



## **STUDIJŲ KOKYBĖS VERTINIMO CENTRAS**

### **LCC TARPTAUTINIO UNIVERSITETO VEIKLOS VERTINIMO IŠVADOS**

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### **INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW REPORT OF LCC INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY**

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## NOTE:

LCC University has been established by Lithuanian, Canadian and American parties and its mission is to be a North American Liberal Arts university. A majority of its faculty are North American. The systems and language used by the University reflect its North American culture. This Report will follow the model established by the University. In particular the reader should note the following:

Faculty	refers to academic teaching staff
Staff	refers to non-teaching staff and is not a generic term
Graduate Studies	refers to postgraduate, Masters studies

## I. INTRODUCTION

1. The review of LCC International University, referred to below as “LCC” or “the University”, was organised by the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education (SKVC), Lithuania, in its role as the Authorized Agency prescribed by Lithuanian law. The review was conducted in accordance with the methodology set out in the Procedure for the External Review in Higher Education approved by Government Resolution No. 1317 on 22<sup>nd</sup> September, 2010. A previous review of LCC had taken place in 2012 accrediting the University for a three-year period.
2. The University submitted a Self-evaluation Report (SER) of 56 pages with 38 Annexes. References to this documentation are made in this report. The review team visited the University from 24<sup>th</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup> November 2015 and conducted meetings with representatives of all relevant bodies of the University, including students, alumni and external stakeholders. During the visit the review team sought to triangulate information provided in the documentation at the meetings with the different University constituencies. Information referred to herein has been verified.
3. The review team explored the four principal areas of the University’s activity as set out in the “Methodology for Conducting an Institutional Review in Higher Education” (referred to below as “the Methodology”): strategic management; academic studies and life-long learning; research and/or art activities; and impact on regional and national development. Within each area of activity the review team referred to the criteria set out in the Methodology and took due account of the associated sub-criteria in reaching a decision.
4. The review team consisted of team leader *Professor dr Malcolm Cook*, Professor Emeritus, University of Exeter, UK; and members *Mr Mateusz Celmer*, PhD Student, Wroclaw University of Technology, Poland; *Ms Danguolė Kiznienė*, Consultant & Representative for Lithuanian social partners; *Professor dr Zoltán Sipos*, Head of the Institute of Business and Management Studies, King Sigismund Business School, Budapest, Hungary; *Professor dr Frank van der Duyn Schouten*, former Rector Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, The Netherlands; and review secretary *Dr Tara Ryan*, Educational Partnerships and Student Services Manager, Institute of Art, Design and Technology, Ireland.
5. The review team made a number of general and overarching observations:
  - a) The SER is a confident document which tells a definite story about recent changes following the previous review report and carries throughout the sense of a Christian ethos of the institution.

- b) The University is a hard working local University with good links to the local community and a significant number of students and staff are actively engaged in work contributing to the local community.
- c) The standard of English spoken by all faculty, staff and students who were not mother-tongue speakers was exemplary.
- d) The University has successfully promoted the model of a liberal arts approach to higher education and the distinctiveness of the North American model.
- e) There has been significant generosity by the founders and funders of the institution towards students and potential students of the region. This has manifested itself in a number of ways including the funding of scholarships, the provision of learning materials, the provision of pastoral care, the provision of supports.

However:

- f) Whilst the SER is quite informative and contains useful concrete information (e.g. the tables) nevertheless it could have been more self-critical.
- g) Work on the establishment of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) needs to be improved by greater specificity.

## II. BACKGROUND INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSTITUTION

6. LCC International University is a private, non-profit university located in Klaipėda which was originally established in 1991 as a Christian College by a joint venture between Lithuanian, Canadian and American foundations. It was granted university title in 2000 (Lithuanian Government Licence 002017) and operates as a university of the liberal arts.
7. As a liberal arts institution the University explicitly identifies and promotes itself as following a North American model of higher education. In this context it specifically offers programmes in the fields of arts, humanities, business and other social sciences which are built around a set of established core competencies. They are critical thinking, conflict transformation, a multicultural perspective, effective communication, a Christian worldview, servant leadership, multidisciplinary knowledge and community building (see p.3, Appendix 4).
8. It offers six Bachelor programmes in *International Business Administration; English Language and Literature; Psychology; Evangelical Theology; Contemporary Communication and International Relations and Development*. It offers two Master (MA) programmes in *Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) and International Management*. No doctoral programmes are provided.
9. The degree programmes are all accredited by SKVC and some are currently in the periodic reaccreditation process. The study of each of the BA programmes leads to an award at level 6 of the Lithuanian Qualifications Framework (LQF) and the MA programmes lead to an award at level 7 of the LQF. The Lithuanian Framework was referenced in 2012 to the overarching European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning (EQF) and also to the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) Bologna Framework, during the same process.
10. LCC's BA in International Business Administration attracts the highest number of students with 290 from a total Bachelor enrolment of 463, i.e. 63%. There are twenty-eight Master students. Almost 100% of the University's students are full-time students. To date the University has graduated over 1,700 people.
11. Significantly, students come from a variety of countries with Lithuanian students only comprising 46% of undergraduate level and 54% at graduate level. The University can be described as East-facing, and is consciously so. Most of its non-Lithuanian students come from countries such as Ukraine, Moldova, Romania, Russia, Kazakhstan, Georgia and Albania.

12. In 2014/15 there were sixty-five members of (between part-time and full-time) faculty, twenty-three of whom were local Lithuanians and forty-two of whom were expatriates of North America. Twenty members of faculty have doctoral degrees. Forty-two staff members are Lithuanian and seventeen are expatriates. (See Tables 7 & 8 of the SAR.).
13. The period reviewed in the self-evaluation covered 2012 to 2015.
14. LCC's vision as articulated in its Strategic Plan 2012-2017 is *to engage students in a transforming educational experience in order to create a generation of leaders for Lithuania, Eastern Europe, and Central Asia who think critically, promote democratic ideals, develop a market economy, and re-build the network of civil society within the context of a Christian worldview.*
15. Its mission is to *provide Christian liberal arts education within a diverse learning community which transforms people for servant leadership.*
16. The University attests core values which are intended to guide its work. They are:
- A liberal arts education integrates learning with all aspects of life.
  - A Christian worldview that invites all people to grow in truth and restoration through the power of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
  - Community is a safe place where people are respected, affirmed, and empowered, so that their dignity is upheld.
  - Relationships should be pursued that are mutual, authentic, and based on trust.
  - A diversity of cultures and traditions, personalities and opinions should be celebrated.

### III. STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT

#### **Strengths**

1. The open, participative and consultative nature of University leadership.
2. The engagement of the University in the previous and current review processes, reflecting an openness and commitment to improvement.
3. The positive attitude and engagement of the Student Council and its participation in all governance bodies of the University.
4. The new faculty and staff assessment model with its goal setting and 360° feedback (for staff).
5. The level of course evaluation and surveys administered.
6. The commitment and care of the faculty and staff for the mission of the institution and for the students.
7. The vision is consistently and uniformly shared across the faculty and staff.
8. The generosity of the founders and funders of the institution towards students and potential students of the region, in the funding of scholarships, the provision of learning materials, the provision of pastoral care, the provision of supports.

