publications specifically pertain to fashion industry and that such publications are typically more interpretative (e.g., books) rather than research-based, the RT would like to encourage the KSU staff to try to move to the international forefront of research output on fashion. Given its rather unique position with a programme devoted to the topic, and given that there are a few academic journals directly related to fashion (in the field of management, marketing, and communication), this should be a logical next objective for the staff.

The teachers consider themselves really internationally oriented, through Erasmus and international research projects. Many of them also have a teaching position at another university and others are in business as well and this is often international business. The SER and additional documents provided to the RT during the site visit showed that in 2014/2015 there were 61 incoming teachers and 29 outgoing teachers for the KSU programmes. Incoming teachers came from Poland, the UK, Switzerland, Croatia, Norway, Germany, Turkey, Latvia, Spain and Denmark. The outgoing teachers went to Denmark, Poland, Germany, Turkey, France, Italy and Portugal, amongst others. However, students from the FI programme said they wanted to have more guest lectures, so the RT believes that at least a substantial part of these visiting scholars did not teach specifically on fashion-related topics. The teachers themselves seemed to confirm this observation that the mobility per programme (outgoing and incoming) could be increased.

The teachers meet often. Formally they do so in the programme management committee (every 6 to 8 weeks), although teachers expressed that organising such formal meetings can be a hassle due to the fact that most teachers are only part-time affiliated to KSU. But teachers also meet informally.

To ensure the quality of education, the University prepared – amongst others – the management motivation system. The University is creating a Human Resource Development System and a Human Resource Training Programme. The staff said that they were satisfied with the conditions for professional development. They also considered their workload satisfactory.

#### ***2.4. Facilities and learning resources***

Lectures of the FI programme are held on the premises of KSU. These premises include classrooms, study facilities, a library, online information resources, computer equipment, and internet access.

Classrooms, computer facilities, software and media equipment of KSU and the partners are nearly sufficient both in their size and quality. Some students complained that the facilities to document (e.g. street interviews or observations they want to film) are not available such that they resort to using their smartphones and other own devices.

The library is small and not sufficient for the number of students in the programme. The number of books in the library is limited. The RT did not find all the books that are listed as mandatory materials. Students also say to go to other libraries in Vilnius to look up books. There is electronic access to basic scientific databases, but they are not fully exploited in the study process (e.g., RT hardly saw any of such references in the student work that was available for the RT). Students also confess they lack the drive to consult physical resources in the library but it is

unclear whether this is due to their motivation or rather the limited availability of the resources (both the books and a place to study or discuss them). The remote access to the online resources is not available to students, although some students said that they got permission for such access. In any case, such access should be granted to all students to further inspire a research-based approach where students are actively looking for articles (rather than using the books and other resources that are made available to them by the teachers). The management informed RT that they are working on a VPN connection to solve that accessibility issue.

Infrastructure for group work is not sufficient. Students said that they have to meet in their homes for their group assignment work. The SER also mentions that in relation to the growing number of students it is necessary to extend the number of well-equipped auditoriums, classrooms, laboratories and team-work spaces. Students complained about the weak Wifi though some claimed this was a “last-year’s issue” that got solved by now.

The SER, and also the teachers during the site visit, expressed a strong need for ‘study digitization’: advanced technology for teaching. Facilities for disabled students are lacking. Facilities specific for the FI programme are not available or reserved. One can think of having preferential rooms for these students or the projects they are working on.

The programme clearly has an applied perspective with an academic approach to the applied field of the fashion industry. Still, with regard to the embedding of this practice component in the facilities, this is not really visible. There is no dedicated room for students to work on practice related projects. Students said that much of their embedded practice (as embedded in their typical course modules) involves observations and what would be described as field work and to do so, they mostly use their own devices (smartphones, laptops, ...) to record and adapt the materials they gather. Of course, there also is a proper practice module incorporated in the programme. Here, the RT believes that the programme has good connections with the applied field, but given that the programme is still young, the precise facilitation of this practice should be further developed and evaluated.

