



CENTRE FOR QUALITY ASSESSMENT IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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**EVALUATION REPORT**  
**STUDY FIELD OF POLYMER AND TEXTILE TECHNOLOGY**  
**AT UTENOS KOLEGIJA**

**Expert panel:**

1. **Prof. dr. Diana Gregor-Svetec**, *(panel chairperson), member of academic community;*
2. **Associate Professor dr. Muhammad Tausif**, *member of academic community;*
3. **Assistant Professor dr. Ewelina Pabjańczyk-Wlazło**, *member of academic community;*
4. **Ms. Agnė Biskytė**, *representative of social partners;*
5. **Ms. Greta Markūnaitė**, *students' representative.*

**Evaluation coordinator – Dr. Ona Šakalienė**

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### Study Field Data\*

Title of the study programme	Clothing Technologies
State code	6531FX018
Type of studies	College studies
Cycle of studies	First cycle
Mode of study and duration (in years)	Full-time (3 years) Part-time (4 years)
Credit volume	180
Qualification degree and (or) professional qualification	Professional Bachelor of Technology Sciences
Language of instruction	Lithuanian
Minimum education required	Secondary education
Registration date of the study programme	27-02-2019

\* if there are **joint** / **two-fields** / **interdisciplinary** study programmes in the study field, please designate it in the foot-note

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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) *site visit of the expert panel to the higher education institution*; 3) *production of the external evaluation report (EER) by the expert panel 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. EXPERT PANEL

The expert panel 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 remote visit to the HEI was organized on the 19th of May, 2022.

#### Expert panel:

1. Prof. dr. Diana Gregor-Svetec, *(panel chairperson), member of academic community*;
2. Associate Professor dr. Muhammad Tausif, *member of academic community*;
3. Assistant Professor dr. Ewelina Pabjańczyk-Wlazło, *member of academic community*;
4. Ms. Agnė Biskytė, *representative of social partners*;
5. Ms. Greta Markūnaitė, *students' representative*.

### 1.3. GENERAL INFORMATION

The documentation submitted by the HEI follows the outline recommended by 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.	Statistics on the participation of teachers and students (P&TT study field) in different activities (projects, conferences, etc.).
2.	
...	

### 1.4. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY FIELD/STUDY FIELD POSITION/STATUS AND SIGNIFICANCE IN THE HEI

The textile and clothing sector still plays an important role in the European manufacturing industry. It is a strong, flexible industry which has responded to the challenges of a globalised economy and turned from traditional labour-intensive industries for mass production towards specialty products, high value-added products, new applications and mass customization.

In Lithuania, higher education institutions that perform textiles and clothing study programs in the group of technology fields are Vilnius Kolegija (VK), Utenos Kolegija (UK) and Kaunas University of Technology (KTU).

*Clothing Technologies* study programme (SP) is part of the study area Technological Sciences in the study field Polymers and Textile Technology (P&TT). It is performed at the Faculty of Business and Technology, which is part of the Utenos Kolegija (UK).

UK is an accredited state higher education institution of the Republic of Lithuania, established in 2000. The Faculty of Medicine and the Faculty of Business and Technology are two structural units of the UK that carry out applied research, provide 22 study programs in 17 study fields. UK offers 1<sup>st</sup> cycle studies, with 1577 students enrolled in part-time and full-time studies.

The Faculty of Business and Technology has 3 departments: Engineering and Technology, Business and Public Management and Law. Among 14 study programs of faculty, the Department of Engineering and Technology offers 7, one of them is *Clothing Technologies* SP. UK performs studies in the study field Polymer and Textile Technology since the establishment of the institution. The first study programme was Sewing Technology, which was renewed and changed to Clothing Design and Technology, which lasted till 2018. *Clothing Technologies* SP launched in 2019, is a first cycle college study.

UK and within the Faculty of Business and Technology are involved in several projects related to regional development and perform activities for the general public.

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## II. GENERAL ASSESSMENT

**Polymer and Textile Technology** field study and **first cycle** at **Utenos Kolegija (UK)** is given **positive** evaluation.