#### **Areas for development and enhancement recommendations**

1. In the preparation of the new strategic plan, establish specific metrics and KPIs by which the University can clearly know whether it is achieving its objectives.
2. Establish a formal risk register which is reviewed at defined periods, looking at the organisation from all perspectives.
3. Establish explicit and formal mechanisms by which regional stakeholder feedback can be obtained and considered.
4. Identify a small number of other higher education institutions (two or three) by which the University can benchmark itself – perhaps one in North America and perhaps another from Europe/Africa/Asia.
5. Continue with the development of a clear quality assurance system with defined internal procedures for programme approval and review (prior to external evaluation).
6. Revise as appropriate the University's quality assurance policy and procedures in line with the 2015 ESG, taking particular note of the Ministerial Statement on Joint Programmes.



7. Establish clear, documented due diligence and approval processes by which the University enters partnerships, signs legal agreements and establishes joint programmes with full awareness of all the diverse jurisdictional accreditation and recognition issues.
8. Appoint a senior member of faculty to have a leadership role in establishing a clear awareness amongst faculty, staff and students of the quality assurance system and the tools and elements of the Bologna process.
9. Ensure that students and external stakeholders are formally updated on responses to or actions taken in respect of feedback that they have given.
10. Formalise procedures by which students can appeal grades and make complaints.

### **Strategic Planning & Governance**

17. The review panel found strong evidence of institutional ownership of the vision and mission of the University across all members of the campus community. The Strategic Plan 2012-2017 clearly articulates the University's distinctive features and establishes a set of goals and objectives which map to the vision. This text was usefully complemented by an Action Plan for the implementation of recommendations arising from the 2012 Institutional Evaluation. The panel commended the good progress made by the University in responding to the recommendations of the 2012 panel, and the good practice whereby LCC published its actions in response to the 2012 Evaluation on its website<sup>1</sup>.
18. The panel also noted the open leadership style and consultative nature of the process for the development of the asse and the current strategic plan across the campus community. This approach has been helpful in gaining understanding and support for the proposed plans, though as discussed at the site meetings the panel notes the complementary and important role of the directive leadership of a President.
19. The review panel noted that the next phase for the development of a new Strategic Plan is commencing. A planning cycle has been established which includes various levels of formal approvals and takes a collaborative, participative and iterative approach where all employees and students contribute openly. There is evidence that the University has a clear sense of progress in implementing its vision and that the work on embedding research, initiated in

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.lcc.lt/home/about-us/facts-figures/action-plan/>

response to the 2012 Institutional Evaluation is being advanced. A monitoring process has also been embedded whereby the Strategic Plan is reviewed every six months by the President's cabinet and the findings are considered by the Board of directors. This is a good model of review (e.g. Appendix Five).

20. Notwithstanding the participative nature of the strategic planning process which involved all members of the internal community in the recent cycle, the review panel considers that external stakeholders could have been more widely and more effectively involved and consulted. Whilst the philanthropic nature of the University and its very significant contribution and commitment to the region will be discussed in section VI, the panel suggests that engagement which is based on greater reciprocal dialogue be developed. It is **recommended** that in future planning explicit and formal mechanisms by which regional stakeholder feedback can be obtained and considered should be established.
21. External stakeholders were reasonably clear on the nature and focus of the university, but the panel observed that LCC is doing a lot 'for', but less 'with' external stakeholders including other Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). As indicated future strategic planning may benefit from greater engagement with Lithuanian or regional HEIs. Involvement with local peers from the various communities of practice may offer LCC an opportunity to showcase its strengths, but also learn and gain support from other HEIs.
22. The review panel noted that there is a high sensitivity to world happenings and that the University is open to responding to challenging situations, a particularly noteworthy example being the establishment (through a different legal entity, but under the governance of the LCC Board) of an English Language Centre in Georgia to support Syrian refugees. The University's commitment to supporting students in regions affected by difficult political conflicts was also noted in its actions whereby it interviews students for its Klaipeda campus in Lebanon and Iraq.

### **Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)**

23. In establishing its Strategy the University intends that its stated goals and objectives have measurable indicators of completion. A model where Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and alternatively, established milestones are monitored exists, e.g. see Appendix 4, Strategic Plan 2012-2017 and Appendix 7, Dashboard and KPI Definitions. Monitoring of KPIs is also a function of the President's Cabinet. Nevertheless the review panel found that the KPIs lacked sufficient specificity to contribute to the University's clear understanding of where it intends to go and reflection on whether it is satisfactorily achieving its goals. Whilst a particular area was

identified, and measured e.g. student numbers, no targets were established. It is **recommended** that in the preparation of the new strategic plan, LCC establishes very specific metrics, targets and KPIs by which the University can clearly know whether it is achieving its objectives.

24. The review panel also **recommends** that LCC identifies a small number of other higher education institutions (two-three) by which the University can benchmark itself – perhaps one in North America and perhaps another from Europe/Africa/Asia. This may assist in the establishment of the new strategic plan and its associated objectives and KPIs.

### **Board of Directors**

25. Faculty and staff members were clear in their understanding of University governance. The inclusive and consultative leadership style led by the President was noted by the review panel. The President's cabinet, and in particular its executive, plays a key role in the operation of the University.
26. The Board is made up of twenty-one persons who represent many countries. Since the previous Institutional Evaluation there has been a concerted effort to change the governance structure to have less US and Canadian citizens on the Board. For example, the Board now includes persons from Russia, Ukraine and Albania. The review panel considers these as positive changes. A more representative Board will assist in maintaining and developing a deeper understanding of the region and contribute to more effective decision-making.
27. The Board meets twice a year in full in Klaipeda, and attendees normally pay their own transport expenses. The review panel noted the explicit philanthropic nature of the university community and was impressed by the generosity of the members in time and financial commitment to LCC.
28. A range of Board committees exist, such as the Finance Committee and the Governance Committee. The committees meet four-five times a year; typically meetings are conducted by Skype. A clear and thorough process which reflects LCC's values has been established for the appointment of a director to the Board.

### **Student Participation**

29. Student participation in University Governance is well established, and there is a student member of the Board, the President's Cabinet, Academic Council as well as the Self – Assessment Working Group. Students with whom the panel met (mainly in person and some by Skype) were confident, articulate and committed to the University. The panel is cognisant of the

difficulties for all HEIs in managing student participation and engagement in governance due to the short-term presence of individual students in particular roles. For significant projects, such as the self-assessment, the University may wish to consider including more than one student to ensure continuity.

## **Risk Management**

30. Arising from a clearer articulation of targets and KPIs, the University will find it helpful to establish a detailed risk register looking at possible scenarios and their likelihood of negative impact on the institution and the establishment of plans to cope with such risks. The review panel noted the assertion in the Strategic Plan 2012-2017 that the Plan identifies internal and external risks (see Appendix 4, p.2). However, a more systematic and explicit approach needs to be adopted. The panel **recommends** that the University establish a formal risk register which is distinctly reviewed at defined periods, looking at the organisation from all perspectives. The panel further noted the existence of the Crisis Management Team and its limited and specific role in risk management. However a risk register needs to be routinely considered by the President's Cabinet and periodically by the Board.