The RT advises the management to invest in facilities and learning resources, in particular the library, facilities for audio-visual arts, infrastructure for group work, advanced technology for teaching and facilities for disabled students.

### ***2.5. Study process and students’ performance assessment***

The admission requirements are well-specified. The admission to the FI programme is carried out in two ways: through the LAMA BPO general admission system and through the direct admission to the university. All students above the minimum LAMA mark are admitted. All direct applicants had to take part in an interview with the Admission Committee. The RT notes that the number of admitted students is steady, with only the absence of part-time students for the current academic year being remarkable. The SER does mention reasons for dropout (lack of motivation, academic failure, financial reasons, and work abroad), but this analysis pertains to the whole KSU rather than for FI specifically. The FI students also gave their interpretation of dropout that they witnessed along the years and they mainly attribute it to lack of motivation. Currently there are 98 students in the programme. Also students, teachers and management mentioned during the site visit that they wanted to grow the university. For a specific programme such as the FI programme a substantial growth beyond the current enrolment numbers might not be feasible or advisable, but a larger group of students in the three bachelor programmes pertaining to the more general group of creative industries is indeed needed to make for a more sustainable department. The RT realises that the factors mentioned are often beyond the control of the university.

The university has implemented professional quality assurance policies and procedures, including student feedback through regularly held surveys. Students indicated that in addition to the formal feedback procedures, teachers ask 'all the time' for feedback and are responsive to the comments by the students.

The RT believes that the organisation of the study process (e.g. the study plan, the order and spreading of the study subjects, the combination of theoretical and practical work) ensures an adequate provision of the programme and the achievement of the learning outcomes. The programme mixes conceptual courses with more practical assignment-based subjects. The RT thinks the programme, for instance, manages to balance the typical generality of a first year with at least some very on-topical subjects. The RT applauds the preparation programme on writing the final thesis in the sixth/ninth semester.

From 2013-2015, there was no outgoing student mobility and students also complained about the limited availability of such mobility. Students attribute this to fashion not being a topic in other universities and due to the fact that KSU is still a young university (such that international contacts still have to grow). As mentioned earlier in this report, the RT believes that a more clear positioning of the programme as a communication (+business) perspective on the fashion industry will lend itself more easily to international contacts and outgoing mobility. FI students could probably follow a less-focused but interesting exchange program at another university, preferably in a city that has a big fashion industry. One other option the RT thinks about is to actively look for international internships which would even help in increasing the reputation of the institute and its alumni well across Lithuanian borders. From 2013 to 2015, twelve incoming mobility students spend at least a few months in the FI programme. Given the predominant Lithuanian language of teaching this is a reasonable number.

KSU ensures an adequate level of academic and social support for the students. There are several support mechanisms, including organizational support by the coordinators, the Career path's system, and financial assistance, including waiving and discounts of tuition fee.

The assessment system of students' performance is clear, adequate and publicly available. The programme uses a 'cumulative assessment score'. Usually, 45% of the student's final grade is based on interim deliveries and 55% is based on an examination of knowledge and understanding. During the site visit, students mentioned that they considered the assessment procedures fair and they valued the – often written – feedback on their work. The data on students' pass and fail rates of the last spring semester show that on average 5 to 15% of full-time students failed an exam, while for part-time students this was 16 to 27%. In all, these are rather low fail rates, certainly for the full-time students. That might indicate that the students are of high quality and very motivated, but it may also show that student assessment is too easy. At the same time, the discrepancy with the part-time students is noticeable. On the one hand it can be expected that part-time students do not show equally good grades, but the staff should try to increase the involvement of these students such that their pass rates are a better match with the full-time students. KSU has implemented some checks on plagiarism and cheating. The management also mentioned the fact that the classes are small and there is a strong social control. Still, the RT wants to stress the importance of educating students in this respect. For instance, the RT had the opportunity to read the short manuals that are compiled to assist the students in making papers, but these manuals did give very little information about the importance of using truly academic sources (rather than books and websites), proper referencing and citation. This was mirrored in the student work that did show very few academic references.