*Study field and cycle assessment in points by evaluation areas*

No.	Evaluation Area	Evaluation of an Area in points*
1.	Intended and achieved learning outcomes and curriculum	4
2.	Links between science (art) and studies	4
3.	Student admission and support	3
4.	Teaching and learning, student performance and graduate employment	3
5.	Teaching staff	4
6.	Learning facilities and resources	4
7.	Study quality management and public information	5
	Total:	27

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

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

3 (good) - the field is being developed systematically, has distinctive features;

4 (very good) - the field is evaluated very well in the national and international context, without any deficiencies;

5 (excellent) - the field is exceptionally good in the national and international context/environment.

### III. STUDY FIELD ANALYSIS

#### 3.1. INTENDED AND ACHIEVED LEARNING OUTCOMES AND CURRICULUM

*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 textiles and clothing sector is still an important part of the EU economy, and with new direction toward inventions, digitalization, sustainability and circular economy aims to strengthen industrial competitiveness. Also in Lithuania, textile, clothing and leather industry have a long time tradition. In 2019, this sector accounted for about 1,5% national GDP. The sector in the EU is based on small businesses, in Lithuania 98% companies are small and medium-sized. In spite of the large job losses in Europe, they still employ 1.5 million people. In Lithuania, the clothing industry is still an important source of employment, and accounts for about 2,5% of total employees. In Europe, the textiles and clothing sector generally require a more skilled workforce. In order to follow new development guidelines of the textiles and clothing manufacturing industry, and to maintain a lead in fashion, image and creativity, medium and above all highly skilled professionals are needed.

Utena region is oriented toward the textiles and clothing manufacturing industry, therefore the need for qualified professionals is constantly present, lately also because of the negative natural population turnover in the region. Companies are seeking professionals in this sector, among them clothing technology graduates with knowledge in production technology. According to LATIA also sewing designers, sewing technologists, cutting designers, production supervisors are needed too. In the EU, demand for high-added value products and customised items is present. Besides mass production, students of the UK can specialise in customised clothing production which is in line with EU strategy.

##### *(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

The aims and outcomes of the *Clothing Technologies* SP are in conformity with the needs of the Utena Region and Lithuanian labour market. Information gathered during the meetings with employees of UK and social partners has revealed good cooperation of the UK with social partners in the clothing sector and beyond. The social partners are involved in all forms of the SP by providing recommendations for the improvement of the programme, practical students training in real working conditions, and the evaluation of the final projects. A lot of activities are devoted to the general public, which shows social responsibility and incorporation of the UK in the local community.

Aims and outcomes of revised SP fulfil a social role of promoting values of sustainable production, addressing environmental issues and promoting standards that help in the development of an modern, advanced society. Working more on knowledge and responsible technology transfer might be a good path for further development.

### 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 UK has prepared a strategy for the period 2019-2021 and 2022-2024, which are accessible on the website of the institution. From the strategy is evident that the vision of the UK is to be a modern and dynamic state institution of higher education, acknowledged nationally and internationally, promoting and cherishing the need for knowledge and creativity of the academic staff, based on high quality demands of all the areas of activity and innovation, developing partnership and actively involved in the life of Aukštaitija Region and Lithuania. The mission is to prepare specialists with a higher college education, meeting the needs of the regional, national and European labour market, and provide conditions for continuous education by developing and promoting an individual's abilities to continuously learn and act under digital society conditions.

The aim of the *Clothing Technologies* SP is to train a creative and socially responsible professional for the clothing and textiles industry, who is capable of designing garments, is familiar with the processes of material preparation and cutting, the design and organisation of technological sewing flows, and who has the general abilities that enable them to adapt to changing environmental conditions and the requirements of the labour market.

#### (2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The main aim of *Clothing technologies* SP is well defined, and is in line with the UK strategy and mission. One of the UK aims is to train professionals in applied sciences for local and national needs. The aims and learning outcomes of *Clothing technologies* SP are in line with this UK aim, to train specialists in the clothing sector as one of the needed professions in the region. SP has 87% of credits field study connected to the clothing technology sector and 20% of credits located for the internship. Besides knowledge in the clothing technology students gain general competences which are in accordance with the mission of the UK to promote individual's abilities to continuously learn. Starting with renewed SP in 2019, the coherence of SP with the vision of the UK to be a modern and dynamic institution is also evident.