## **Quality and Quality Management**

31. The review panel noted that the notion of quality was clearly owned by everyone across the University community and members of the community demonstrated authenticity and autonomy in their engagement with the panel. It was further noted that the University had undertaken the work recommended in the 2012 report to draw together the quality assurance documents into a single text. This work will form the basis of bringing quality assurance and the organisational understanding of the *Standards and Guidelines for the Quality Assurance of Higher Education* (ESG) 2015 to the next stage.
32. The panel **recommends** that the University continues the development of a clear quality assurance system with defined internal procedures for programme design, programme approval and programme review (prior to external evaluation). Such procedures should include, amongst other things, mechanisms on how to involve external stakeholder feedback in the programme development and/or review. Institutional reflection on models such as the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM)<sup>2</sup> or Baldrige<sup>3</sup> may assist in deepening and progressing institutional understanding and ownership of quality assurance.

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.efqm.org/the-efqm-excellence-model>

33. Whilst the devolved ownership for quality assurance is positive in many respects, the panel ***recommends*** that the University allocate leadership for and ownership of quality assurance to a senior faculty member who can assist in championing a deeper understanding of its uses and how it can support and enhance the strategic management and academic life of the University. This person can assist in growing an understanding of the Bologna process and its relevance. In this context LCC should undertake a gap analysis between the newly approved 2015 *ESG* and the earlier 2009 edition and revise or develop any procedures as appropriate to reflect the enhanced understanding in Europe of quality assurance in higher education. There may be merit in a sub-group of Academic Council taking on this mapping task. The University's strength in its unique identity as a provider of a North American liberal arts model of higher education needs to be complemented with a clear understanding of European dimensions.
34. In revising its quality assurance the University should take particular note of the 2015 Ministerial Statement on Joint Programmes. As will be discussed in Section IV, LCC's use of language in respect of joint, dual, double degrees and programmes needs to be more precise reflecting both the legal contexts in which it operates and the publication of accurate information. A dedicated section in the QA documentation on the establishment of joint programmes and joint or dual degrees may be useful. It should include clear guidance on formal due diligence processes which include consideration of academic and regulatory dimensions and which should be undertaken prior to any new partnership.
35. A key element of effective quality assurance is good communication practices and this is particularly manifested in the 'closing of the loop' in respect of student feedback. Whilst students and faculty and staff gave examples of student feedback and suggestions being acted on, there was no formal system to communicate back to students actions taken in response to their comments. The panel ***recommends*** that a mechanism to close the loop in communications with students be adopted.
36. Notwithstanding the need to establish ways to formally 'close the communication loop', the review panel noted the comprehensive model of student and graduate survey in place and the collection of information which can assist in finding ways continuously to improve the University.

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<sup>3</sup> [http://www.nist.gov/baldrige/publications/education\\_criteria.cfm](http://www.nist.gov/baldrige/publications/education_criteria.cfm)

## Organisational Structure and Management of Human Resources

37. The University has established a number of new posts, including the Associate Dean for Faculty Development and the Director of Institutional Research whose roles will be helpful in achieving the institutional goals – particularly in the context of developing the University’s research profile (as will be discussed in Section V). The appointment of a Director of Institutional Research (.5 of Full Time Equivalent (FTE)) is an important step for the University and it should assist in prudent decision-making. The identification of any important knowledge gaps along with the collection and analysis of relevant information to assist in planning and policy implementation will be an important task for the Director. This should enhance the effectiveness of decisions taken and ensure alignment to strategic goals.
38. The panel confirmed that staff members have defined roles and job descriptions are in place. Also noted was the 360° review of staff members which is an example of good practice. Faculty reviews are also undertaken whereby each faculty member meets with their Head of Department to agree annual goals and review professional development objectives. Classroom peer observation takes place on an ad hoc basis currently, assisting faculty members in improving their teaching. The review panel **recommends** that this good practice be embedded formally in the University faculty review model and that it is a mandatory feature. With the high turnover of faculty due to the visiting lecture model in place in the University review and monitoring of faculty performance is particularly important.
39. Training needs of staff and faculty are identified annually in the review meetings and are communicated to the Human Resources (HR) department. Financial support is provided to both staff and faculty to enable persons to undertake further studies. 3% of the operating budget is allocated to support professional development activities.
40. On recruitment the HR department screens incoming staff and faculty for basic competencies and qualifications. The chair of a department sets the academic standards or person profile for faculty. Once initial screening is conducted, Skype or in-person interviews take place for faculty. Professional and personal references are taken, the latter pertaining to LCC’s threshold employment criterion: faculty and staff must be adherents of a Christian faith, which is defined as a person who can commit to the tenets of the Nicene Creed, which goes back to the origins of Christianity.
41. The review panel also noted the new LCC Promotion-Track Sabbatical Leave – see appendices 28, 29, 30. This is a commendable development and should assist in enhancing faculty

commitment to the University and enhancing the academic and research profile of the institution.

## **Financial Planning**

42. As indicated above the University is a non-profit philanthropic mission, inspired by Christian values. Accordingly it is predominantly dependent on fund-raising activities for financial sustainability and they occupy a significant portion of the time of the President – approximately 40%. This involves, amongst other things, three trips to North America per year on fund-raising missions. The Board of Directors also contribute to the fund-raising activities and identify opportunities for the President to source funds. Currently the University has considerable cash reserves. There is a dedicated audit committee of the Board which considers the financial situation on a regular basis aiming to ensure continued financial sustainability.
43. Whilst fees are charged to students, and they are approximately €2,800 per year, at least 67% of students are provided with some form of substantial financial aid. The very high level of financial support provided to students was viewed by the review panel as commendable reflecting a clear commitment to philanthropy and the needs of the region. The variety of supports from access to Lithuanian scholarships to the offer of on campus work was also noted. As stated above, the University is East-facing, and as such many of the potential students are coming from poorer countries. A particular challenge in recent times has been the various currency devaluations in neighbouring countries arising from the political conflict and difficulties in those areas. Accordingly the University has reserved additional funds to support students who are no longer able to complete payment of their fees due to rapid currency devaluation in their home countries. This is a noteworthy service to civic society.
44. The University has formal internal procedures for the development of budget proposals. Proposals are elaborated at department level and then sent to the President's Cabinet for decision and subsequent allocation. There is local control of a budget at chair of department level. It is the role of the President's Cabinet to ensure that funds are allocated according to the University's mission.

## **Learner Resources**

45. In keeping with the philanthropic nature of the University the range of student supports in place, including the provision of on-campus accommodation, was comprehensive and impressive given the size of the institution. There is cross-campus WIFI coverage, online library access,

well-equipped teaching facilities, restaurant, gym, and a chapel. Particularly noteworthy is the free provision of text books to students by the University. A trained counsellor is available for one-to-one sessions and workshops are also provided on areas of concern for students. This is complemented by referrals to local services for specialised health services. Non-EU students are required to have medical insurance in place. EU and Lithuanian students have access to public medical services in Lithuania once they have the appropriate documentation in place.