With respect to the assessment of the students the RT advises to further professionalize the assessment procedures including formal rules about the '4 eyes' principle (at least two colleagues should have a look at the exam questions and the answer key) and rigorous procedures to prevent and check for plagiarism and cheating.

There are no graduates yet, neither have there been completed internships. The RT cannot judge to what extent the professional activities of the graduates meet the programme providers' expectations. The part-time students indicated during the site visit that the programme met their expectations and is a welcome addition to their job. Also stakeholders indicated that they value the programme.

Most students also have a job despite being in the full-time programme (the RT did not meet part-time students). Some worked nearly full-time although they did claim that this work was either fashion related or allowed them to study during working hours. Still, these students believed that the combination with a full-time programme was manageable. When asked for an assessment of their average workload per week (following classes, doing assignments, preparing for exams, etc.) students said they were not able to estimate this because studying for this programme was a passion. That is of course a good thing. On the other hand, the RT thinks that if the combination with such extended job hours is feasible, the programme could also be a bit too light. For instance, with regard to the exams, it could be questioned whether expectations about what students should study could be higher.

## **2.6. Programme management**

### *The programme portfolio*

In 2012 the new management team of KSU decided to develop four new programmes. Firstly *Creative & Cultural Industry* (2012) and *Entertainment & Tourism Industry* (2012), then *Fashion Industry* (2013), and finally (2014) the master programme *Integrated Creative Communication*. The choice for these four programmes was motivated by the need of the Lithuanian and European industry as had become clear in several reports and consultations.

All programmes aim to combine theoretical and practical elements and are based on a 'project based learning' concept. The university highly values input from stakeholders - practitioners from industry - for the development of the programmes. Practitioners participate in the Study Programme Committee.

The RT values these initiatives. As the programmes are brand new - the first group of students still have to graduate - the RT is of the opinion that in the coming years a broad evaluation of the programmes and the portfolio of the programmes by the university, stakeholders and students would be appropriate. The reports on the different programmes which are produced in the current SKVC evaluation inform the evaluations and discussions about the individual programmes.

The RT is not fully convinced of the choice that was made for the specific programmes and their profiles. Why a combination of creative and cultural industries in one programme? Why a combination of entertainment and tourism industries in one programme? What are differences between creative and entertainment industries? Among the three bachelor programmes, the FI seems to be the most focused of all, the students seem to value it the most, and the RT also has good impression about it. Maybe, the structuring principle of that programme could be considered exemplary for the other bachelor programmes? On the other hand, the RT has a number of concerns about the FI programme that are common to all evaluated KSU programmes (cf. infra).

Would it be possible and advisable to schedule a common first bachelor year after which the students specialize in for instance fashion, tourism, culture or entertainment? This also corresponds with some of the statements made by the social partners not to “trap students in a specific field. Students might now believe this will be the field of their future profession, but this might not be true. Therefore, some general, transferable set of competencies is to preferred”.

Is the master programme Integrated Creative Communication (currently without further specialization options) the most logical ‘next step’ after, or in addition to, the bachelors programmes that the university offers? What aspects – such as communication, management, economic - and which fields - fashion, entertainment, culture, art - make up the typology of programmes offered? The university is strongly recommended to rethink the logic and feasibility of the programme portfolio, to consider the need and desirability of adaptations, to state clearly the similarities and differences between the programmes, and to give strong arguments for the choices made.

#### *The FI programme*

Responsibilities for decisions and monitoring of the FI programme are clearly allocated. The Study Programme Committee is responsible for the design, evaluation and changes in the curriculum and the study subjects.

The programme management searches for input from students: students are encouraged to participate in study quality surveys and meetings held in the middle of each semester. Also, teachers ask students regularly for comments and suggestions. Students indicated that the teachers and management are receptive to suggestions and complaints. Hence, the outcomes of these formal and informal internal evaluations are clearly used to monitor and adapt the programme where necessary and they prove to be effective and efficient.

