CENTRE FOR QUALITY ASSESSMENT IN HIGHER EDUCATION

EVALUATION REPORT

STUDY FIELD

HISTORY AND THEORY OF ARTS

at KLAIPEDA UNIVERSITY

Expert panel:

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2. **Dr. Michael Fox,** *academic,*
3. **Lect. Hannu Apajalahti,** *academic,*
4. **Ms Monika Lipšic,** *representative of social partners,*
5. **Mr Justas Žemaitis,** *students' representative.*

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Study Field Data

Title of the study programme	Programme “ Drama Theory and History ”
State code	621U94001 (previous) 6211NX057
Type of studies	University studies
Cycle of studies	Second cycle
Mode of study and duration (in years)	Full-Time (Session-Based) (2)
Credit volume	120
Qualification degree and (or) professional qualification	Master of Humanities
Language of instruction	Lithuanian
Minimum education required	Bachelor’s degree or equivalent
Registration date of the study programme	2001-08-02 No. 1187 2002-06-09 No. 1093

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I. INTRODUCTION

1.1. BACKGROUND OF THE EVALUATION PROCESS

The evaluation of study fields is based on the Methodology of External Evaluation of Study Fields approved by the Director of the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education (hereafter – SKVC) 31 December 2019 Order No. V-149.

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

The evaluation process consists of the main following stages: *1) self-evaluation and self-evaluation report 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 this external evaluation report of the study field SKVC takes a decision to accredit study field either for 7 years or for 3 years. If the field evaluation is negative then the study field is not accredited.

The study field and cycle are **accredited for 7 years** if all evaluation areas are evaluated as 'exceptional' (5 points), 'very good' (4 points) or 'good' (3 points).

The study field and cycle are **accredited for 3 years** if one of the evaluation areas was evaluated as 'satisfactory' (2 points).

The study field and cycle **are not accredited** if at least one of evaluation areas was evaluated as 'unsatisfactory' (1 point).

1.2. THE REVIEW TEAM

The review team was assigned according to the Experts Selection Procedure (hereinafter referred to as the Procedure) as approved by the Director of Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education on 31 December 2019 Order No. V-149. The Review Visit to the HEI was conducted by the team on *09/12/2020.*

1. **Prof. dr. Dana Arnold (team leader)** *the University of East Anglia, Professor of Art History, United Kingdom.*
2. **Dr. Michael Fox,** *Limerick School of Art and Design, Senior Lecturer and Programme Co-ordinator Year One Art and Design Core Year, Ireland*
3. **Lect. Hannu Apajalahti,** *Sibelius Academy / University of the Arts Helsinki, Lecturer of Music Theory, Finland.*
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5. **Mr Justas Žemaitis,** *student of Vilnius University, Master study programme Religious Studies, Lithuania.*

1.3. GENERAL INFORMATION

The 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:

No.	Name of the document
1.	'Field of Study: ART STUDIES (N24) SELF EVALUATION REPORT' (hereafter abbreviated as SER)
2.	Introduction to the KU infrastructure provided in photo format 'TEATROLOGIJA. DRAMA THEORY AND HISTORY'.
3.	Examples of theses.
4.	Examples of 'STUDY MODULE PROGRAMME' descriptions ('Classical Drama', 'Modern Theatre', 'The Tendencies of Contemporary Lithuanian theatre', 'History of Lithuanian stage direction', 'The Traids of Lithuanian theatrological Thought', 'Western Lithuania', 'Entitlement Theatre art developments in Western area')
5.	List of teaching staffs' publications for the period of 2017-2019

1.4. BACKGROUND OF STUDY FIELD/STUDY FIELD PLACE AND SIGNIFICANCE IN HEI

Klaipeda University (hereafter abbreviated as KU) acquired the rights of the University in 1991. It was established on the ground of the faculties of different higher education institutions operating in Klaipeda since 1971. KU is a multidisciplinary, national, and Baltic Sea Marine Science and Studies Centre integrated into international academic networks, realizing the mission and goals, meeting the needs of the Western Lithuania region and Klaipeda city. The KU's position is defined with the focus on the development of marine and energy programmes and the creation of the highest international level studies in Lithuania.

Studies in the study field of History and Theory of Arts consists of 1 study programme in second cycles. The second cycle study programme Drama Theory and History (state code – 6211NX057) (hereafter – MA programme, programme) is carried out at the Faculty of Social and Humanitarian sciences of Klaipeda university at where the Department of Baltic Philology is responsible for the programmes.

Aims of Master programme in the field of History and Theory of Arts are 'to train qualified theatre researchers who know modern methods of theatre and drama analysis, Lithuanian theatre process, theatre and humanities perspectives in the conditions of

globalisation, possibilities of coexistence of national and global, higher and mass cultures, who have the skills to accumulate, systemise, analyse and synthesise, and can analyse and evaluate the theatre discourse with motivation.'

Studies in the study field of History and Theory of Arts in KU, focus more on the theatrical research in the Western region and covers professional, amateur, and school theatre. The studies are of an applied nature, focused on the development of theatrical skills. The orientation to the knowledge of the region, research of amateur and school theatre and education by theatre stressed out by the expert panel during programme's evaluation on 2013.

The students of this programme are often already working in the field of theatre. There are 35 enrolled students in total studying in this programme at the time of evaluation. The graduates of this programme work in theatres, are employed as theatre/drama and Lithuanian language teachers in gymnasiums, various cultural and non-formal education institutions.

The self-evaluation report contains 'MgT' as an abbreviation of Master programme Theatrology. Thus in this report in places, where SER is quoted, the abbreviation 'MgT' is used.

II. GENERAL ASSESSMENT

History and Theory of Arts study field and **second cycle** at Klaipeda University is given **negative** evaluation.

Study field and cycle assessment in points by evaluation areas.

No.	Evaluation Area	Evaluation of an area in points*
1.	Study aims, outcomes and content	1
2.	Links between science (art) and study activities	2
3.	Student admission and support	1
4.	Studying, student performance and graduate employment	2
5.	Teaching staff	2
6.	Learning facilities and resources	3
7.	Study quality management and publicity	1
	Total:	**12**

*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 evaluated very well in the national and international context, without any deficiencies;
5 (exceptional) - the field is exceptionally good in the national and international context/environment.

III. STUDY FIELD ANALYSIS

3.1. STUDY AIMS, OUTCOMES AND CONTENT

Study aims, outcomes and content shall be assessed in accordance with the following indicators:

3.1.1. Evaluation of the conformity of the aims and outcomes of the field and cycle study programmes to the needs of the society and/or the labour market (not applicable to HEIs operating in exile conditions).

(1) Factual situation

The programme Drama Theory and History is located in an area which has a strong historical and cultural heritage. Klaipeda has six professional theatres, there are also a number of municipally supported theatres and organisations that support youth and children's theatre. In the SER student and graduate involvement in the city's various theatrical institutions are outlined and they are actively involved in theatrical activities.

While the programme has responded to the previous external evaluation recommendations on the orientating the aims and outcomes towards regional knowledge and research, there is still a lack of recognition within the learning outcomes and the course units of the very specific way in which the students and graduates interact with the region/ city in their particular social context. The panel view this as a serious shortcoming and one that needs to be immediately rectified.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The online panel meetings with the various groups were very insightful and contributed to the Panel's understanding of the social and labour market context, in which this programme is operating. The Teacher's group spoke of the contribution that the students of this programme make to the cultural life of the University. Members of the Alumni spoke of the programme as a confidence builder for professional life. A gymnasium director spoke of the positive relationship students have with children and youth in early learning institutions. It was also noted that MA students have a blog which is popular in Lithuania.