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

#### (1) Factual situation

The first cycle study programme is performed in compliance with the Descriptor of the study fields of Technology (Order No V-922 of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania of 27 July 2015), Description of Study Cycles (Order No. V-1012 of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania, 2015) and the Description of General Requirements for the Provision of Studies (Order No. V-1168 of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania, 2016).

Table 1. Compliance of the program with the general requirements for College first cycle study programmes.

Criteria	Legal requirements	In the Programme
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Scope of the programme in ECTS	180, 210 or 240 ECTS	180
ECTS for the study field	No less than 120 ECTS	156
ECTS for studies specified by College or optional studies	No more than 120 ECTS	24
ECTS for internship	No less than 30 ECTS	35
ECTS for final thesis (project)	No less than 9 ECTS	3+9
Contact hours (including distance contact hours)	No less than 20 % of learning (unless otherwise stated in the descriptor of study field)	48.5%

## *(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

In SER the study plan of *Clothing technologies* SP is given, from which the distribution of study subjects by semesters, distribution of students' workload within the study subjects and credits allocated are evident. From what is shown in the document the compliance of the curriculum design with the legal requirements for College first cycle study programmes is substantiated. The principles of composition of study credits based on student workload are described in the SER. Each study subject descriptor specifies the links between the study subject and the study programme learning outcomes. The learning outcomes are presented according to the Description of the Study Cycles in 5 groups: knowledge and its application, special skills, research skills, social skills and personal skills. The links between the aim of *Clothing Technologies* SP, the intended learning outcomes and study subjects correspond to the predicted knowledge and competences in the study field Polymers and Textile Technology, specifically clothing technology. From these documents the sufficiency of the SP to ensure learning outcomes and conformity with the requirements of the legislation for college studies is evident. It can be confirmed that the *Clothing technologies* SP is relevant and adequate for the qualification degree Professional Bachelor of Technology Science corresponding to the 6th level of the Lithuanian Qualifications Framework.

### *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*

Learning outcomes of the study subjects were prepared based on the learning outcomes of the SP. Each study subject outline contains also a description of the content, learning outcomes, teaching/learning and assessment methods. In the SER different teaching/learning methods are listed for knowledge acquisition and information provision (academic lecture, interactive lecture, engaging lecture, problem-based lecture, discussion lecture, conversation, discussion, use of audio and video teaching/learning materials, preparation of presentations, research activities, review of publications, exercises, teaching practice, lectures outside the College, visits to companies, organisations, classes in the library, analysis of specialised materials and other activities, working in databases, etc). The assessment methods used to evaluate knowledge listed are test, exam, interview, oral and written questioning. Methods are selected

taking into account the specifics of study subjects. According to SER the teaching/learning methods used in each study subject depend on the specificity of the study subject, its scope and content, learning outcomes and the recommendations set out in the Descriptor of the study fields of Technology.

## *(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

The aim of *Clothing technologies* SP is explicit and the 17 intended learning outcomes are set realistically and can be reached. Coherence of the aims and intended learning outcomes of the SP, learning outcomes of the study subjects and learning outcomes of the cycle of study is evident. The analysis has shown that study subjects' learning outcomes are arising from SP learning outcomes. Most study subjects give 4 learning outcomes, some of them more, up to 8, only few are specific and give 1 or 2 learning outcomes. More than 45% of learning outcomes are connected to special skills and 27% to knowledge and its application. Students acquire above all professional competencies, which are the main goal of *Clothing technologies* SP. Emerging themes, such as digitalisation and sustainability issues, are included. With over 20% of learning outcomes related to social skills and personal abilities SP enables graduates to adapt to changing conditions and the requirements of the labour market. With less than 7% of learning outcomes connected to ability to conduct research in 11 study subjects, it is not clear if students can develop critical thinking and reasoning skills, observe logical connections, and gain problem-solving skills to a greater extent. It is recommended that more study subjects include learning outcomes related to development of research. The UK provides students with various teaching/learning methods. Most of them are student-centred teaching techniques. Such diversity of methods suggests a good probability that intended learning outcomes can be reached. Different assessment methods are used to assess the student achievements. From the SER it is not evident which teaching/learning and assessment methods are used at each study subject, and how diverse they are within each study subject.