Despite the strong internal mechanisms for programme evaluation (by the management, the study programme committee, among teachers, and with students), one could argue that the extent to which external evaluations are incorporated is not sufficient. Given the unique position of this programme, informal external evaluation based on the comparison with similar programmes is not possible. Even from an international perspective, similar programmes are not abundantly available. This implies that the RT suggests to seek more active collaboration with those few institutes that do offer such programmes and to work on the positioning/presentation of its own FI programme to be able to connect with other partners that have at least a partially similar focus.

Information and data on the implementation of the programme are regularly collected and analysed. Requests by the RT for additional information about the programme during the site visit were promptly granted.

The teachers mentioned that there are formal meetings to discuss the programme with each other; some said once per semester, others said every 6-8 weeks. Teachers also indicated that they discuss the programme and the alignment of the study subjects regularly.

The willingness of the social partners to contribute to the programme is substantial. However, during the site visit, almost all partners indicated that they have not substantially contributed to the programmes yet. Some were new and their contribution to the programme had just started. Also the SER mentioned as a necessary ‘improvement action’: A better integration of the social partners into problem solving, study programme management and improvement (SER).

The documents and discussions with management, teachers, students and stakeholders have strengthened the opinion of the RT that the Study Programme Committee manages the programme well. Still, the management faces some important issues for the near future. These include:

- the need to evaluate and rethink the logic, design and feasibility of the three new bachelor programmes and the master programme that have been founded since 2012,
- the need to attract more students,
- the need to find real and sustainable collaborations with industry partners,
- the wish to transform from a teaching university to a research university; to explore options for doctoral degrees partnering with other universities.

### **III. RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. The university is strongly recommended to rethink the logic and feasibility of the portfolio of the four new programmes that have been founded since 2012, to consider the need and desirability of adaptations, to state clearly the similarities and differences between the programmes, and to give strong arguments for the choices made.
2. The programme aims and intended learning outcomes are now formulated on a too abstract level such that from an outside perspective it is difficult to grasp the essence of the FI programme. Despite this, the programme attracts a reasonable amount of students, but this could be due to the very unique character of the programme. The RT believes that a more concrete positioning, in redefining the programme aims according to the communication and business core of the programme, would increase the evaluation of the programme by other stakeholders such as future employers, social partners, and academic Erasmus exchange partners. At the same time such a more specific version of the programme aims could translate to more specific and measurable learning outcomes.
3. The RT advises to add more research subjects to the programme. This pertains both to actual methodological modules and/or an integrated perspective with a stronger attention to research/evidence-based module contents.
4. The RT advises the university to further develop and implement the announced Human Resource Development System and a Human Resource Training Programme.
5. The RT advises to evaluate, and if necessary reconsider the workload of the current study programme.
6. The RT advises to invest in 'in house' facilities and learning resources, such as well-equipped library, databases, auditoriums, classrooms, laboratories and team-work spaces, and to create facilities for disabled students.
7. The RT advises to professionalize the assessment procedures including formal rules about the '4 eyes' principle (at least two colleagues should have a look at the exam questions and the answer key) and rigorous procedures to check for plagiarism and cheating.

### **IV. SUMMARY**

The new management team that was installed at Kazimieras Simonavičius University in 2012 developed three new bachelor programmes and one new master programme in the areas of creative, cultural, entertainment and tourism industries. All programmes aim to combine theoretical and practical elements and are based on the 'project based learning' concept. The university highly values input from stakeholders - practitioners from industry - for the development of the programmes. The design and evaluation of the programmes is based on a 'learning outcomes' approach.

Now, after a little more than three years of experience, it is a good moment to rethink the logic and feasibility of the programmes portfolio, to consider the need and desirability of adaptations, to state clearly the similarities and differences between the programmes, and to give strong arguments for the choices made.



The key objective of the Fashion Industry programme is “to develop high-level expert fashion industries professionals [...]”. Although this objective, the programme aims and the described learning outcomes are formulated on a too abstract and broad level, the FI programme addresses a specific need that students, academics and social partners have. The Review Team was impressed with how the programme manages to bridge from an academic perspective to a very specific industry.