All of these examples point to existing and potential active relationships between individuals and their cultural environment. The learning outcomes for the programme appear disconnected from the practical social and labour market realities of the cultural environment in which this programme is operating. The panel view this disconnect as a failing on the part of the programme in the design of the learning outcomes. This is despite the fact that the programme is currently located within the faculty of Social Sciences and is part of the Baltic Philology department, which seems inadequate context. While semester three provides an introduction to the humanities and social sciences there is a necessity to embed these as a

core elements throughout the programme if the aims and learning outcomes are to align with the social demands of the programme.

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

(1) Factual situation

The strategy of KU is governed by the document Development of humanities and social sciences and studies, fostering artistic creation and art studies, a link to which was provided to the panel in the SER (document available in Lithuanian only). The SER summarises that the document specifies KU's priority to promote and develop the region through scientific, educational, artistic and other cultural activities.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

During the panel meeting with Senior Management and Faculty Administration Staff the need for the programme to be socially contextualised within the region, was mentioned on a number of occasions. It was stated that KU is focused on Baltic regionality. Theatre is part of this coastal area so this programme is needed as a basis for entertainment and non-formal theatre education. It was further stated that; in the regions universities are cultural centres and KU is the cultural centre for its region, providing a platform for cultural practitioners to come together. The graduates and students are involved in art practice while others are involved in in art therapy. It is a socially integrated field

The social dimensions expressed in these examples are in parallel with KU's strategic priorities but as stated previously are not given the central position they warrant in the learning outcomes for the programme. The panel view the centrality of the KUs strategic priorities within the learning outcomes as an essential prerequisite to the programme and the programmes failure to give it a central position is a serious failing.

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

(1) Factual situation

The programme is based on 120 ECTS over four semesters and leads to a master of humanities degree. The minimum qualification required for entry to the programme is a Bachelor's degree or equivalent. Within the programme one study credit equals 26.67 hours study, which includes both contact and independent learning. According to the SER this complies with KU's document on Study Regulations. A link to the document is provided in the SER but was inactive during the writing of this report. A study field programme plan was made available in tabular form in Annex1. This table maps the unit, the number of hours allocated to it, contact and independent learning and the number of credits associated with

each unit. Independent learning makes up in excess of 50% of the study. 30 credits are allocated to the final research work and thesis.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The panel are satisfied that all of these categories exceed the satisfactory standard for the required study cycles.

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

(1) Factual situation

The teaching, learning and assessment methods adopted by the programme to achieve the learning outcomes are outlined in the SER and in Annex1. Table 2, SER maps the learning units and the learning outcomes to the required skills, outlined in the in the Descriptor of the Study Field of History and Theory of Art (hereafter – Description of the study field) approved by Order No V-825 of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania of 23 July 2015, for programmes of the second cycle.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The panel have noted that within the mapping of learning outcomes to the Ministry's descriptors, which is shown in Table 2. SER the category Special Abilities, which in the Ministry's document outlines technical, methodical, informational and organizational/managerial skills is replaced with the category Subject-Specific Skills. While at first this may seem as just a semantical change it may well indicate a more fundamental issue which sees the socially engaged aspects of the programme given less emphasis. All of the social related units are presented as optional units. The importance of the socialising aspects of the study is outlined in the Description of the study field 23.4.1 and 23.4.2. As a number of students and graduates socialise their knowledge through interaction with gymnasiums and other educational groups the Panel welcome the inclusion of two educational units, although the unit on Drama in Education is only presented as an optional unit. It is the view of the panel that more of these socialising units must be included as mandatory units as the current situation is totally unsatisfactory.

The teaching, learning and assessment methodologies used include lectures, workshops, individual and independent work the level of independent work is consistent with second cycle level.

Assessment is carried out in accordance with KU criteria set out in items 167–169 of the KU Study Regulations and implemented through:

- cumulative assessment;
- study results assessed by interim reports (individual work, semester work, performance analysis or review, etc.);
- final grades which are the sum of midterms and exams.

The minimum mark for interim and final assignments is 5 (weak). If a student does not score a transition mark - the minimum score for a set number of interim assessments – he/she is not allowed to take the exam.

Semester 4 is structured around the research project and final thesis, the execution and defence of which is allocated 30 credits. Defence of the thesis is overseen by a commission of 5 specialists including professional practitioners, social partners and at least one member from another institution.

In the view of the panel there is a lack of clarity surrounding the procedures for assessment, documentation of assessments and structured feedback. The students indicated a use of VLE (Moodle) for the dissemination of information on thesis writing it was stated that email was the predominant form of communication, social media platforms such as Facebook are also used. The Panel were not given any indication that more formal means of assessment procedures, documentation and feedback were in place. This is a cause of concern to the Panel members. Greater, properly documented policy and operational procedures relating to assessments must be formulated and made available as the current situation is totally unsatisfactory.

3.1.5. Evaluation of the totality of the field and cycle study programme subjects/modules, which ensures consistent development of competences of students.

(1) Factual situation

A general synopsis of the programme is outlined in the SER with a more detailed tabular breakdown of the programme units available in SER. The SER explains the progression of the subjects as:

- the historical basis of theatrology from primitive theatre to the contemporary in semester one.;
- the development of applying contemporary theatre concept and research methodologies to practical text analysis in semester two;
- theatrology in context in semester three;
- research project and final thesis in semester 4.

The programme units are broad and varied and while they offer a wide overview of the area it is difficult to see how they progress in a linear manner to increase the students' focus.

Before 2013 one person taught majority of subjects so too much similarities so study subjects changed and hired new teachers reorganisation took place invited new teachers instead of those retires but they could not take the full workload

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

It is the view of the panel that the overall set of units are wide and varied but in terms of providing a structured development of competencies which deliver a focus for the students thesis and potential career enhancement there is a worrying disconnect which is

unacceptable. The panel believe that greater linear coherency between the units is essential. During the meeting with the SER group it was pointed out to the Panel that prior to 2013 most of the programme units were taught by one individual which limited the scope of the programme. Attempts to rectify this situation have been difficult as the hiring of new teachers has meant teachers who do not have full teaching commitments associated with the programme. When examining the programme units, the resultant fragmentation is apparent and leads to a lack of progression coherency. Most units are stand alone and do not have more advanced follow on units. For the Panel this has posed a question as to whether this programme should be used to its best advantage as a series of CPD units under the umbrella of lifelong learning instead of trying to combine these disjointed units into a Master's programme.

3.1.6. Evaluation of opportunities for students to personalise the structure of field study programmes according to their personal learning objectives and intended learning outcomes.

(1) Factual situation

Students' opportunity to personalise their final research and thesis topics are governed by KU regulations; Description of General Requirements for Independent Written and Artistic Works of KU Students. The topics are approved by the Dean in the first two weeks of semester three. The student chooses the topic of their final thesis and this is coordinated with their supervisor. The SER states that many students are already in employment in the field and so chose topics based on their professional needs.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The list of thesis topics, presented to the panel in Annex 2 confirms the earlier SER statement that many students chose topics based on their professional needs. Many of the theses deal with regional, social and educational topic. This further reinforces the Panel's assertion that there is a disconnect between the study units and the needs of the students, operating in societal contexts. It would benefit the students greatly if the unit contents not only addressed the regional context of the field but also the more granular social contexts in which the students are already located, through their employment. For this programme to succeed it is imperative that the learning outcomes reflect the social contexts in which the students are located.

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

(1) Factual situation

The thesis titles outlined in the SER, Annex 2 show enquiry into the operational role of various forms of theatre within the context of regional and national settings. These theses

are an indicator of the very positive, constructive and dynamic role a properly structured and focused programme in this field could play.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

It is the view of the panel that the final theses are compliant with the requirements, as defined by the official documents of the KU. The structure of the defence commission also meets institutional and National regulations. The Panel, however, are concerned by the disappointing number of students who for various reasons are unable to continue to the defence stage; only two of the original six submitted for defence in 2019.