### *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*

The *Clothing technology* SP is conducted as full-time and part-time study. They differ in duration and study load per study year. The full-time study load is 30 credits each semester, whereas the study load at part-time mode of study is from 21 to 24 credits. One credit means 25-30 hours of student work. SP consists of compulsory, general subjects of College studies and freely selected subjects. The arrangement of study subjects follows the same structure of SP for both modes of study. The core and compulsory subjects are first given, in the final year students choose between two modules: Tailored Clothing Production and Mass Clothing Production. The professional activity internship is included at full-time study each semester, at part-time study most semesters, except first and seventh semester. At both modes of study in last semester final internship and preparation of final thesis is planned.

## *(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

Both modes of study (full-time and part-time) have the same volume of study in credits and the volume of contact work, leading to achieving the same aims and learning outcomes. The structure of SP is well designed, balanced, the study subjects are arranged in the way that first the basic knowledge is acquired, followed by compulsory study subjects from the study field

and general study subjects of college studies, ending with the selecting alternative module. The *Clothing technology* SP is a new study program, registered in 2019, that's way improvements and revision were not done, because there is no need for that yet. In future, monitoring and analysing the competences gained is recommended in order to make changes as necessary.

### *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*

SP offers two modules, which are scheduled in the 3rd academic year. Personalization of student work in SP is enabled with choosing 3 freely elected subjects (9 credits). The internship and topic of the final thesis also provide personalization of work for students. A good chance for personalization is the academic exchange programs in the country and abroad. Students have the right to study following the individual study plan under the procedure established by the Study Regulations of Utena College. In special cases, when student provides reasoned request an individual study plan is made, which specifies the arrangement of subjects and timing of examinations

#### *(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

Specialization is part of the *Clothing Technologies* SP, students choose between two modules consisting of 4 subjects. Further, students can choose 3 freely elected subjects from the list of elective subjects. Students have the opportunity to study one foreign language (English, German or Russian) and one subject from the social science field. With the final thesis and internship which are also personalised forms of study, almost 40% of SP is to a greater extent personalised. The College has even a legalised possibility for the students to study according to an individual study plan. It is clear that students have the opportunity to personalize the structure of SP according to their personal learning objectives and intended learning outcomes.

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

#### *(1) Factual situation*

The final theses are prepared following the General Methodological Requirements for the Study Field and the whole procedure is regulated by the "Procedure for Preparation, Submission, Defence and Evaluation of Final Theses of Utena College". The similarity of the thesis with others is assessed by the thesis supervisor. Final thesis are uploaded to the Lithuanian Academic Electronic Library Repository. The final thesis, which is evaluated with 12 credits, consists of an analytical project, an informative poster of the designed collection, a true-to-life design of the selected model or collection. It is prepared independently by students under the guidance of the thesis supervisor and is defended at a public meeting of the Qualifying Committee. According to SER each member of the committee evaluates the thesis individually, taking into account its compliance with the formal requirements, the level of the learning outcomes achieved and/or professional competencies demonstrated, the presentation of the thesis, and the reviewer's report. (SER p.12) In the *Clothing technologies* SP no final thesis has been defended yet; the first are expected to be defended in 2022-2023.

#### *(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

The UK has developed a procedure for preparation, submission, defence and evaluation of the final thesis which was approved by the UK resolution. Final theses are defended at a public meeting of the Qualifying Committee composed of minimum 3 (3-5) members, where two-thirds are representatives of the employers/social partners.

It is commendable that the Final theses are uploaded to the Lithuanian Academic Electronic Library Repository, where anti-plagiarism detection can be performed and access to the final thesis is available in intranet.

Students can choose a topic for the final thesis that is in the area of their interest. The final thesis are prepared independently by students. The UK should encourage cooperation with social partners further and strive to increase the number of final thesis done in real working conditions and situations.

Since no final thesis of SP was defended yet we can't give the opinion about the conformity of the content of the final thesis to the field study. Nevertheless, the final theses of previous programme *Clothing Design and Technology* SP have been reviewed by the evaluation team. The professional bachelor theses seem to be on a good level. They are well structured, have practical character and are targeted to fashion engineering activities.

### ***Strengths and weaknesses of this evaluation area:***

#### ***(1) Strengths:***

1. SP is on the level of studies for a Professional Bachelor degree in the textiles and clothing sector on national and international level.
2. Students gain good professional competences needed for the textile and clothing sector and meet the current needs of the regional and national labour market. Besides professional competences, competences related to social skills and personal abilities are also obtained.
3. The opportunity to personalize the structure of SP according to students' personal learning objectives and intended learning outcomes is provided
4. Cooperation with social partners is very well developed.