The way the programme aims are concretized into the programme, make the programme a suitable academic bachelor with a strong focus on practice. The modules and overall contents of the programme also make sure the programme is well suited within the broader discipline of communication and the Review Team suggests to further specify this positioning since Fashion Industry label could confuse other stakeholders and (certainly international) partners. The Review Team is of the opinion that it is necessary to concretize the objectives and to confine the scope of the objectives in order to make them manageable and feasible.

The Review Team is positive about the ‘learning outcomes’ approach underlying the programme: learning outcomes of the programme and the study subjects, content of the programme and the qualifications offered are compatible with each other. Programme aims and learning outcomes are based on the academic and professional requirements, public needs and the needs of the labour market. Programme aims and learning outcomes (of programme and study subjects), however, are formulated on a very general and abstract level. The Review Team suggests to define the learning outcomes more *specific* and *measurable* and to relate the learning outcomes of the programme and the intended results of the study subjects more clearly and directly. That would make it possible that they really guide the development and evaluation of the programme.

The content of the study subjects is consistent with the type and level of the studies and are appropriate for the achievement of the learning outcomes. It is advised to include study subjects explicitly aimed at integration of topics and approaches, as a real multi-disciplinary and interdisciplinary programme requires more than offering different topics and approaches in different study subjects.

A real concern for the Review Team is the limited number of research methods subjects in this academic programme. Students did not perceive this to be a problem, but the Review Team believes that if the students are about to prepare a proper thesis, they might be confronted with a lack of methodological, analytical or reflective insight that is typically developed in methodological modules are modules where research is more strongly embedded in. Research training is almost absent. Based on these observations, the Review Team advises the management to add more research subjects to the programme.

The qualifications of the teaching staff are adequate to ensure learning outcomes. The group of teachers reflects the academic and applied aspects of the programme. The staff composition encompasses both theoretical and practical expertise and includes all major topics of the programme. The staff publishes extensively and is active in research and international exchange. The university faces some difficulties in attracting permanent teaching staff and should try to further stimulate the staff to do research and publish on the international forefront of this specific discipline of communication pertaining to fashion industry.

Classrooms, computer facilities, software and media equipment of KSU and the partners are nearly sufficient both in their size and quality. The library is small and not sufficient for the number of students in the programme. The number of books in the library is limited. There is electronic access to basic scientific databases, but they are not fully exploited in the study

process. Infrastructure for group work is not sufficient. It is necessary to extend the number of well-equipped auditoriums, classrooms, laboratories and team-work spaces. There is a strong need for 'study digitization': advanced technology for teaching. Facilities for disabled students are lacking.

The Review Team advises the management to invest in facilities and learning resources, in particular the library, facilities for audio-visual arts, infrastructure for group work, advanced technology for teaching and facilities for disabled students.

The admission requirements are well-specified. The university has implemented professional quality assurance policies and procedures, including student feedback through regularly held surveys. The assessment system of students' performance is clear, adequate and publicly available. The programme uses a 'cumulative assessment score'. Students' pass rates are pretty high (above 88% on average). The Review Team advises to professionalize the assessment procedures including formal rules about the '4 eyes' principle (at least two colleagues should have a look at the exam questions and the answer key) and rigorous procedures to check for plagiarism and cheating.

The willingness of the social partners to contribute to the programme is impressive. The real participation of social partners is, however, limited. The university has to find ways for real and sustainable collaborations with industry partners in the future.

## V. GENERAL ASSESSMENT

The study programme *Fashion Industry* (state code – 612P90007) at Kazimieras Simonavičius University is given **positive** evaluation.

*Study programme assessment in points by evaluation areas.*

No.	Evaluation Area	Evaluation of an area in points*
1.	Programme aims and learning outcomes	2
2.	Curriculum design	3
3.	Teaching staff	3
4.	Facilities and learning resources	2
5.	Study process and students' performance assessment	3
6.	Programme management	3
	<b>Total:</b>	<b>16</b>

\*1 (unsatisfactory) - there are essential shortcomings that must be eliminated;

2 (satisfactory) - meets the established minimum requirements, needs improvement;

3 (good) - the field develops systematically, has distinctive features;

4 (very good) - the field is exceptionally good.

