



## **OVERVIEW REPORT FOR THE COMMUNICATION COMMUNICATION FIELD EVALUATION OF OCTOBER 2015**

### **INTRODUCTION**

This report is based on the external quality evaluation of the following study programmes in the study field of Communication in Lithuanian Higher Education Institutions: at European Humanities University – Media and Communication; at Kazimieras Simonavičius University – Integrated Creative Communication, - Creative and Cultural Industries, - Entertainment and Tourism Industries, - Fashion Industry; at Vilnius Gediminas Technical University – Creative Industries, - Entertainment Industries.

The external evaluations were organised by the Lithuanian Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education (SKVC).

The external evaluations were performed according to the evaluation areas and criteria: (1) Programme aims and learning outcomes, (2) Curriculum design, (3) Teaching staff, (4) Facilities and learning resources, (5) Study process and students' performance assessment, and (6) Programme management.

Comprehensive external evaluation reports including strengths and weaknesses and concluding with some recommendations were prepared for each evaluated programme and included evaluation marks. This overview focuses on the main findings of the external evaluation of the Communication study field from a general point of view.

All programmes received positive evaluation.

### **OVERVIEW BY EVALUATION AREAS**

The text below summarizes some general observations of the Review Team and these do not necessary apply to each individual programme. We refer to the reports on the individual programmes for programme specific observations.

### **Programme aims and learning outcomes**

The Review Team (RT) is of the opinion that the programmes present an important area: communication, in particular creative and entertainment industries. All evaluated universities offer several programmes in this area: KSU offers Creative and Cultural Industries, Fashion Industry, Entertainment and Tourism Industries, and the master programme Integrated Creative Communication; VGTU offers Creative Industries and Entertainment Industries, EHU offers one programme, but with two rather different specialisations (New Media; Visual Culture and Creative industries). The RT applauds the Universities for the wide offer, but at the same time recommends to be more clear about the similarities and differences between the programmes and rethink the labelling of the programs as this was not always clear. The RT committee believes that it would be wise to communicate the programmes and their differences better to the stakeholders. That would facilitate communications with prospective students, social partners and Erasmus partners. Also, a university may want to consider options to make its offer more efficient (programmes with (more) common elements, a common first year?), especially given the limited number of students.

The RT is very positive about the ‘learning outcomes approach’ that underlie the curriculum designs, but also believes that it is necessary to take the next step and to concretize the objectives and to confine the scope of the objectives of (some of) the programmes in order to make them manageable and feasible. It is also recommended to define the learning outcomes of these programmes more specific and measurable and to relate the learning outcomes of the programmes and the intended results of the study subjects more clearly and directly, in order to make it possible that they really guide the development and evaluation of the programme.

### **Curriculum design**

The RT believes that the curricula are attractive and adequate for the learning outcomes. At the same time, the RT advises the managements to evaluate the academic thoroughness of the programmes and to consider adding more research subjects and research articles to the programme. The RT also suggests adding subjects focused on the integration of topics and approaches, as a programme should be more than just a collection of subjects. The RT also believes that in some cases, the practice component could be more integrated into the programme. In general the RT is of the opinion that some programmes could be more intensive.

### **Teaching staff**

The RT was impressed by the motivation and quality of the teaching staff. Without doubt, the qualifications of the staff are sufficient to ensure the learning outcomes. It became clear that the teaching staffs have only limited opportunities for research. Because the staff is highly motivated, the number of publications is still substantive. The RT also advises to further develop professional development opportunities for the teaching staff.

### **Facilities and learning resources**

The RT considers the facilities and learning resources satisfactory / good, but also believes that for some programmes there is room for further investments in facilities and learning resources, such as a well-equipped library, databases, auditoriums, classrooms, laboratories and teamwork spaces.

### **Study process and students' performance assessment**

The RT is of the opinion that the study process and student's performance assessment are adequate in general. The admissions requirements are well-founded. 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.

### **Programme management**

The RT believes that -in general- the management of the programmes is strong with good governance. The management is committed and willing and able to make changes if and when necessary. A point of concern for most programmes is the number and quality of students. The RT also thinks that it would be possible to involve the social partners more in the curriculum design, as the participation of the of social partners is rather limited in practice.

## **MAIN STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF STUDY PROGRAMMES IN COMMUNICATION STUDY FIELD**

### **➤ Strategic recommendations at institutional level (for Higher Education Institutions):**

Please see above.

### **➤ Strategic recommendations at national level (for the Ministry of Education and Science):**

Please see above.

*Prepared by the leader of the Review Team: Prof. Dr. Peter Neijens, University of Amsterdam, the Netherlands*