46. The one area of concern relates to lack of physical access to the library for any student or faculty or staff member who may have impaired mobility. The panel suggests that the University consider ways to remove this barrier for these persons. The review panel does note the supports available for students with learning difficulties, such as dyslexia through the Student Success Center. Reasonable accommodations are provided in assessments as required. The Student Success Center clearly provides a good service to students, offering help with academic issues encountered on the programmes. The meeting with all year 1 students by the head of the Center is a good model to assist in identifying challenges the students may have and how students can be supported. The model of assigning a mentor to each student from the relevant academic department is also a good practice.

### **Code of Ethics**

47. The review panel ***confirmed*** that appropriate ethical processes are in place. The Institutional Review Board documentation provides a framework for seeking ethical approval for research projects for faculty, staff and students and at all levels of study. An Academic Integrity Policy with associated procedures is also in place, and publically available on the LCC website.

**Judgement on the area: Strategic Management is given a positive evaluation.**



## IV. ACADEMIC STUDIES AND LIFE-LONG LEARNING

### **Strengths**

1. The successful promotion of the model of liberal arts approach to higher education and the distinctiveness of the North American model.
2. The spread of students from a variety of countries.
3. The provision of careers advice and comprehensive provision of practical placement opportunities.

### **Areas for Development and enhancement recommendations**

1. Ensure that marks awarded are explicitly aligned to the assessment of programme and subject learning outcomes.
2. Allocate ownership of leading the institutional embedding of learning outcomes with a constructive alignment to student assessment to a specific individual or to a dedicated sub-committee of Academic Council.
3. Establish programme committees or programme boards which are made up of faculty teaching on the programme and have student representatives which meet at least once a semester and have clear terms of reference.
4. With the issue of the revised 2015 ECTS Guidelines, take the opportunity to discuss and if necessary provide training to faculty and staff on the allocation of student workloads.
5. Where possible ensure that a whole discipline/course is not taught by one faculty member alone, so that students gain exposure to different approaches to a subject.
6. Ensure that there is clear comprehension of the complex nature of joint programmes, joint degrees and double degrees with due understanding of the Lisbon convention amongst all faculty and staff.

### **Programmes, Institutional Strategy and the National Environment**

48. Currently LCC has six Bachelor and two Master Degree programmes. Two of the Bachelor programmes are accredited for six-year periods by SKVC; all other programmes are due for reaccreditation or are in the mid accreditation process<sup>4</sup>. The numbers attending each programme provide a viable learning environment for the students. A potential exception to this is the

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<sup>4</sup> This information was accurate at the time of the Review in November 2015. At the time of factual verification of the Report, February 2016, a third programme, the Bachelor degree in International Business Administration had also received six years accreditation.

Theology degree which currently only has six students. However, the Liberal Arts model of programme provision combined with LCC's Christian perspective means that for all programmes there is a University requirement to take modules from the Theology programme thus ensuring solid numbers for many modules.

49. The review panel discussed this requirement with both students and faculty. Students clearly and confidently articulated their satisfaction with the requirement irrespective of their theological beliefs or non-beliefs. It was viewed by students as an interesting and stimulating subject where they said they learnt a lot about various religious beliefs, and where they were free to practise their own or none. Faculty stated that the purpose of the mandatory courses was to ensure that students understood and were able to articulate what a Christian world view was and how it might influence one's ethical practices and secondly to assist students in identifying what their own world-view was. Met by the panel were some individual students and graduates who are adherents to the Islamic faith and to no faith whose ability and confidence freely to articulate their world-views was noteworthy.
50. In reflecting on the range of programmes provided and the mode in which they are provided the panel considered the possibility that programmes could also be offered on a part-time basis thus broadening access to LCC's courses from amongst older members of the Lithuanian public. Higher education in Lithuania is predominantly attended by the school leaver. Typically it is the domain of the eighteen+ year old. It is suggested that the University explore opportunities to serve society with blended learning/online dimensions and offer opportunities to persons for whom education could be a "second chance". In reflecting on this LCC may wish to consider the work currently being done with local teachers which is very positive. It may be possible to develop similar approaches with other professions. Whilst noting the challenges of this from both the perspectives of cost and timing of provision there may be opportunities for persons to attend certain modules or courses if not full programmes in the first instance thus earning partial credit. The panel did note that there is no age barrier in place to the eligibility for the various types of financial aid available.
51. In this context the review panel noted the policy and procedure in place for the Recognition of Prior Learning. Examples of advanced entry were cited, and there appeared to be an awareness and familiarity with the process amongst staff and faculty.

## **Student and Graduate Experience**

52. In various meetings with students and graduates, all persons met indicated that their LCC University experience exceeded their expectations. The students and graduates praised their experience of classroom interaction, the intellectual dialogue, the pedagogical approach, the personal tutor system and classroom dynamics in general. They indicated that their qualification was valued by employers in particular due to the strength of their language skills and familiarity with the North American model of higher education. Graduates also have continued to further study in nineteen countries over half of which are in Western Europe.
53. The University maintains significant links with its alumni and surveys all graduates six/seven months after graduation ascertaining employment and further study destinations. Alumni who are based locally are also invited back to the University to participate in programme provision and offer student exposure to the work place. Amongst other things, graduates help with the innovation laboratory, give guest lectures and provide day-long seminars on the campus.
54. A Careers Office provides support on Graduate Studies; Business Work Placements; Employment rights and responsibilities; job opportunities; CV preparation, Summer Work, etc. It also issues weekly emails to all graduates with job opportunities in various countries.

## **Bologna: Qualifications Frameworks, Standards, Learning Outcomes**

55. Allied to a deepening of LCC's understanding of quality assurance for higher education and the establishment of a more comprehensive academic infrastructure is a wider and deeper appreciation of the Bologna process and its various elements including the constructive alignment of assessment to learning outcomes (both course and programme) and the allocation of workload, according to the 2015 ECTS Guide<sup>5</sup>. Whilst the University's model of a liberal arts education based on a North American understanding of higher education is both a unique and positive feature which is a key attraction for students, care needs to be taken with the use of language and concepts to ensure that they are consistent with those in common use in the EHEA. For example Appendix 17 lists "student learning outcomes"; it is not clear if these are a set of graduate attributes arising from the Strategic Plan's development of the idea of a liberal arts education or if they are assessable programme learning outcomes which are embedded in all programmes. This set of outcomes seems to have been established in response to a recommendation of the 2012 panel (see point 10 in Appendix 10), but its manner of articulation

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<sup>5</sup> [http://www.procesbolonski.uw.edu.pl/dane/ECTS\\_GUIDE.pdf](http://www.procesbolonski.uw.edu.pl/dane/ECTS_GUIDE.pdf)

suggests that there may not have been a clear understanding of the model of programme design implicit in the previous panel's recommendation. LCC may find it beneficial to provide its faculty with training on course and programme learning outcomes, assessment and its constructive alignment, programme design in this context, etc. The work of the Australian John Biggs<sup>6</sup> may be helpful, or consideration of varied European certificate programmes proved in the English medium on teaching and learning in higher education<sup>7</sup>: there is a wide variety of sources and thought on this field of pedagogy. It is particularly **recommended** that LCC ensures that marks awarded are explicitly aligned to the assessment of programme and course learning outcomes and a process for this is built into programme design and programme review. Perhaps there is an opportunity for the University to work with other local HEI's on the development of a professional development programme which addresses these professional development needs of faculty. These suggestions complement the comments made in paragraphs 31-35. It is important that LCC fully understands the pedagogical thought behind the tools of the Bologna process and acts to combine the strengths of both the North American HE model and the recent European student-centred approaches. With the issue of the revised 2015 *ECTS Guideline*, it is **recommended** that the University take the opportunity to discuss and if necessary provide training to faculty and staff on the allocation of student workload.