Recommendations for this evaluation area:

1. The learning outcomes for the programme appear disconnected from the practical social and labour market realities of the cultural environment in which this programme is operating. This is despite the fact that the programme is currently located within the faculty of Social Sciences and that the social dimension is central to the KU's strategic policies. The panel therefore recommends that the overall programme needs to be socially contextualised and in particular this social dimension needs to be reflected in the learning outcomes and that they are cognisant of the KU's strategic policies.
2. In the view of the panel there is a lack of clarity surrounding the procedures for assessment, documentation of assessments and structured feedback. The panel therefore recommends that Greater, properly documented policy and operational procedures relating to assessments must be formulated and made available.
3. When examining the programme units, the panel became aware that unit fragmentation is apparent and leads to a lack of progression coherency. The panel recommends that the development of a programme structure which gives greater linear coherency between the units is essential.

3.2. LINKS BETWEEN SCIENCE (ART) AND STUDY ACTIVITIES

Links between science (art) and study activities shall be assessed in accordance with the following indicators:

3.2.1. Evaluation of the sufficiency of the science (applied science, art) activities implemented by the HEI for the field of research (art) related to the field of study.

(1) Factual situation

It is apparent from information supplied in the SER, that the faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities (hereafter – FSSH) are actively engaged in organising conferences and events that are centered on defining Lithuania's identity in the post-Soviet era. There is a list of

events described in the SER and it is outlined how these events comply with the national strategy for Lithuanian humanities and social sciences. A number of these events have been culture related.

The level of published staff-research is also outlined and there is particular mention given to a series of 10 radio interviews with famous actors and directors organised by staff members. Staff have also availed of Erasmus+ opportunities and also their involvement in national and international conferences.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

During the meeting with the Senior Management and Faculty Administration Staff, the view was expressed that it was a high priority within the faculty to generate a synergy in arts/science which would help to define the role of humanities in Society.

It is the view of the Panel that while on one level it appears as though the link between the student's employment areas and their studies/research topics could be viewed in a positive way, when one becomes aware of the variety of contemporary social topics engaged with at faculty level it becomes obvious that the programme is not fully exploiting the rich sources of research and the synergy possibilities available to them through their location in the FSSH. Through the possibilities presented at faculty level the students could seize the opportunity to understand and make a greater social contribution through their research topics. While the level of applied art arising from the student's employment areas and their resultant research areas are viewed by the panel as satisfactory, the failure to fully exploit the possibilities presented at faculty level is seen as a significant shortcoming.

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

(1) Factual situation

The SER outlines the extensive and highly valued contemporary field research conducted by a number of the programme staff. During the Panel meeting with the Teaching Staff Teachers confirmed that the subjects of their research areas were core to the areas which they cover in their teaching practice.

During the Panel meeting with Reps of the HEI regarding Facilities the panel were informed of faculty plans for the next five years which will include a modern media centre. The issues presented as a response to Covid 19 have also made the faculty aware of the necessity for providing digital equipment and support for those working from home.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The panel have formed the view that while the contemporary research of the programme staff mentioned in the SER is very valuable in maintaining a link between the

content of the programme and the contemporary field developments, encouragement to avail of more of the areas on offer at faculty level would be of benefit. When new infrastructural developments become on stream it will be important for students working in the area of Drama Theory and History to be able to avail of them as research tools.

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

(1) Factual situation

The SER outlines a number of practical/applied areas in which the programme students are involved. These include various festivals, events organised through the city's various theatres, contributing to various publications, involvement with schools and participation in the scientific projects of their teachers. The student demographic also provides opportunities for the students to partake in activities related to their employment.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

It is the view of the Panel that within the programme, there is a sense of community and identity held by both staff and students which provides strong ties with the theatre in the western region of Lithuania. These ties are the source of applied activities for students and the programme, through involvement with them provides access to a range of cultural activities in a regional area for its students.

However broader international possibilities are sadly curtailed. It was also noted during a number of the Panel meetings that while mobility occurs at staff level the study/employment balance required by most students precludes them from availing of the same mobility opportunities and the scientific possibilities associated with them. The level of local and regional engagement by students in a variety of activities (festivals and events) offer the students an acceptable opportunity to engage with professionals from outside their immediate educational environment. However, the panel view the lack of international mobility for students as a significant shortcoming.

Recommendations for this evaluation area:

1. The programme is not fully exploiting the rich sources of research and the synergy possibilities available to them through their location in the FSSH. The panel recommends that improved structures be put in place to encourage these synergies to enrich the research possibilities for students on this programme.
2. It is the view of the Panel that within the programme, there is a sense of community and identity held by both staff and students which provides strong ties with the

theatre in the western region of Lithuania. However broader international possibilities are sadly curtailed. While mobility occurs at staff level the study/employment balance required by most students precludes them from availing of the same mobility opportunities and the scientific possibilities associated with them. The panel recommends that suitable structures and incentives be put in place to encourage students to avail of international mobility opportunities.

3.3. STUDENT ADMISSION AND SUPPORT

Student admission and support shall be evaluated according to the following indicators:

3.3.1. Evaluation of the suitability and publicity of student selection and admission criteria and process.

(1) Factual situation

The SER and relevant website link (in Lithuanian only) give general information about the student selection and admission criteria and processes, including how the competitive score for graduates of the first cycle studies and admission to the second cycle studies is calculated.

The minimum qualification required for entry to the programme is a Bachelor's degree or equivalent. SER also states, that 'An additional score is added to applicants' competitive score to the second cycle studies who have scientific articles published in a peer-reviewed periodical, one-time or continuous publication.'

The criteria for admission to the KU Master's programme are approved by the KU Senate and are presented online on the KU website.

Those who are applying to the Master's programme must submit the document proving the degree obtained by the applicant from first-cycle (bachelor, integrated studies or professional bachelor) degree studies or the document proving the completion of bridging studies programme.

The competitive score for the applicants to programme is calculated based on the formula KB = Vx0.6 + Bx0.4 + PB, where KB is the competitive score, V is the evaluation of the subjects of the first cycle diploma supplement weighted average, B is the evaluation of the final thesis and/or final examination (s), PB – additional points.

Only those applicants who collected 6 or more points to the final competitive score can be admitted to the study programme. Additional points to the competitive score are added for the person's research activity and his/her published articles in scientific journals. The applicant is informed about successful admission through KU website and e-mail.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The panel agree that from the statements in the SER and the meetings with staff during the online visit that the criteria for admission are generic, lack subject specificity and are not justified. The panel are unanimous in the view that the absence of a requirement for any arts or humanities qualifications to be eligible for this master's degree is concerning and that this vagueness in the admission criteria results in a lack of transparency regarding the recruitment and selection of students. Also, there is not stated, that additional points are added for 'articles published in a peer-reviewed periodical, one-time or continuous publication' connected to the field studies, implying that article published in any non-History and Theory of Arts related field will also provide additional points. The panel does not accept that the requirements for admission for the programme follow the recommendations laid out in the Description of the study field. They are significantly deficient and must be rectified. The recommendations that must be adhered to are:

'11.2.1. With higher education qualification and having completed the first cycle university studies in History and Theory of Art and Art Studies and meeting special requirements established by the higher education institution;

11.2.2. With higher education qualification and having completed the first cycle studies of such other study area and (or) study field, also supplementary or minor studies of the study field of History and Theory of Art, and meeting special requirements established by the higher education institution.'