Grupės vadovas: Team leader:	Prof. Dr. Peter Neijens
Grupės nariai: Team members:	Dr. Kathleen Virginia Donnelly
	Dr. Viktors Freibergs
	Dr. Tim Smits
	Mr. Mindaugas Grajauskas
	Mr. Giedrius Žilinskas

**KAZIMIERO SIMONAVIČIAUS UNIVERSITETO PIRMOSIOS PAKOPOS STUDIJŲ  
PROGRAMOS *MADOS INDUSTRIJA* (VALSTYBINIS KODAS – 612P90007) 2016-01-06  
EKSPERTINIO VERTINIMO IŠVADŲ NR. SV4-6 IŠRAŠAS**

&lt;...&gt;

**V. APIBENDRINAMASIS ĮVERTINIMAS**

Kazimiero Simonavičiaus universiteto studijų programa *Mados industrija* (valstybinis kodas – 612P90007) vertinama **teigiamai**.

<b>Eil. Nr.</b>	Vertinimo sritis	<b>Srities įvertinimas, balais*</b>
1.	Programos tikslai ir numatomi studijų rezultatai	2
2.	Programos sandara	3
3.	Personalas	3
4.	Materialieji ištekliai	2
5.	Studijų eiga ir jos vertinimas	3
6.	Programos vadyba	3
	Iš viso:	<b>16</b>

\* 1 – Nepatenkinamai (yra esminių trūkumų, kuriuos būtina pašalinti)

2 – Patenkinamai (tenkina minimalius reikalavimus, reikia tobulinti)

3 – Gerai (sistemiškai plėtojama sritis, turi savitų bruožų)

4 – Labai gerai (sritis yra išskirtinė)

&lt;...&gt;

**IV. SANTRAUKA**

2012 m. Kazimiero Simonavičiaus universitete suburta nauja vadovybės komanda parengė tris naujas bakalauro studijų programas ir vieną naują magistro studijų programą kūrybinių, kultūrinių, pramogų ir turizmo industrijų srityse. Visose studijų programose siekiama suderinti teorinius ir praktinius aspektus ir remiamasi „projektų metodu pagrįsto mokymosi“ koncepcija. Universitetas labai vertina socialinių dalininkų, t. y. industrijose dirbančių praktikų, indėlį kuriant studijų programas. Studijų programų sandara ir vertinimas pagrįsti studijų rezultatų metodu.

Po šiek tiek daugiau nei trejų metų patirties šiuo metu yra gera proga persvarstyti studijų programų paketo pagrįstumą ir įgyvendinamumą, išnagrinėti poreikį ir pageidavimus jį keisti, aiškiai nurodyti programų panašumus bei skirtumus ir svariai argumentuoti sprendimus.

Pagrindinis studijų programos *Mados industrija* uždavinys – „rengti aukšto lygio mados industrijos specialistus [...]“. Nors šis uždavinys, studijų programos tikslai ir aprašyti studijų rezultatai suformuluoti pernelyg abstrakčiai ir plačiai, MI studijų programa skirta konkrečių poreikių turintiems studentams, akademikams ir socialiniams partneriams. Ekspertų grupei padarė įspūdį, kaip studijų programoje sugebama susieti akademinis aspektus su labai konkrečia industrija.

Studijų programos tikslai konkretūs, todėl ji tinka profesinio bakalauro studijoms, kuriose didelis dėmesys skiriamas praktikai. Moduliai ir bendrai studijų programos turinys taip pat tinka platesniam komunikacijų dalykui ir ekspertų grupė siūlo tiksliau apibrėžti šią poziciją, nes pavadinimas Mados industrija gali suklaidinti kitus socialinius dalininkus ir (žinoma, tarptautinius) partnerius. Ekspertų grupės manymu, būtina konkretizuoti tikslus ir sumažinti jų skaičių, kad būtų galima valdyti ir įgyvendinti.