### **Joint Programmes and Joint Degrees**

56. In its Action Plan for Promoting the International Dimension in Higher Education for 2013-2016, the Lithuanian Ministry of Education and Science identified the development of Joint Programmes as a national target. A similar target is also identified as a European priority, e.g. under the European Research Area (ERA), as well as in the EHEA Bologna Follow-Up Group (BFUG) Work Plan 2012–2015. The review panel noted LCC's list of Erasmus + partners and also its partnership with Taylor University, Indiana, USA.
57. In various meetings with the panel a degree programme of Taylor University was referred to as a dual, joint and double degree with LCC and the contrary assertion was also made i.e., that no double degree existed. In considering the Memorandum of Agreement between the two institutions, the review panel was of the view that it was ambiguous and would benefit from revision to ensure greater clarity about the nature of the award(s) available. It was evident that

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<sup>6</sup> <http://www.johnbiggs.com.au/>

<sup>7</sup> For example <https://www.ucc.ie/en/ckb02/>, [https://www.ioe.ac.uk/study/PSP9\\_PATHIM.html](https://www.ioe.ac.uk/study/PSP9_PATHIM.html), <http://www.learning.ox.ac.uk/support/teaching/programmes/diploma/>

there were differing understandings of dual, double, joint degrees and that this difference may lead to inadvertent breaches of good practice or indeed various regulatory requirements. For example MBA programmes are not provided in Lithuania, yet the informational stands and website of LCC implies that an MBA is available from Taylor University as a dual degree. Another example is the website use of the term ‘double degree’ to refer to the opportunity to take a double major or dual subject specialization. The review panel suggests that LCC audit its literature in all forms in respect of joint programmes or joint degrees and seek the expertise of SKVC in arriving at clear definitions and how to communicate accurately various partnerships which may be in existence.

58. Matters relating to the recognition of qualifications and the issuing of diplomas also need to be agreed and stipulated. This is particularly important where there are high numbers of international students and where the Lithuanian Government in March 2015 has made it easier for incoming international students to obtain student visas. How will their qualifications be recognised at home? The University needs to be cognisant that some countries have an in-principle ban on the recognition of jointly awarded qualifications. There are also established models for a European Diploma Supplement (EDS) for a jointly awarded degree that LCC may wish to consider<sup>8</sup>.
59. As previously suggested the processes around due diligence, alignment with strategic priorities, and the legal infrastructure of agreements may need strengthening. In the current Strategic Plan there is an objective (2A) to develop further higher education partnerships which may lead to joint degrees. However, there is no QA process in place providing criteria to guide the University in choosing which university, in which location, in which discipline partnerships should be established and for what purpose(s). Due diligence processes and risk and opportunities thresholds need to be established. It is **recommended** that the University reflects on good practices and established guidelines around collaborative provision and implements improvements required.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup>[http://ecahe.eu/w/index.php/Practical\\_Guidelines\\_for\\_Joint\\_Programmes\\_on\\_the\\_Diploma\\_Supplement](http://ecahe.eu/w/index.php/Practical_Guidelines_for_Joint_Programmes_on_the_Diploma_Supplement)

<sup>9</sup> *Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications Concerning Higher education in the European region*, Lisbon (1997); the Committee of the Convention on the recognition of qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region, *Recommendation the Recognition of Joint Degrees*, Strasbourg (2004); the OECD/UNESCO *Guidelines for Quality Provision in Cross-Border Higher Education* (2005); and the UNESCO/COUNCIL OF EUROPE *Code of Good Practice in the Provision of Transnational Education* (2007); *Joint degrees: legal framework in Member States*, EACEA (2013) [http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus\\_mundus/beneficiaries/documents/action1/jointdegreeprogrammes\\_may2013.pdf](http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus_mundus/beneficiaries/documents/action1/jointdegreeprogrammes_may2013.pdf); *Guidelines for Good Practice for Awarding Joint Degrees*, European Consortium for Accreditation in higher education (2012); *Bridge Handbook: Joint Programmes and Recognition of Joint Degrees*, Bridge Project (2012). *European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes*, approved by EHEA Ministers (2015), [http://www.enqa.eu/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/European-Approach-QA-of-Joint-Programmes\\_Yerevan-2015.pdf](http://www.enqa.eu/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/European-Approach-QA-of-Joint-Programmes_Yerevan-2015.pdf)

### **Student, faculty and staff exchanges**

60. As previously discussed, LCC has been established by a group of Lithuanian and North American philanthropists, with the explicit intent of providing a North American model of liberal education in Lithuania. Part of the model involves the deliberate and consistent recruitment of North American faculty to teach the programmes, some on short term contracts – anything from six weeks to six months. Currently 60% of faculty are non-Lithuanian and 50% of students. The 50% come from twenty-eight different countries. Accordingly, it is possible to say that LCC is an international University from this perspective; however uniquely so. Given the East-facing nature of the institution and its North American origin though it is a distinctly East European/American entity with a regional focus. The region in this context is defined as those countries that border Lithuania to the East and beyond.
61. Aside from this particularly distinct distribution of students and employees from various countries the University also offers a significant number of study abroad opportunities. LCC students can travel to one of thirty North American partners for a semester and students from those institutions can also travel to LCC. Students travelling in both directions earn credit towards their home degree programme. In addition to the University's 463 Bachelor students, it has fifty-one North American Study Abroad students. The experience of the North American students on campus seems to be one of engagement and rigour.
62. LCC also has a range of Erasmus + partnerships in place which provide for student, faculty and staff exchanges. In 2014/15 there were twenty incoming Erasmus students and fifteen outgoing students, but no faculty or staff exchanges. The panel noted that in Appendix 26 the University indicated that it has plans to increase the number of students, faculty and staff participating in Erasmus mobility actions, amongst other things. There is no mention of this in the Strategic Plan 2012-2017. In the upcoming planning phase for the new strategic plan, reflection on this area should be incorporated.