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

(1) Factual situation

A brief description of the general principles for the recognition of foreign qualifications, partial studies and prior non-formal and informal learning and its application is given in the SER. Students who have acquired degree in foreign higher education institution and have an intention to study in the study programme must submit documents on the assessments from foreign higher education institution to the department which is obligated to host the study programme.

Study subjects are credited if their aims in a foreign higher education institution coincide with the aims of the study subject provided in the programme hosted by the department, also if the assessed study subject is coinciding with two thirds of the study subject aims and the description of the study sources.

After an applicant submits the relevant documents:

'The head of the Department (head of the study programme) evaluates the study results' compliance and the course unit requirements of the programme to be studied. A course unit is credited if its scope is at least two-thirds of the scope of a similar course unit provided in the programme to be studied and corresponds to its essential objectives and the course unit content's main parts. Student optional course units are credited without

restriction. The total volume of credited non-university course units may not exceed half of the university's basic study programme's volume.'

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The panel is agreed that the procedure of recognition of foreign qualifications, partial studies and prior non-formal and informal learning and its application is inadequate. The criteria for recognition are vague and there is no requirement for any arts or humanities qualifications to be eligible for this master's degree. There is a lack of transparency regarding procedures governing the selection of students from overseas and it is not clear how these students are recruited. Taking into consideration, that students with different BA background are accepted to this programme, the principle, that 'Student optional course units are credited without restriction' is unacceptable to the panel – this implies, that students can have courses that have no connection to the study field credited. If optional courses that do not correspond to the essential objectives of the programme are credited, the panel is not convinced that the aims and outcomes of the study programme are reached by the graduates. The panel is unanimous in its judgement that procedure of recognition of foreign qualifications, partial studies and prior non-formal and informal learning are significantly deficient must be revised and must adhere to the requirements for this programme.

3.3.3. Evaluation of conditions for ensuring academic mobility of students.

(1) Factual situation

A brief description of the general introduction given by the institution to students about Erasmus + is outlined in the SER.

A selection for the Erasmus+ exchange of studies and internship is carried out twice during the academic year in September and February. During these months, information on Erasmus+ exchange of studies and internship is presented on KU website, on websites of the faculties', on the social networks of KU and through e-mail. An informational seminar is hosted at the university, during which KU students, who participated in the Erasmus+ programme together with foreign students, who come to study at the KU through Erasmus+ programme, jointly share their experience for those who are interested in Erasmus+ exchange possibilities. Despite the declining interest from KU students in the opportunities of the Erasmus+ exchange of studies and internship programme in recent years, the information procedure about exchange opportunities is being carried out in a targeted manner.

In SER it is noted that 'MgT students have not been interested in the opportunities of the Erasmus+ programme in recent years because they are employed and do not want to lose their jobs. There were no students from other countries who came to MgT during this period.'

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The panel is agreed that the lack of mobility of programme's students and the absence of any Erasmus + students from other countries within the programme is very concerning and inappropriate. It is noteworthy, that information about this programme is not provided in the English version of KU website, which confirms the lack of interest in student exchange. Also, during last programme evaluation, the expert panel noted 'non-existent academic mobility of theatrologists'. Even in SER this problem is recognized as an area for improvement, and the panel notes that measures that were taken to improve this situation ('the programme coordinator has been attending lectures at various levels and courses and presents the Erasmus+ programme possibilities. We also ask Erasmus+ university teachers to share their impressions and evaluations of the universities they have visited with their students') These measure are not sufficient and must be improved. The meetings with staff and students during the online visit confirmed the insularity of this programme which is severely detrimental to its standing both nationally and internationally, and to the experience of students.

3.3.4. Assessment of the suitability, adequacy and effectiveness of the academic, financial, social, psychological and personal support provided to the students of the field.

and

3.3.5 Evaluation of the sufficiency of study information and student counselling.

(1) Factual situation

According to the SER, additional assistance is provided to students facing academic, psychological, social, material, financial or career issues. All students are encouraged to participate fully in the study process.

Students are introduced to the course of the studies during the introductory lectures. Information about the study process is also accessible on the university's website. Throughout the study process each student can address their concerns about their studies, exam evaluations and other questions related to studies to the members of teaching staff and administrators of the Faculty or Department. This is briefly described in the SER.

The SER and a relevant link describe that support offered to students claiming that 'Material support for MgT students is sufficient' and that the strength of study fields area is that 'Academic, material, social, psychological, spiritual support for students is optimal; its system is clear and transparent'.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The panel is agreed that the information provided about the student support, study information and counselling provision offered to students is generic, vague and therefore inadequate. Meetings with staff and students during the online visit confirmed the view of the panel that this is deficient and does not meet minimum standards. The prevailing attitude of both staff and students is that mature students (who comprise the whole cohort) do not require certain kinds of support because they are adults. The panel was also concerned that

there could be a lack of student support (counselling, personal support) as the number of graduates has been only 6 in 2017-2019, despite the fact, that there have been 16 admitted students 2017-2019. Regardless of the low number of admitted students, there are 35 enrolled students in total. These numbers show not only low numbers of students interested in the study programme, but also the few that finish the study programme.

Staff and students also confirmed that feedback, advice and most kinds of contact was informal, undocumented and often took place off-site 'in a café over coffee and cake'. The panel were extremely concerned that the casual, clubby culture encouraged a view that mature students did not require the support mechanisms offered to other students and may discourage those who might need help from seeking it. The panel was also very concerned at the lack of demarcation between staff and students, which undermines the fairness, and transparency of the teaching, learning practices and pastoral support. The provision of student support, study information and counselling is significantly deficient and does not meet the minimum requirements and must be rectified.

Recommendations for this evaluation area:

1. The admission criteria are unacceptable and must revised to be subject specific to meet the needs for studies in the field of History and Theory of Arts.

2. There is an unacceptable lack of transparency that must be addressed. Feedback to students, advice and most kind of contact between staff and students is informal, undocumented and often takes place off-site 'in a café over coffee and cake' (prior to pandemic). This significant deficiency must be addressed and a formal structure must be implemented that provides a robust system for the feedback and support that is provided to the students.

3. The panel finds the casual, clubby culture of the programme promotes an ethos that mature students do not require the support mechanisms offered to other students. This is unacceptable and must be improved. There are also deficiencies in the management of the studies undertaken by the students. It is essential that the needs of the students must be taken seriously and managed appropriately and pro-actively. There must be a change in thinking, that mature students do not need support.

4. The lack of mobility of programme students and the absence of any Erasmus + students from other countries within the programme is very concerning. The meetings with staff and students during the online visit confirmed the insularity of this programme which is severely detrimental to its standing both nationally and internationally. Thus the additional measures should be taken to improve mobility of the students. If students are not able to participate in physical mobility due to their personal or professional reasons, efforts must be made to encourage them to participate in the projects similar to Erasmus+ Virtual Exchange.

5. The information provided about the studies and counselling provision offered to students is generic, vague and therefore inadequate. The numbers of students in the programme show not only low interest in the study programme, but also the few that finish the study programme may be due to a lack of appropriate support. It is essential that a more pro-active approach to student counselling should be taken, not only providing the help to the students if the request is received, but also anticipating problems and help that may be needed, especially by mature students.

3.4. STUDYING, STUDENT PERFORMANCE AND GRADUATE EMPLOYMENT

Studying, student performance and graduate employment shall be evaluated according to the following indicators:

3.4.1. Evaluation of the teaching and learning process that enables to take into account the needs of the students and enable them to achieve the intended learning outcomes.

(1) Factual situation

SER describes the learning process of the programme and indicates that the studies are conducted in full-time form of studies and the session study schedule is applied. Periodic sessions take place four times a year. Studies are carried out using various methods such as lectures, discussions, reflections, individual and group work, consultations, practical observation and interview tasks, analysis of scientific sources and data, modelling, independent work, video reviews, analysis and other. The form of assessment of students' achievement is an examination.