Ekspertų grupė teigiamai vertina į studijų rezultatus orientuotą metodą, kuriuo grindžiama studijų programa: studijų programos studijų rezultatai ir studijų dalykai, studijų programos turinys ir siūlomos kvalifikacijos tarpusavyje dera. Studijų programos tikslai ir studijų rezultatai grindžiami akademiniais ir profesiniais reikalavimais, visuomenės ir darbo rinkos poreikiais. Tačiau studijų programos tikslai ir studijų rezultatai (studijų programos ir studijų dalykų) suformuluoti labai bendrai ir abstrakčiai. Ekspertų grupė siūlo konkrečiau apibrėžti studijų rezultatus, kad juos būtų galima išmatuoti, ir aiškiau bei labiau tiesiogiai programos studijų rezultatus susieti su numatomais studijų dalykų rezultatais. Tada būtų galima jais vadovautis plėtojant ir vertinant programą.

Studijų dalykų turinys atitinka studijų rūšį ir lygį ir yra tinkamas studijų rezultatams pasiekti. Siūloma įtraukti studijų dalykų, kurie būtų aiškiau orientuoti į temų ir metodų integraciją, kad tai būtų tikra daugiadalykė ir tarpdalykinė programa, o ne tik siūlyti įvairias temas ir metodus įvairiuose studijų dalykuose.

Ekspertų grupei tikrą susirūpinimą šioje studijų programoje kelia ribotas tyrimų metodų dalykų skaičius. Studentai nesuvokia, jog tai yra problema, bet ekspertų grupė mano, kad jei studentai norėtų parengti tinkamą baigiamąjį darbą, jie gali susidurti su metodinių, analitinių ar refleksyviųjų išvalgų, kurios paprastai dėstomos metodiniuose moduluose, trūkumu. Tai moduliai, kuriuose daugiau dėmesio skiriama moksliniams tyrimams. Tyrimų mokymo beveik nėra. Remdamasi šiais pastebėjimais, ekspertų grupė siūlo vadovybei į studijų programą įtraukti daugiau mokslinių tyrimų dalykų.

Dėstytojų kvalifikacija pakankama studijų rezultatams pasiekti. Dėstytojų komanda atspindi programos akademinis ir taikomojus aspektus. Dėstytojų komandoje yra turinčiųjų teorinės ir praktinės patirties, jie apima visas pagrindines programos temas. Darbuotojai skelbia daug publikacijų, aktyviai dalyvauja moksliniuose tyrimuose ir tarptautiniuose mainuose. Universitetas patiria tam tikrų sunkumų bandydamas pritraukti dėstytojų dirbti visu etatu ir turėtų labiau skatinti darbuotojus atlikti mokslinius tyrimus ir skelbti publikacijas šios konkrečios komunikacijos tematikos, susijusios su mados industrija, tarptautiniuose leidiniuose.

KSU auditorijų, kompiuterinės, programinės ir medijų įrangos bei partnerių beveik pakanka tiek kiekybės, tiek kokybės prasme. Biblioteka maža, jos nepakanka tokiam studijų programos studentų skaičiui. Knygų skaičius bibliotekoje nedidelis. Teikiama elektroninė prieiga prie pagrindinių mokslinių duomenų bazių, tačiau ji nėra visiškai išnaudojama studijose. Nepakankama grupinio darbo infrastruktūra. Būtina didinti gerai įrengtų auditorijų, klasių, laboratorijų ir komandinio darbo patalpų skaičių. Būtina didinti studijų skaitmeninimą, t. y. taikyti pažangias mokymo technologijas. Trūksta neįgaliems studentams pritaikytų sąlygų.

Ekspertų grupė rekomenduoja vadovybei skirti investicijų patalpoms ir materialiesiems ištekliams, visų pirma bibliotekai, garso ir vaizdo menų įrangai, grupinio darbo infrastruktūrai, pažangioms mokymo technologijoms ir įrangai neįgaliems studentams.