### **Enhancing Student-centred learning**

63. As indicated in the section on Resource allocation in paragraphs 45-46 the University has assigned significant resources to supporting students. Additionally, students and graduates reported a high satisfaction with in-class dialogue and dynamics.
64. Students also spoke of how diversity occurred in the curriculum as the nature of classroom dynamic and approach to assessment changed from one professor to another. Whilst students indicated that these changes were not outside of the communicated model of assessment for the *Studijų kokybės vertinimo centras*

module, it is important that LCC ensure all faculty, particularly short-term visitors, are fully aware of the parameters of the programme. The advantage of many guest lectures can be that one can have a field leader visit for a short period of time whereas one may not be able to attract such lecturers on a permanent basis. Whilst maintaining the advantages of this, and recognising the opportunities for students to engage with such leaders, it is important that the intended learning outcomes of the module and programme are critically addressed. The review panel **recommends** the establishment of programme committees or programme boards which are made up of representatives of faculty teaching on the programme and student representatives which meet at least once a semester and have clear terms of reference. These boards would be an appropriate locus for the discussion and revision of programme and course assessment strategies. In reflecting on how a programme is provided it is further **recommended** that where possible a whole discipline/course is not taught by one faculty member alone, so that students gain exposure to different approaches to a subject.

#### **Stakeholder Involvement: Cooperation with Academic, Social and Business Partners**

65. The Review panel noted the model where in principle all Bachelor students undertake an assessed practicum or work-placement as part of their programme. Students and faculty gave examples of placements undertaken and projects taken in response to real cases. The positive nature of the relationships that LCC has in place with local community and businesses clearly facilitates the comprehensive and effective work placement programme being operated by the University, which is clearly valued by students. It also helps to build up very positive relationships with external stakeholders assisting in gaining stakeholder input into the curriculum. However, as indicated in paragraph 32 on quality assurance, the University should consider ways to involve external stakeholders in more formal ways in providing insight on programme provision and the strategic direction of the institution. Involvement in programme committees mentioned in paragraph 64 may be one of a number of mechanisms by which to achieve this. A recommendation regarding a Consultative forum will be made in Section VI.

**Judgement on the area: Academic Studies and Lifelong Learning is given positive evaluation.**

## V. RESEARCH AND/OR ART ACTIVITIES

### **Strengths**

1. The establishment of the position of Associate Dean for Faculty Development and the Director of Institutional Research.
2. The appetite to conduct research amongst faculty met by the panel.

### **Areas for Development and enhancement recommendations**

1. Bring to completion the establishment of a specific vision and strategy for the further development of research activities and a research culture for LCC.
2. Establish clear areas of focus for LCC's research activities, drawing on the strengths and unique features of the institution.
3. Consider entering local and international HEI collaborations to make bids for public funding for research projects.
4. Plan for the future institutional recognition of the importance of research by ensuring faculty receive adequate time in which to be research active.
5. Plan for the institution to realise that philanthropic funding for teaching needs to be complemented to some extent by the funding of research and researchers and that this may also contribute to the mission of the University.
6. Build relationships of a deeper nature with Lithuanian HEIs and other regional HEIs.
7. Where resources allow increase access to journals such as JSTOR.

### **Institutional Approach to Research**

66. The review panel considered the University's approach to research and acknowledged the definite progress and developments made since the Institutional Evaluation in 2012. Significant contributions to the improvements are accounted for in the appointment of an Associate Dean for Faculty Development and the Director of Institutional Research. From the meetings held by the review panel it is clear that the creation of this role and its exercise by the current incumbent is providing welcomed research leadership and direction for faculty. Additionally the revised training and development policies, as manifested in work of the Faculty Development Review Committee and in the provision of Research, Teaching and Reading Group are key enhancements. In both allocating time and other resources to assist faculty in developing their research careers there is clear institutional recognition of its importance. The appointment of



additional faculty with PhDs was also noted as a positive contribution to developing a research culture. It is **recommended** that where resources allow there should be increased access to journals such as JSTOR. Notwithstanding the clear improvements the review panel strongly **recommends** that LCC brings to completion the specific vision and research strategy which has been initiated in the strategic document “Value-based Innovations for Social Transformation”. When completed this strategy must have established clear focus areas for LCC’s research activities, preferably related to the existing strengths of the identity of LCC. The panel **recommends** that the strategy includes plans for the future institutional recognition of the importance of research by ensuring faculty receive adequate time in which to be research active. It is further **recommended** that there is institutional recognition that philanthropic funding for teaching needs to be complemented to some extent by the funding of research and researchers and that this may also contribute to the mission of the University. It may be useful to initiate dialogue at Board level on the importance of the research dimension of the University’s activities and that a plan is put in place to identify funding sources which would be dedicated to research activities or research-active faculty, releasing them to some extent from their teaching duties.

67. During the site visit there was significant dialogue on the challenges for a university of the scale and nature of LCC to be both a research institute and a teaching institute. Given that LCC is a University recognised as such under Lithuanian legislation, it is important that the role of research be clearly defined and understood and in a way which can be effectively realised. The panel **recommends** that consideration be given to taking the University’s strengths and unique facets and making them the focus of a research agenda, i.e. interests arising from the vision-specific dimensions of the institution’s Christian world view, e.g. the role of a Christian university, Business Ethics, etc. A further area of specific focus may be the pedagogies of North America vs Europe.

### **Local Relevance**

68. LCC engages very actively with the local and regional areas. As indicated in the preceding section work placements are available in many companies and organisations. The programmes that the University offers, such as the *Teaching of English as a Second Language* and business marketing are of direct relevance to the surrounding area, both within and without Lithuania’s borders. There are opportunities for applied research in these areas where faculty and students have undertaken projects on behalf of companies. There are also opportunities for LCC to work with other HEIs that have discipline areas that LCC does not have, thereby complementing what

LCC can offer to the region, e.g. technology is important to business, so connect with another to harness this strength. The panel **recommends** that the University works to build relationships of a deeper nature with Lithuanian HEIs and other regional HEIs to assist in this enterprise.

69. A further area where the University exhibits strength is in cultural diversity and training for same. The University has undertaken good preliminary work in this area and there are good opportunities for further work.

70. The Innovation lab which is at a nascent stage and will be mentioned in the next section provides a platform for good engagement with partners and may prompt areas for applied research.

71. The University refers to the European Research Area (ERA) implicitly in its Self Assessment, e.g. in the context of Europe 2020 and the recent EHEA Ministerial Statements. The review panel notes the objectives of the ERA under Europe 2020 as the following:

- increased effectiveness of national research systems
- optimal levels of transnational co-operation and competition
- an open labour market for researchers by improving researcher mobility, training and careers as well as an open and merit-based recruitment
- gender equality and gender mainstreaming in research
- optimal circulation and transfer of scientific knowledge including via digital ERA (EU, 2012)<sup>10</sup>.

In the articulation of the University's research strategy it may be helpful explicitly to reference any recent dimensions of the ERA or its relevance to the research focus of LCC.