According to SER, the intended learning outcomes are related to the regionality of Western Lithuania, its cultural context and amateur theatre culture as well as theatre education.

In the Panel's meetings with KU staff as well as students it was emphasized the fact that all of the students of the programme are working/having families and some of them are living outside of Klaipeda town. It was mentioned also on several occasions that the study programme is supporting students by providing them with a flexible schedule. During the meeting with students, they were also expressing their satisfaction with how the studies are happening in pandemic times, mainly using the materials disseminated through email.

The subjects of the final theses of MA students are often chosen within the field of their already existing professional career.

Programme students are active participants in the study process. The students who participated in the online meeting were characterized by the application of the knowledge acquired during their studies in their professional activities and workplaces. Several students have a vast amount of professional experience before entering to study in the programme. A group of interviewed students during the online meeting stated that they are running a blog about theatre on Facebook where students publish their reviews on selected theatre

performances. However, the full involvement of the students in the study process is complicated by existing social commitments to workplaces or parenthood. This could be the reason why there is a very low interest in studying outside the KU in foreign universities through exchange programmes, notably Erasmus+, despite the quite enthusiastic feedback from the students on studies in the KU.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The teaching and learning process of the programme meets the established minimum requirements, but needs improvement. It is varied in its form and provides students with a range of activities, also allowing them to participate in different projects led by the staff. It takes into account the needs of the students as the programme is providing students with a flexible study schedule, allowing them to live and work in other towns in Lithuania.

The study process in *covid* times is happening as planned and both the teachers and the students are convenient with it and satisfied while also building strong and vital in the region culture community ties.

Based on the online meetings with staff and students, the Expert Panel has formed an opinion that most of the study process is happening in rather informal ways, without the support of formal structures; this is a cause of concern to the Panel members.

The intended students' learning outcomes, theses subjects, research fields seem to be often already formulated by students prior to coming to study. While the study programme and research outcome as well as student final work and final theses have local meaning, they lack a wider context.

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

(1) Factual situation

SER indicates that 'students may receive a free attendance permit from the dean and the MgT has an opportunity for distant learning' in cases of illness, pregnancy, parental leave or may temporarily terminate their studies according to the law of the Republic of Lithuania. Students also have a possibility to take exams individually. Another socially vulnerable group is indicated as students with low income and they are provided with a possibility to reduce their tuition fee.

During the meetings with students and university staff it was indicated that financial assistance is rarely needed as most of the students are working.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The field of evaluation meets the established minimum requirements, but needs improvement. Based on the information in the SER, supporting information and online meetings with staff and students, the Expert Panel is concerned that the socially vulnerable groups are narrowly defined, not including the people with physical disabilities, age factors or

ethnic origins. The prevailing attitude of both staff and students is that mature students do not require certain kinds of support because they are adults. This raises panel's concern about the possibility to receive needed support.

3.4.3. Evaluation of the systematic nature of the monitoring of student study progress and feedback to students to promote self-assessment and subsequent planning of study progress.

(1) Factual situation

The monitoring of student study progress is not informative in the SER. The feedback to students to promote self-assessment and subsequent planning of study progress is described in SER:

'Various forms of feedback are introduced: discussion on the performance of a task or exam assessment (in a group or individually), feedback and comments by electronic means, students' self-assessment or peer assessment, discussion groups. Oral or written comments are provided to the Master's student in assessing part or all of their thesis. University teachers announce the consultation time – 1.5 hours per week when students can consult on various issues.'

It was also mentioned by the staff and students that the teachers and programme curators are always accessible for students to contact them individually regarding any questions related to studies.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

In the Expert Panel's opinion, the amount of individual feedback given to students is a satisfactory aspect of the study program. According to staff, 'which is also easy, given the little amount of students in the programme.' The availability of staff and teachers for students to contact is also evaluated as a satisfactory factor. However, the informal student and staff relationships do not contribute to the improvement of the study quality which is a major deficiency.

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

(1) Factual situation

SER writes: 'Many MgT students are employed so the problem of recruitment is not relevant. Also, second-cycle studies are not directly labour market-oriented.' No one in the student group interviewed showed any interest in a career of a university teacher or researcher either. During the meetings with students and social partners it was stressed on several occasions that this study programme helps to improve students' skills in their current jobs.

The meeting with staff, students and other social partners introduced a variety of fields where alumni are working - from theatre administration to critical writing in magazines and newspapers to teaching at schools and museum curators.

It is also indicated that of the 11 graduates in the period 2016-2019, all work in the region of Western Lithuania.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The study programme is not directly labour market-oriented and also not science oriented. For the Panel this poses a question as to whether this programme should be used to its best advantage as a series of CPD (continuous professional development) units under the umbrella of lifelong learning instead of trying to combine these disjointed units into a Master's programme.

The Expert Panel formed a satisfactory opinion about the employability of the students and their career tracking. It was expressed on several occasions during the meetings the long lasting connections between the alumni, teaching staff and students which contribute to future collaborations as well. The area of evaluation meets the established minimum requirements, but needs improvement.

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

(1) Factual situation

According to SER, the principles and measures to ensure academic honesty, tolerance and non-discrimination are defined in the Code of Ethics of KU teachers and Researchers (2006) and Code of Academic Ethics of Klaipeda University (2019) while each student who enters the university signs Student's Declaration of Integrity.

The document describing the students must follow the principle of academic integrity is The Description of general requirements for KU students' independent written works (2020).

Later in the SER it is mentioned that in recent years there was one case of violation of principles of academic integrity decision.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The Expert Panel thinks the policy documents are satisfying to ensure academic integrity, tolerance and non-discrimination. Despite the policy documents meeting the minimal needs satisfying, the communication during the meeting with one of the groups caused a concern to the Panel members if the ethical communication is sustained, as the members of the meeting felt no boundaries and let themselves a very non-formal, sometimes insolent, way of communication.

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

(1) Factual situation

The SER provides such information:

'Chapter XIII of the KU Study Regulations provides an appeals procedure when students disagree with the assessment of an examination or final thesis, or when a student considers that he or she has been unlawfully prevented from defending a final thesis. If a student is dissatisfied with the administration's response to a statement or complaint or has not received a response within the specified time, he or she may apply to the Administration and Student Dispute Resolution Commission. If a student receives an unsatisfactory grade during the exam, it can be retaken once without repeating the course. Failing the exam two times, students can continue their studies at a paid study place by repeating the course. The latter option can be used by students twice during the entire study period. A student, who disagrees with the evaluation for a course unit's learning outcomes, has a right to appeal to the Appellative Commission within two days. Within three days of the receipt of an appeal, the Department's head notifies the student about the decision. There have been no appeals or complaints in the last three years.'

Neither SER nor during the meetings the complaints of students regarding the study process were not provided.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

Based on the information in the SER, the panel is satisfied with the application of procedures for the submission and examination of appeals and complaints regarding the study process within the field studies.

Recommendations for this evaluation area:

1. The Panel is raising concerns about the lack of any broader contribution to the academy and the absence of the training of future university teachers.
2. The study programme should take a wider approach to the needs of the students. The socially vulnerable groups are narrowly defined, not including the people with physical disabilities, age factors or ethnic origins.
3. The institution should educate the members of the community about ethical behaviour and boundaries that must be kept in the academic community.
4. A clear formal structure should be added in the study process, as it is happening in rather informal ways, without the support of formal structures.