#### ***(2) Weaknesses:***

1. There were no weaknesses detected. Just a remark for further development of SP in the P&TT study field. In SP emerging themes, such as digitalisation and sustainability are already included. Nevertheless, with the fast development in these areas, constant monitoring of SP in order to include the latest digital software for textile and fashion design and newest technologies in the field is recommended, as well as to give more attention to learning outcomes which would lead to further development of research skills.

## **3.2. LINKS BETWEEN SCIENCE (ART) AND STUDIES**

***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***

The UK is involved in Research and Experimental Development projects, consultancy activities for the region and the country, and also it offers non-formal education services. The

UK also acquires a substantial and increasing amount of funds from public sources (state budget allocations to promote the participation in social & cultural development, regional development projects and consultancy activities). Research and development activities are focused on the provisions of the "Vision of the Future of Lithuanian Science and Studies: Scientific Lithuania 2030" on the directions of research in social, natural and technical sciences, the orientation of studies towards the paradigm of sustainable development, social sustainability and the needs of the Utena region.

The regulation on the organisation, quality assurance and evaluation of the UK scientific activities are in place.

In 2020-2021, the Faculty of Business and Technology established an Applied Research Performance Development Group which approved topics of the UK's Polymer and Textile Technology (P&TT) study field applied research trends: issues in the development of garment manufacturing technologies – textile technologies; functionalisation of garment virtual design processes in the development of mass production; modern design solutions in garments.

The UK organise different events allowing for contacts with business sector, the exchange of research experiences among teachers from UK and other HEIs.

## *(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

UK is strongly oriented towards research and development activities which are evidenced, among others, by a high number of different incentives yearly allocation in the evaluated period. These activities include different kinds of projects (educational, projects improving practical experiences of students and staff, or improving research skills and competences, events and conferences, career days and others). The amount of funds acquired from public sources over the years 2018 – 2021 increased almost fourfold, although the performance in the research field related to the field of study being evaluated dropped from 7000,00 EUR in 2018 to 6000,00 EUR in 2020.

UK introduced the strategic approach to the development of the research activities, directions and topics of applied scientific research and the sufficiency of the available financial resources. This strategy is updated every 2-3 years by the Academic Board Resolution. The teachers providing lectures in the SP are in majority active researchers, taking part in conferences, publishing articles, various national seminars, discussions and conferences related to the field of study. The sufficiency of the science (applied science, art) activities implemented by the UK for the field of research (art) related to the field of study can be evaluated as very good.

### *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 UK cooperates very closely with external partners which are involved in many processes and at different levels, e.g. they take part in improving the quality of SP and educational services, communicating the results of applied research activities and commissioning of the consultancy activities. Those activities fall into 8 different areas of collaboration which can be listed as follows:

1. promotion of science and communicating the results of applied research;
2. participation in cultural life at local and national levels;
3. development of youth entrepreneurship and creativity;
4. public accessibility of the UK's premises and facilities to the local community;
5. activities are targeting socially sensitive groups outside UK;



6. volunteering by students and teachers;
7. environmental protection and saving of natural resources;
8. inclusion of the UK in regional strategic documents.

In case of SP content, the study subjects integrate the latest methods of research of clothing materials and their properties, modern technologies of clothing design, construction and production, such as computer-aided design, virtual 3D modelling of clothing, and more. Students can also receive training in the latest material processing and testing technologies in practical lectures in the laboratories of external partners.

## *(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

The links between UK and external (social and business) partners are strongly marked, e.g. by active participation in the management of the UK as members of the management and academic self-government bodies; participation in the process of development and implementation of SP as members of the Study Programme Committees, members of the Qualifying Committees for final theses and qualification examinations; as well as giving lectures and take students on internships, as well as others (study visits, joint conferences, joint projects, visiting lectures from companies etc.). The UK also utilises strong connections with industry & business to present the study programmes and ensure high-quality, modern, labour market-oriented studies. The link between the content of studies and the latest developments in science, art and technology is visible and it can be assumed that it will increase significantly in the future.