72. The review panel notes that the high turnover of staff due to the model of provision, provides an opportunity to make a swift impact and change direction in the areas of research being undertaken. The high level of mobility also offers opportunities for the establishment of national and international research collaborations, and inviting guests who will specifically enhance the research agenda. There are already some small examples of this type of activity, but a refined research strategy and established targets around these types of activities will assist in strengthening the research profile of the University. In this context it is **recommended** that the

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<sup>10</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/research/era/pdf/era-communication/joint-statement-17072012\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/research/era/pdf/era-communication/joint-statement-17072012_en.pdf)

University consider entering local and international HEI collaborations to make bids for public funding for research projects.

**Judgement on the area: Research and/or Art Activities is given a positive evaluation.**

## VI. IMPACT ON REGIONAL AND NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

### **Strengths**

1. The very significant level and the effectiveness of outreach to the schools in the region, including professional development provided to teachers, and the intercultural programme being offered to school children and to their teachers.
2. The level of internships available to students reflecting good relationships with local community and business organisations.

### **Areas for Development and enhancement recommendations**

1. The University would benefit from the establishment of a Consultative Forum through which local social and businesses partners can participate in idea sharing and generation.
2. Establish a formal alumni association with local chapters in different countries.

### **Impact of mission on region**

73. In dialogue with the panel, it was difficult to agree an exact definition of the term regional. This arises from the University's broad East-facing mission, and fluidity about its activities. Sometimes region means the Klaipeda area and sometimes it means the Baltic area and sometimes it means greater Non-EU Eastern Europe. It is this perspective which has given rise to LCC working with national Lithuanian organisations, such as the English Language Teachers Association, but also working in Georgia, providing English language tuition as a response to the crisis of refugees fleeing conflict coming to Europe from the Middle East. The University views its philanthropic commitment as to the region in general and it seeks to respond proactively to social needs.
74. From discussions between stakeholders and the panel members it was evident that LCC engages in a very significant amount of activity locally and there was very positive feedback from the social partners on LCC's contribution locally. There was strong oral confirmation of impact and positive contribution to the local area. This strength can be better harnessed by the development of mechanisms to measure its impact more effectively. This is an area which needs work.
75. The panel obtained many examples of graduates who are employed locally and the employers with whom the panel members met were very positive about the graduates. It was further noted

that the students who are on work placement are making a significant impact to local business and social organisations.

76. The University participates in local forums and is involved in various Klaipeda councils, such as Klaipeda City Academic Council and Klaipeda City Non-Governmental Organisations Council.
77. Whilst the University manifests significant commitment to the region, its involvement may benefit from a formal mechanism by which LCC can consult the stakeholders in its region. The panel **recommends** that the University establish a Consultative Forum, or a Strategic Advisory Board, through which local social and businesses partners can participate in idea sharing and generation. It should meet on a fixed periodic basis.
78. As indicated in paragraph 72, engagement with local stakeholders will be enhanced and made more effective if the University considers opportunities for entering local and international HEI collaborations.

### **Volunteer work**

79. The University adopts a philanthropic approach consistently across its range of activities. This is particularly manifested in its work in local communities and with Church groups. Students are assisted in volunteering and a number of community based lifelong learning programmes are in place. They include the Community Multicultural Awareness Programme, English Language Institute and the LCC Academy. Faculty, staff and students participate in all of these activities and they are highly valued by the stakeholders. Faculty are assessed in their annual review on three dimensions – teaching, research, service to society. Many faculty and staff are involved in activities both through LCC and also as individuals. Voluntary work is strongly aligned to the University's mission.
80. The review panel notes specifically the University's work with local Lithuanian High Schools. It is particularly commendable. Both student and faculty involvement is significant and the interventions are very warmly welcomed by the teachers and high school students. The demand for the intercultural training being provided was noted, indicating that the University has identified a genuine social need and is responding effectively to it. The range of Continuous Professional Development programmes being provided for teachers on a pro bono basis in Lithuania is laudable. The review panel was very cognisant of the enormous commitment of the University to its locality, and the tangible manifestations of its Christian mission. Additional CPD is provided (at a cost to participants) in Georgia, Moldova, Albania and Ukraine.

## **Student Work**

81. Students engage in work placements in a wide variety of local organisations. Some of these include Work placements in homeless shelters, trafficking, work with children and elderly. Local community and business organisations welcome the student workers. Students also conduct project work on real-life problems posed by companies. Employers participate on the student evaluation panels both for theses and in providing feedback on students on placement as well as participating in the assessment of business plan proposals.
82. Students also have an opportunity to participate in a leadership project whereby they are assigned a variety of positions and roles on the campus and receive formal mentoring from members of staff. Approximately fifty persons participate in this annually. It is designed to promote the importance of integrity and ethics, build emotional intelligence and work in a team (see appendix 21). Students engaged on this programme reported that it was a positive and helpful experience.
83. A recent campus development is the Innovation Laboratory which hosts monthly sessions for community leaders on best practices in certain fields and also offers graduates opportunities to share their working experiences with current students. This is a venture which will merit further development and involvement of students.
84. Whilst the University evidenced good relationships with its graduates it would benefit from the development of a formal Alumni Association. The panel *recommends* the establishment of a formal alumni association with local chapters in different countries. LCC should draw on the alumni in formal processes to contribute to programme development and review.

**Judgement on the area: Impact on Regional and National Development is given a positive evaluation.**

## VII. GOOD PRACTICE AND ENHANCEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

**A number of examples of good practice identified by the review panel have been highlighted in the Report. These include the following:**

1. The open, participative and consultative nature of University leadership.
2. The engagement of the University in the previous and current review processes, reflecting an openness and commitment to improvement.
3. The positive attitude and engagement of the Student Council and their participation in all governance bodies of the University.
4. The new faculty and staff assessment model with its goal setting and 360° feedback (for staff)
5. The level of course evaluation and surveys administered.
6. The commitment and care of the faculty and staff for the mission of the institution and for the students.
7. The vision is consistently and uniformly shared across the faculty and staff.
8. The generosity of the founders and funders of the institution towards students and potential students of the region, in the funding of scholarships, the provision of learning materials, the provision of pastoral care, the provision of supports.
9. The successful promotion of the model of liberal arts approach to higher education and the distinctiveness of the North American model.
10. The spread of students from a variety of countries.
11. The provision of careers advice and comprehensive provision of practical placement opportunities.
12. The establishment of the position of Associate Dean for Faculty Development and Director of Institutional Research.
13. The appetite to conduct research amongst faculty met by the panel.
14. The very significant level and the effectiveness of outreach to the schools in the region, including professional development provided to teachers, and the intercultural programme being offered to school children and to their teachers.

15. The level of internships available to students reflecting good relationships with local community and business organisations.