3.5. TEACHING STAFF

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

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

(1) Factual situation

According to the SER, there are eight full-time teachers in the study field. Seven of them have a doctoral degree and research activities related to the study field and one of them is a professional artist (theatre director) within the field. The faculty also hires part-time visitors from other universities. According to documentation professors teach at least 20% of the study units. The selection of academic staff complies with the formal legal requirements both in terms of academic competencies and pedagogical experience in higher education. Three most significant works in the last five years by each full-time teacher have been listed in the SER.

As mentioned in the section 3.1.5. of this report, after the previous evaluation 2013, study subjects changed following the recommendations presented in the report. In online meeting with senior management and faculty admin the panel was told, that programme reforms caused lack of teachers who could take responsibility for new core studies of the updated programme. Consequently, new teachers were hired from other universities, but they were unable to cater for the full workload.

The dynamics of teaching staff turnover is not provided in the SER and no means how to ensure education of young teaching staff is presented. In online meetings no further information was provided when participants were asked about future visions and plans, although it was mentioned that there is a need for new teachers.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The panel notes that according to the information given in the SER, the research and professional profiles of the teaching staff meet the formal legal requirements. There are a low number of active students and hence the student teacher ratio is at least formally appropriate. There have been only 16 admitted students 2017-2019. Despite the rather low number of admitted students, there are still 35 enrolled students in total. The number of graduates has been only 6 in 2017-2019. Based on the SER and online meetings, most of the students are working and participating studies only periodically. Occasionally some of them interrupt their studies altogether and then later come back again. In a situation where students are studying rather irregularly, it is virtually impossible to evaluate and predict the real workload of the teachers. This requires considerable flexibility from teacher's part.

It is the panel's view that if the university took into account recommendations presented in the section 3.1. concerning contents of the programme, and thus following its own vision and strategy, it should reconsider the teaching staff's responsibilities and workloads as well. It is stated in the panel's recommendation 1 in section 3.1. that the overall programme needs to be socially contextualised and in particular this social dimension needs to be reflected in the learning outcomes and that they are cognisant of the KU's strategic policies. Even without substantial changes in the programme content, but especially in the case if the programme contents were reconsidered as recommended, this would require adequate means to ensure that some of the critical responsibilities do not lay on part-time teachers or visitors.

The panel notes that the information about the staff turnover provided in the SER and interviews was inadequate. It is the panel's view that there is lack of vision and strategy for how the education of future teaching staff of the study field is ensured in relation to the strategy of the university and the future development of the programme. No one in the student group interviewed showed any interest in a career of a university teacher or researcher.

3.5.2. Evaluation of conditions for ensuring teaching staffs' academic mobility (not applicable to studies carried out by HEIs operating under the conditions of exile).

(1) Factual situation

According to the SER and based on the information given in the online meetings, internationalization is considered very important in the university. According to the SER teachers in the study field cooperate with other Lithuanian institutions which are named. SER lists also universities and other institutions abroad where teachers have done interims. Results are not analysed (e.g. in relation to the mission, vision or strategy) and there is no evaluation of conditions for ensuring staff's mobility.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

Based on the SER and the interviews the panel agree that provided information about the academic mobility is modest. Although the university considers internationalization very important, information given to the panel does not support a view that teaching staff's international mobility is by any systematic means evaluated or its conditions ensured. Concerning international mobility between partner universities, there seems to be no connection to the strategic vision and its strong emphasis on the Baltic Sea region pointed out in the meeting with senior management and faculty administration.

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

(1) Factual situation

The SER doesn't provide any information how the conditions to improve the competences of the teaching staff are systematically ensured. The SER just describes briefly the actual situation concerning teachers' workload: 33% of the total workload must be devoted to research. Pedagogical work hours are related to the number of students in a group: 'For example, teaching one course unit at MgT for a group of 6 students gives the university teacher 44 contact and self-study hours.' The SER states that this link between pedagogical work and number of students 'is determined by the funding situation, which is very unfavourable for university teachers.'

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The panel was not provided adequate information concerning conditions and systematic nature of teaching staff's development which is supported by the university. There are no systematic means in use to ensure that current teaching staff members were able to constantly improve their competencies as researchers and teachers in a way that would support the strategy of the university and requirements set by reforms of the programme.

Recommendations for this evaluation area:

1. The university should reconsider staff turnover and future staffing strategies in relation to the strategy of the university and the development of the programme.
2. The university should develop systematic means for ensuring that teaching staff members were able to constantly improve their competencies as researchers and teachers in a way that would support the requirements set by the study programme development.
3. Even without substantial changes in the programme content, but especially in the case if the programme contents were reformed as recommended in this report, the university should reconsider the teaching staff's responsibilities and workloads. This requires means to ensure that some of the critical responsibilities do not lay on part-time teachers or visitors.
4. The university and the management of the study field should consider that teaching staff's academic mobility is by systematic means evaluated and its conditions ensured. The concerning lack of international mobility between partner universities should be addressed as there seems to be no connection to the strategic vision and its strong emphasis on the Baltic Sea region pointed out by the representatives of the university.

3.6. LEARNING FACILITIES AND RESOURCES

Study field learning facilities and resources should be evaluated according to the following criteria:

3.6.1. Evaluation of the suitability and adequacy of the physical, informational and financial resources of the field studies to ensure an effective learning process.

(1) Factual situation

SER provides in detail the data on the premises used for the field studies and practice and the number of working places within them are provided. The equipment is adequate. The details of the material in the library are indicated. Information on available access to electronic publications is provided.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

As due to covid-19 panel was not able to participate in face-to-face visit, photo presentation of the facilities owned by KU was introduced before online visit took place as well as the information provided in SER and accompanying material. However, provided information shows that all the resources are mostly oriented towards philology department needs. With an exception of shared data bases of Vilnius University and Vilnius Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre the resources of the particular field related to the theatre studies are not described and provided, therefor not existent and this creates a major deficiency in the field of studies.

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

(1) Factual situation

According to SER, annual analysis of the study programme implementation is carried out by the decision of the FSSH Study Committee. New publications in the library are ordered by the departments upon submission of an application to the Information Resources Formation Division of the KUB (Klaipeda University Library) electronically. At the department, the list is compiled by the teachers. The library continually informs departments about books published in Lithuania, and provides catalogues of specialized foreign publishers.

It is planned to prepare more course units for distant learning, as there is a growing demand.

*While there were plans expressed to having a media library, t*here is no more specific information provided regarding the planning and upgrading of the materials and resources specifically for the field of studies related to the study part of theatre

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

There is no specific information provided regarding the planning and upgrading of the materials and resources specifically for the field of studies related to the study part of theatre, which raises concerns.

Recommendations for this evaluation area:

1. Strengthen the library materials and resources concerning theatre studies.

2. Students should be able to order books in the library for purchase directly.

3. The community of students and staff should be informed constantly by HR department or librarians about the renewal of the resources especially those needed for the studies of theatre.

4. Systematic planning of resources must be introduced into the practice.

3.7. STUDY QUALITY MANAGEMENT AND PUBLICITY

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

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

(1) Factual situation

According to SER, the Quality Management System provides all information related to the process (planning, implementation, control, and improvement): activities, result, responsible persons, and the most critical documents regulating the process. The frequency of the internal evaluation is carried out every year.

According to SER, the structure and content of study programmes implemented in KU are reviewed and updated annually.

The survey results are also taken into account when internal quality assurance takes place.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The Expert Panel is considering the internal quality assurance system of the study field as meeting the established minimum needs, however there is a lack of information regarding the efficiency of the quality assurance system at the level of specific programme. Panel's concerns mentioned in the report above, regarding the planning of staff turnover, resource renewal planning, students support and other, raises a serious concern to the panel about the functioning of the quality assurance system at the programme's level.

3.7.2. Evaluation of the effectiveness of the involvement of stakeholders (students and other stakeholders) in internal quality assurance. Evaluation of the planning and upgrading of resources needed to carry out the field studies.