### *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 UK actively encourage students and creates conditions for their participation in many practical methods of education and obtaining information on the latest technologies through various types of events and conferences organized by UK or co-organized by UK and external partners, organization of internships and study visits in companies from the sector, joint final projects ordered by companies, different festival, participation in projects, and many others. UK publishes a peer-reviewed scientific journal and since 2014 it has published a special issue every few years "Ižvalgos. Papers of Young Researchers", which is dedicated to the publication of applied research articles by students and joint research articles by students and teachers. All final projects address real problems related to clothing production and the technologies used and they are distinguished by a high level of individualisation and practicality.

#### *(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

The UK offers a great deal of opportunities for students to participate in science and research activities on many levels. This applies to both the obligatory elements of SP (e.g. practical final works, each of which is carried out in cooperation with an external partner, various types of compulsory internships, lectures and seminar), as well as voluntary parts - such as participation in events organized at the unit, presenting the results of their study at conferences and authoring publication in the dedicated journal, participation in festivals, projects, study visits etc. The conditions for students to get involved in scientific (applied science, art) activities consistent with their study cycle are provided.

### ***Strengths and weaknesses of this evaluation area:***

#### ***(1) Strengths:***

1. A very tight cooperation with partners from industry and business who actively participate in the creation of the SP, its modification, and processes related to the evaluation of students' work. This allows for the assumption that the studies offered by UK are characterized by an exceptionally high practical level and allow students to acquire skills that are extremely important in terms of opportunities on the labour market.
2. Many different opportunities that UK offers for students to engage in various types of scientific and research activities.

#### ***(2) Weaknesses:***

No weaknesses

### **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***

Admission to the UK is executed in accordance with national laws, General Admission to Higher Education Institutions Regulations and Student Admission Regulations approved by the order of the UK Rector, resolutions of the UK Academic Board and other legal acts. Information on admission procedures and the dates is announced at <http://www.lamabpo.lt> and at the UK website, as well as at Service of Document Admission. The UK organise Open Doors and visits schools in order to market and encourage more participants.

##### ***(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis***

All recruitments are carried out on the basis of national and UK legal regulations. Information is available on LAMABPO website, including the UK website, available in English and presented in a clear and understandable manner. The UK is making efforts to encourage applicants by organizing Open Days and visiting schools. However, the number of admissions is relatively low (in total 8 in 2019 – 3 sf and 5 snf, 7 in 2020 – 2 sf and 5 snf, 7 in 2021 – sf) . The UK identified this problem and made efforts to increase the number of places paid by the state. The admitted students' competitive score is rather average, however a positive aspect is that in the years 2019-2021 the admitted students' mean competitive score increased (from 4.27 in 2019 to 5.05 in 2021). The suitability and publicity of student selection and admission criteria and process can be evaluated as good.

#### ***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***

Recognition of admitted foreigners' qualification, acquired abroad, is regulated by the Lisbon Convention on Recognition annually approved by the Rector of UK. The UK has developed

rules for determining e.g. learning outcomes of partial studies abroad, and the assessment and recognition of non-formal and informal learning competencies. The UK in the study field does not receive too many requests (in the years 2018-2019 and 2019-2020 there were no applications submitted, while in the years 2020-2021 1 person, in the years 2021-2022 2 persons submitted application) for recognition or credit transfer (On average, 3.8% of all students submit applications for credit transfer). The UK lists reasonable examples where recognition could not be obtained, among others lack of submission the required documents, more than 10 years passed since the previous studies, during which the content of the subject has become obsolete, unless otherwise provided by other legal acts and if the 2/3 of the scope of subject does not meet its essential aims and main parts of the subject content.

## *(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

The UK developed and implemented procedures of recognition of different qualifications. In justified cases, it allows for obtaining credits for subjects from higher years, or credits for subjects passed at other universities, including foreign ones. The procedures are described on the UK website and are available in English. Also, the administrative system for trilateral Agreement of Studies/Internship Placement is in place, which allows for making agreements between the institutions and the student on the subjects lists and transfer of points. The topic of the recognition of non-formal and informal learning educational outcomes is under discussion at national level and there are plans to introduce appropriate procedures and rules for recognition in all HEIs, as well as in UK.