**The following is a summary of the review panel's recommendations:**

## **1. Strategic Management**

It is recommended that LCC:

- a) In the preparation of the new strategic plan, establishes specific metrics and KPIs by which the University can clearly know whether it is achieving its objectives.
- b) Establishes a formal risk register which is reviewed at defined periods, looking at the organisation from all perspectives.
- c) Establishes explicit and formal mechanisms by which regional stakeholder feedback can be obtained and considered.
- d) Identifies a small number of other higher education institutions (two-three) by which the University can benchmark itself – perhaps one in North America and perhaps another from Europe/Africa/Asia.
- e) Continues with the development of a clear quality assurance system with defined internal procedures for programme approval and review (prior to external evaluation).
- f) Revises as appropriate the University's quality assurance policy and procedures in line with the 2015 ESG, taking particular note of the Ministerial Statement on Joint Programmes.
- g) Establishes clear, documented due diligence and approval processes by which the University enters partnerships, signs legal agreements and establishes joint programmes with full awareness of all the diverse jurisdictional accreditation and recognition issues.
- h) Appoints a senior member of faculty to have a leadership role in establishing a clear awareness amongst faculty, staff and students of the quality assurance system and the tools and elements of the Bologna process.
- i) Ensures that students and external stakeholders are formally updated on responses to or actions taken in respect of feedback that they have given.
- j) Formalises procedures by which students can appeal grades and make complaints.



## **2. Academic Studies & Lifelong Learning**

It is recommended that LCC:

- a) Ensures that marks awarded are explicitly aligned to the assessment of programme and course learning outcomes.
- b) Allocates ownership of leading the institutional embedding of learning outcomes with a constructive alignment to student assessment to a specific individual or to a dedicated sub-committee of academic council.
- c) Establishes programme committees or programme boards which are made up of faculty teaching on the programme and have student representatives which meet at least once a semester and have clear terms of reference.
- d) With the issue of the revised 2015 *ECTS Guidelines*, takes the opportunity to discuss and if necessary provide training to faculty and staff on the allocation of student workload.
- e) Where possible ensures that a whole discipline/course is not taught by one faculty member alone, so that students gain exposure to different approaches to a subject.
- f) Ensures that there is clear comprehension of the complex nature of joint programmes, joint degrees and double degrees with due understanding of the Lisbon convention amongst all faculty and staff.

## **3. Research and/or Art Activities**

It is recommended that LCC:

- a) Brings to completion the establishment of a specific vision and strategy for the further development of research activities and a research culture for LCC.
- b) Establishes clear areas of focus for LCC's research activities, drawing on the strengths and unique features of the institution.
- c) Considers entering local and international HEI collaborations to make bids for public funding for research projects.
- d) Plans for the future institutional recognition of the importance of research by ensuring faculty receive adequate time in which to be research active.

- e) Plans for the institution to realise that philanthropic funding for teaching needs to be complemented to some extent by the funding of research and researchers and that this may also contribute to the mission of the University.
- f) Builds relationships of a deeper nature with Lithuanian HEIs and other regional HEIs.
- g) Where resources allow increases access to journals such as JSTOR.

#### **4. Impact on Regional and National Development**

It is recommended that LCC:

- a) Establishes a Consultative Forum through which local social and businesses partners can participate in idea sharing and generation.
- b) Establishes a formal alumni association with local chapters in different countries.

#### **For consideration by the Ministry of Education and Science**

The following are some observations that the review panel offers for consideration by the Ministry of Education and Science:

- Whilst there is no issue with regard to LCC clarity should be provided and maintained regarding the basis on which institutions are entitled to use the title of ‘University’ and about what constitutes a university and what defines a college.
- The regulatory context of joint programmes, particularly those which involve transnational partnerships, should be made clearer.

## VIII. JUDGEMENT

LCC international university is given a positive evaluation.

Grupės vadovas:

Prof. dr. Malcolm C. Cook

Team leader:

Ms. Danguolė Kiznienė

Grupės nariai:

Prof. dr. Zoltan Sipos

Team members:

Prof. Frank Van Den Duyn Schouten

Mr. Mateusz Celmer

Vertinimo sekretorius:

Dr. Tara Ryan

Review secretary:

## ANNEX 1. ABBREVIATIONS

BFUG	Bologna Follow-Up Group
CPD	Continuous Professional Development
EDS	European Diploma Supplement
EHEA	European Higher Education Area
ERA	European Research Area
ESG	<i>Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area</i> , 4 <sup>th</sup> edition (2015)
EQF	European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning
ET 2020	Strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training
EU	European Union
FTE	Full Time Equivalent
HE	Higher Education
HEI	Higher Education Institution
LQF	Lithuanian Qualifications Framework
LLL	Lifelong Learning
MOA	Memorandum of Agreement
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
PhD	Doctor of Philosophy
QA	Quality Assurance
SER	Self-evaluation Report
SKVC	Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education

## ANNEX 2. LCC UNIVERSITY RESPONSE TO REVIEW REPORT



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UNIVERSITY

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February 22, 2016

Dear Members of the SKVC Institutional Review Team,

On behalf of LCC International University, I wish to acknowledge the receipt of the Institutional Review Report, received on February 15, 2016. LCC administrative and academic leadership have reviewed the report, and offer the following comments:

The Institutional Review Report that was submitted by the international review team on behalf of the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education (SKVC) is generally a correct representation of LCC institutional strengths and weaknesses. We are in agreement that the evaluation of the university was conducted in an open, transparent manner and in accordance with the methodology and guidelines specified in the Procedure for External Review in Higher Education.

LCC International University acknowledges that the purpose of the evaluation was to improve the performance of LCC and to receive recommendations that will lead toward enhanced quality of its educational program. It is our view that the institutional review achieved these objectives.

### Minor Items of Accuracy

1. Paragraph 8 – The official title of the program is “Evangelical Theology.”
2. Paragraph 12 – The two references to faculty and staff from outside of Lithuania should be spelled “expatriate.”
3. Paragraph 66 – In one instance, the abbreviation of the institution should be corrected to “LCC.”
4. Paragraph 79 – The program title should be “English Language Institute,” rather than “English language tuition.”
5. Lithuanian Translation – In order to ensure that the Lithuanian translation matches the English, we are offering a copy of the Lithuanian in “track changes” mode.

### Items of Potential Misinterpretation

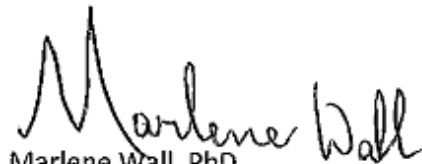
6. Paragraph 12 – While the statement is factually correct, it is important to note that these numbers are based on headcount, and not on full-time equivalency (FTE). Without that clarification, the numbers could be misinterpreted.

### Item That Has Changed Since Site Visit

7. Paragraph 48 – The second sentence was accurate at the time of the Site Visit in November 2015. However, by this time, LCC has received confirmation that a third Bachelor program (our International Business Administration program) has been accredited for a six-year period by SKVC. Therefore, at this time, we are awaiting final word of one more program’s accreditation, and we are anticipating a Site Visit for another.

We are thankful for the thorough review by the Institutional Review Team. We look forward to receiving the final report in the near future. LCC International University is committed to quality, to transparency, and to the development of a new generation of leaders who can assist in the continued strengthening of civil society in Lithuania, Eastern Europe, and Central Asia and beyond. We affirm the recognition of the European higher education system for “the existence of universities with different traditions, missions, and strengths” (from EUA Vision Statement, 2006).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Marlene Wall". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Marlene" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Wall".

Marlene Wall, PhD  
President