(1) Factual situation

Stakeholders' contribution to the development of the study programme is stated in the SER and was later confirmed by the social partners from Klaipeda Drama Theatre. The Department of Philology has close relations with Klaipeda Drama Theatre, which creates conditions for the executors of the programme to discover the aspects relevant to the formation of vocational training knowledge, practical, and transferable skills.

Most of the social partners are former students maintaining their connection with the study programme afterwards. However, the programme itself has changed significantly in the last couple of years and some of the social partners are from study programme generation more than 10 years ago and thus in the view of the panel were not informed about the changes in the study program. This raises a panel's concern if social partners are incorporated in the quality assurance system and participate in the renewal of the study program.

According to SER, the students receive questionnaires in the end of the year, where they provide their answers regarding the planning and upgrading of resources. It was also mentioned by the staff that many on students' opinions about the study quality are often expressed in informal meetings.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

This field meets the established minimum requirements, but needs improvement; the involvement of stakeholders in internal quality assurance gives by no means a positive effect of the programme of studies. While there is involvement from major theatre in Klaipeda, common projects with other regional theatres, school teachers, there is no significant involvement in the internal quality assurance with other Lithuanian/international institutions. Social partners' involvement seems to be rather informal, therefor it lacks attentiveness.

The Panel raises concerns regarding the communication with students in the process of quality assurance as well as planning and upgrading the resources needed to carry out the field studies.

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

(1) Factual situation

According to SER, 'the following internal research is performed at KU: (1) content of the course unit and assessment of the quality of teaching (assessed by students); (2) graduates' evaluation of KU activities (evaluated by graduates); (3) internship assessment (assessed by students); (4) efficiency of the study process (assessed by graduates); (5) implementation of study programmes (assessed by administrative staff and university teachers); (6) other one-time quantitative and qualitative research performed to gather information relevant to the activities of the KU. The summarized results of the research are discussed with the stakeholders and reflected in the departments' reports. Summarized information is publicly available on the KU website in the annual KU report.'

The following are also publicly published on the KU website: requirements for admission to study programmes, study programme results, descriptions of course units, qualifications to be acquired, career opportunities, and other information related to the organization of studies: legal acts and documents regulating the study process at KU.

During the interviews with staff, it was also mentioned that the best way of communication about the study programme is through its graduates and alumnus, by word of mouth.

The University's Facebook page is well-held and professionally representing various areas of activities, including cultural events, but there is no significant connection to theatre activities or the programme in evaluation.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

In the opinion of the expert panel the general communication about the study programme is meeting the established minimum needs. The collection, use and publication of information on studies, their evaluation and improvement processes and outcomes are included alongside general University documents and therefore represented.

The SER, however at times was very unorganized and presented completely irrelevant information, thus this raised a concern of the Panel about the KU's representatives responsible for quality assurance and their ability to present information and this is considered as a major deficiency.

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

(1) Factual situation

According to SER, there are questionnaires given to students every year.

The expert recommendation during last external evaluation commented on the mechanism of programme student participation in programme improvement processes and it is stated in the SER that a standardized assessment of the study process is performed at the end of each semester.

The SER states:

'MgT students, as can be seen from their interviews with journalists, place the most significant emphasis on the informal attitude of university teachers towards work, the ability to communicate sincerely, respectfully, and tolerantly with students, and maintain collegial relationships.

<...> The students noted in the questionnaires that there is much interdisciplinarity in the studies, the university teachers are competent. Students are satisfied with the harmony of theatre, drama, literature, and visual arts. Quote from student feedback: 'An excellent choice is to invite professionals whose work is currently theatre-related to teach. While comparing different theatres' activities, it would be great to hear the latest knowledge from the people

who actually work in those theatres. It would be strong to take part in rehearsals of performances as well, to see what principles are the basis of theatre director's work.'

Students emphasize that they have updated their knowledge, vocabulary, literary analysis skills, learned a lot about contemporary drama – students like discussions and university teachers' ability to evaluate their work.'

During the online meetings the expert panel has formed an opinion that both the students and the teachers are satisfied with the informal atmosphere and its representation in the study field, however in Panel's opinion the rational boundaries are missing, as was pointed out in this report.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The positive opinion by the students of the study programme was obvious in all online meetings with students and social partners. There is a big support for the programme from its graduates.

The student opinion in experts' view is not very systematically collected and summarized by the institution. The answer on how this information is collected was not answered during the online meetings. The Panel believes the situation is rather ambivalent where on one hand the processes are governed from the university on the other hand there is no consistent system in the level of department as proven by SER and during the meetings.

Recommendations for this evaluation area:

1. There is a lack of professionalism in the area of programme assurance system.
2. There is no significant involvement of stakeholders in the internal quality assurance process, needed to carry out the field studies, thus the knowledge is encapsulated. It is recommended to incorporate the social partners to the process of study programme's improvement in more formal ways. The wider range of social partners should be encouraged to participate in quality assurance more actively.
3. The SER at times was very unorganized and presented irrelevant information, thus this raised a concern of the Panel about the KU's representatives responsible for quality assurance and their ability to present information. The Quality Management System should be implemented not only in the level of higher education institution (KU), but in the level of Department and programme in question.
4. There is a concerning lack of systematic reviews and plans for improvements.

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

The list of recommendations, that must be implemented in order to assure that students admitted before study field's non-accreditation will gain knowledge and skills at least on minimum level:

1. The admission criteria are unacceptable and must revised to be subject specific to meet the needs for studies in the field of History and Theory of Arts.
2. The unacceptable lack of transparency and absence of structures in the habitually informal interaction with students must be rectified. These significant deficiencies must be addressed and a formal structure must be implemented that provides a robust system for the feedback and support that is provided to the students.
3. The learning outcomes for the programme appear disconnected from the practical social and labour market realities of the cultural environment in which this programme is operating. This is despite the fact that the programme is currently located within the faculty of Social Sciences and that the social dimension is central to the KU's strategic policies. The panel therefore recommends that the overall programme needs to be socially contextualised and in particular this social dimension needs to be reflected in the learning outcomes and that they are cognisant of the KU's strategic policies.
4. In the view of the panel there is a lack of clarity surrounding the procedures for assessment, documentation of assessments and structured feedback. The panel therefore recommends that Greater, properly documented policy and operational procedures relating to assessments must be formulated and made available.
5. When examining the programme units, the panel became aware that unit fragmentation is apparent and leads to a lack of progression coherency. The panel recommends that the development of a programme structure which gives greater linear coherency between the units is essential.
6. The programme is not fully exploiting the rich sources of research and the synergy possibilities available to them through their location in the FSSH. The panel recommends that improved structures be put in place to encourage these synergies to enrich the research possibilities for students on this programme.
7. It is the view of the Panel that within the programme, there is a sense of community and identity held by both staff and students which provides strong ties with the theatre in the western region of Lithuania. However broader international possibilities are sadly curtailed. While mobility occurs at staff level the study/employment balance required by most students precludes them from availing of the same mobility opportunities and the scientific possibilities associated with them. The panel recommends that suitable structures and incentives be put in place to encourage students to avail of international mobility opportunities.

8. The lack of any broader contribution to the academy and the absence of training of future teachers is a significant deficiency of the study programme and must be addressed.

9. The study programme needs to take a wider approach to the needs of the students. The socially vulnerable groups are narrowly defined, not including the people with physical disabilities, age factors or ethnic origins.

10. Systematic planning of resources must be introduced into the practice.

11. There is a significant lack of professionalism in the area of programme assurance system that must be addressed by significant involvement of stakeholders in the internal quality assurance process in more formal ways.

12. The university should reconsider staff turnover and future staffing strategies in relation to the strategy of the university and the development of the programme.