Priėmimo reikalavimai apibrėžti gerai. Universitetas įgyvendino profesionalią kokybės užtikrinimo politiką ir tvarką, įskaitant studentų grįžtamąjį ryšį per nuolat rengiamas apklausas. Studentų pasiekimų vertinimo sistema aiški, tinkama ir viešai prieinama. Programoje naudojama kaupiamoji balo vertinimo sistema. Studentų pažangumo lygis gana aukštas (vidutiniškai daugiau kaip 88 proc.). Ekspertų grupė rekomenduoja sukurti profesionalią vertinimo tvarką, įskaitant oficialias taisykles dėl keturių akių principo (egzamino klausimus ir atsakymus turi peržiūrėti bent du kolegos) ir griežtą plagijavimo ir sukčiavimo kontrolę.

Socialinių partnerių noras prisidėti prie programos įspūdingas. Tačiau realus jų dalyvavimas menkas. Universitetas turi rasti būdų realiai ir tvariai bendradarbiauti su industrijos partneriais ateityje.

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### III. REKOMENDACIJOS

1. Universitetui ypač rekomenduojama persvarstyti keturių naujų 2012 m. pradėtų vykdyti studijų programų paketo pagrindimą ir tinkamumą, išnagrinėti pakeitimų poreikį ir pageidavimus, aiškiai nurodyti studijų programų panašumus bei skirtumus ir svariai argumentuoti savo pasirinkimą.
2. Šiuo metu suformuluoti studijų programos tikslai ir numatomi studijų rezultatai pernelyg abstraktūs, tad vertinant juos iš išorės sunku suvokti studijų programos *Mados industrija* (toliau – MI) esmę. Studijų programa pritraukia nemažai studentų, bet taip gali būti dėl unikalios jos pobūdžio. Ekspertų grupė (toliau – EG) mano, kad konkrečiau apibrėžus studijų programos tikslus, atsižvelgiant į studijų programos komunikaciją ir verslo aspektą, kitiems socialiniams dalininkams, pavyzdžiui, būsimiems darbdaviams, socialiniams partneriams ir akademiniais Erasmus mainų programos partneriams, būtų lengviau įvertinti šią studijų programą. Be to, konkretesni studijų programos tikslai leistų siekti konkretesnių ir labiau išmatuojamų studijų rezultatų.
3. EG pataria į studijų programą įtraukti daugiau mokslinių tyrimų dalykų. Tai taikytina tiek faktiniams metodologiniams moduliams, tiek (arba) integruotiems metodams, kur daugiau dėmesio skiriama moksliniams tyrimams ir (arba) įrodymais pagrįstam modulių turiniui.
4. EG rekomenduoja universitetui toliau plėtoti ir įgyvendinti paskelbtą Žmogiškųjų išteklių plėtros sistemą ir Žmogiškųjų išteklių mokymo programą.
5. EG rekomenduoja įvertinti ir, jei reikia, persvarstyti dabartinės studijų programos darbo krūvį.
6. EG pataria investuoti į vidaus įrangą ir materialiuosius išteklius, pavyzdžiui, tinkamai aprūpintą biblioteką, duomenų bazines, auditorijas, klases, laboratorijas, komandinio darbo erdves, ir sukurti sąlygas neįgaliems studentams.

7. EG rekomenduoja įgyvendinti profesionalią vertinimo tvarką, įskaitant oficialias taisykles dėl keturių akių principo (egzamino klausimus ir atsakymus turi patikrinti bent du kolegos) ir griežtą plagijavimo ir sukčiavimo kontrolę.

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Paslaugos teikėjas patvirtina, jog yra susipažinęs su Lietuvos Respublikos baudžiamojo kodekso 235 straipsnio, numatančio atsakomybę už melagingą ar žinomai neteisingai atliktą vertimą, reikalavimais.

Vertėjos rekvizitai (vardas, pavardė, parašas)