13. The university should develop systematic means for ensuring that teaching staff members were able to constantly improve their competencies as researchers and teachers in a way that would support the requirements set by the study programme development.

14. Even without substantial changes in the programme content, but especially in the case if the programme contents were reformed as recommended in this report, the university should reconsider the teaching staff's responsibilities and workloads. This requires means to ensure that some of the critical responsibilities do not lay on part-time teachers or visitors.

15. The university and the management of the study field should consider that teaching staff's academic mobility is by systematic means evaluated and its conditions ensured. The concerning lack of international mobility between partner universities should be addressed as there seems to be no connection to the strategic vision and its strong emphasis on the Baltic Sea region pointed out by the representatives of the university.

V. SUMMARY

The following is a summary of the findings of the evaluation team based on the Self-Evaluation Reports and the interviews with the university administration (senior management and faculty administration staff), staff responsible for the preparation of the SER, teaching staff and stakeholders (students, alumni, employers, social partners). The evaluation team gives a negative evaluation to the implementation of study field of History and Theory of Arts second cycle study programme at Klaipeda University.

The evaluation of the study programme in questions raised multiple discussions among the Expert Panel. While creating the community and being an important culture hub in local context, there are major concerns if the study programme qualifies for the Master's level programme of studies. There is a sense of community and identity held by both staff and students and strong ties with the theatre in the Western region of Lithuania, but there are big concerns about the lack of any broader contribution to the academy and the absence of the training of future university teachers.

The panel is unanimous in finding the information in the SER generic and vague and it does not therefore give a clear indication of the study field and the specifics of this programme. The careless presentation of the study field in the SER was unacceptable and the panel sought to discover further information about the programme during the online visit and requested further written information (see below). The online meetings with staff, students and university administration did not fully address the panel’s serious doubts about the quality of the information in the SER. As a consequence the panel concludes that the poor quality of the SER matches the deficiencies in this programme that is being implemented in the study field of History and Theory of Arts.

The learning outcomes, which are central to any programme, are in general unsatisfactory and their role in defining the structure and purpose of this programme are deemed to be unacceptable. The learning outcomes appear disconnected from the practical social and labour market realities of the cultural environment in which this programme is operating. This disconnect reveals a deficiency in the underlying structure and design of the learning outcomes

While semester three provides an introduction to the humanities and social sciences there is a necessity to embed these as a core elements throughout the programme if the aims and learning outcomes are to align with the social demands of the programme. The KU’s strategic priorities are also not given the central position, they warrant within the learning outcomes whereas they should be an essential prerequisites. Failure to place these strategic priorities centrally within the learning outcomes is a major failing in the programmes design.

While mapping of learning outcomes to the Description of the study field, as shown in SER, the category Special Abilities, which in the Description of the study field outlines

technical, methodical, informational and organizational/managerial skills is replaced with the category Subject-Specific Skills. This change in terminology reveals a more fundamental issue which sees the socially engaged aspects of the programme given less emphasis. All of the social related units are presented as optional units. This lack of mandatory recognition of the socialising units is a serious fault and is therefore unsatisfactory.

The units themselves are wide and varied but in terms of providing a structured development of competencies which deliver a focus for the students thesis and potential career enhancement there is a worrying disconnect, which is unacceptable.

In the view of the panel there is a lack of clarity surrounding the procedures for assessment, documentation of assessments and structured feedback. There is no evidence of any formal, properly documented policy and operational procedures relating to assessments which are standard, international prerequisites across higher education.

The contemporary research of the programme staff mentioned in the SER is very valuable in maintaining a link between the content of the programme and the contemporary field developments.

While the link between the student's employment areas and their studies/research is positive and has great potential, when compared to the variety of contemporary social topics engaged with at faculty level, it becomes obvious that the programme is not fully exploiting the rich sources of research and the synergy possibilities available to them through their location in the FSSH. This lack of engagement is viewed by the panel as a significant shortcoming.

Within the programme there is a sense of community and identity held by both staff and students which provides strong ties with the theatre in the western region of Lithuania. The level of local and regional engagement by students in a variety of activities (festivals and events) offer the students an acceptable opportunity to engage with professionals from outside their immediate educational environment. However, the panel view the lack of international mobility for students as a significant shortcoming.

The selection of academic staff complies with the formal legal requirements both in terms of academic competencies and pedagogical experience in higher education.

After the previous evaluation 2013, study subjects changed following the recommendations presented in the report. Programme reforms caused lack of teachers who could take responsibility for new core studies of the updated programme. Consequently, new teachers were hired from other universities, but they were unable to cater for the full workload.

Despite the rather low number of admitted students, there are still 35 enrolled students in total. Occasionally students interrupt their studies. Because students are studying

irregularly, it is difficult to evaluate and predict teachers' real workload. This requires considerable flexibility from teacher's part.

The dynamics of teaching staff turnover is not provided in the SER and no means how to ensure education of young teaching staff is presented. In online meetings no further information was provided when participants were asked about future visions and plans, although it was mentioned that there is a need for new teachers.

If the university took into account recommendations presented in this report, it should reconsider the teaching staff's responsibilities and workloads. Even without substantial changes in the programme content, but especially in the case if the programme contents were reconsidered as recommended, this would require adequate means to ensure that some of the critical responsibilities do not lay on part-time teachers or visitors.

Study field cooperates mostly with other Lithuanian institutions and international cooperation with institutions abroad is modest. Teaching staff's academic mobility is not really evaluated, or its conditions ensured. Concerning international mobility within the study field, there seems to be no connection to the strategic vision and its strong emphasis on the Baltic Sea region pointed out in the documentation and online meetings. The support provided to the students is inconsistent and underdeveloped. It was stated during evaluation process, that every student can receive university's support regarding academical, financial or social issues. However, the panel was concerned that there could be a lack of student support as the prevailing attitude of both staff and students is that mature students (who comprise the whole cohort) do not require certain kinds of support because they are adults. This view may discourage those who might need help from seeking it. The panel was also very concerned at the lack of demarcation between staff and students, which undermines the fairness, and transparency of the teaching, learning practices and pastoral support, as staff and students also confirmed that feedback, advice and most kinds of contact was informal, undocumented and often took place off-site 'in a café over coffee and cake'.

The panel was also concerned that there could be a lack of student support (counselling, personal support) as the number of graduates has been only 6 in 2017-2019, despite the fact, that there have been 16 admitted students 2017-2019. Regardless of the low number of admitted students, there are 35 enrolled students in total. These numbers show not only low numbers of students interested in the study programme, but also the few that finish the study programme.

It was a clear problem during online meetings where both students and teachers showed their casual and clubby attitude towards study process. Teachers often give feedback to students, but it lacks formal tone. Students are not motivated to improve at the academic level. During the interview, none of students were interested in pursuing an academic career in teaching and research.

There is a clear lack of interest in international exchange. The lack of mobility of programme students and the absence of any Erasmus+ students from other countries within the programme was indicated during the evaluation. The meetings with staff and students during the online visit confirmed the insularity of this programme which is severely detrimental to its standing both nationally and internationally, and to the experience of students. The reasons of this tendency could be found in existing social and economic situation, lack of international relations and cooperation with other institutions of higher education.

Most of the graduates are now working in a variety of fields based on study field from teaching to administrating theatres. All of graduates are working in the region of Western Lithuania.

Expert panel signatures:

1. **Prof. dr. Dana Arnold (team leader)** *academic,*
2. **Dr. Michael Fox,** *academic,*
3. **Lect. Hannu Apajalahti,** *academic,*
4. **Ms Monika Lipšic,** *representative of social partners'*
5. **Mr Justas Žemaitis,** *students' representative*.