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

## *(1) Factual situation*

The UK has signed 3 cooperation agreements with Erasmus+ partner institutions in Estonia, Turkey and Latvia with which student exchanges can take place. Information on mobility opportunities is provided to students by the International Relations Department; meetings with the students are organised, information is provided during the annual International Erasmus+ Weeks, organised by the UK. All the above mentioned information is announced on the UK website in the Moodle environment and on the UK Facebook account.

Employees of the International Relations Department consult students on the opportunities to participate in the ERASMUS+ exchange programme, prepare documents required for the study exchange and internships in foreign HEIs.

Students from abroad can come for partial studies or complete (full-time) studies. There were no incoming students during the analysed period. During the assessment period, 2 students left for partial studies in the study field. During 2020-2021, the students completed a 2-month internship at the Laser Center of Rēzekne Academy of Technologies and in the clothing production laboratories in Latvia.

## *(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

The UK provides opportunities for student academic mobility and clear communication of the mentioned opportunities in their internal and external communication. Employees of the International Relations Department also help students to prepare required documents. As seen from the provided analyses some students participate in academic mobility, although these numbers are low, which might be due to the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the UK could provide students with internationalisation in-house including mixed types of mobilities



(half and fully virtual), visiting professor lectures from foreign universities, joint distance projects with foreign universities, the inclusion of the teachers from foreign universities in the assessment of students works (by IT facilities). The joint degree with the University from Latvia is also a good direction of development for students to increase their skills and competences for international presence.

It must be noticed that the expert panel only met with the part-time students. During meetings with SP representatives it was clear to see that all the academic mobility opportunities are clearly communicated to students. During meetings it was also noticed that part-time students are less motivated to participate in academic mobility because most of them are working full or part time.

#### *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*

##### *(1) Factual situation*

Academic support in the HEI for students includes counselling on the subjects studied, acknowledgement of learning outcomes (credit transfer), preparation of final theses, internships, participation in the Erasmus+ exchange programme, career opportunities, etc. There is a Faculty Practice Supervisor in place, who consults the students and mediates searching places of internship.

All students have an opportunity to receive various forms of financial support: study, social, incentive, one-time and targeted scholarships, a state loan for tuition fees and a state-supported loan with a state guarantee. Information is published for the students on the website of the State Studies Foundation and in Lithuanian on the UK website. Students, paying for their studies, have the opportunity to pay the tuition fee in instalments.

During the analysed period 27 students received financial support with incentive scholarships from the UK and 5 received One-time scholarships.

There is no full-time psychologist post at the UK. However, there are professional, practising psychologists working as teachers among the staff.

The UK provides accommodation services for students. Students can stay in 3 student homes. The internal procedure for the allocation of places in student homes and for the residents of student homes is regulated by UK Student Home Regulations.

The students' interests are represented by Student Representation.

##### *(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

The suitability, adequacy and effectiveness of the academic, financial, social, psychological and personal support provided to the students of the field seems sufficient. During the meeting with the panel of experts, students expressed their satisfaction with the support offered, also with the amount of financial support. However, it should be noted that in 2018-2022 the UK did not grant a tuition waiver to any student. Efforts have been made to increase the number of state-funded vacancies for the SP. Knowing of the high demand in industry for graduates of this SP and the fact that tuition fees are relatively high, the UK could try to increase the number of vacancies financed by the social partners.

Students have a lot of support for academic integrity. Teachers help students in all states of their study work and they are presented in stages. Teachers provide students with multiple topics for their research work to ensure academic integrity.

It was communicated that the HEI housing quality is good, and the dormitories are near the UK. Pay and living conditions are adapted to students who study part time. Double and triple rooms are available, there are shared spaces: kitchen, bathroom and washing room.

The part-time students don't have a relationship with the students union, but it was acknowledged that students know that they can contact them for any help. It was also noticed that students have a close relationship with the administration, especially with the dean of the faculty who visits the students periodically and provides them personally with additional information.

### *3.3.5 Evaluation of the sufficiency of study information and student counselling*

#### *(1) Factual situation*

Before the beginning of the academic year, a group tutor is appointed for each academic group. The tutor helps them to adapt, conveys the latest information, and consults. Students commence their studies with Introduction into Studies. Teachers, starting with lectures first introduce students to the study subject aims, its content, intended learning outcomes, assessment system and present obligatory references.

Students are provided with conditions for the consultations by the subject teachers. The study plan includes subject hours for student consultations. Teachers advise students on the issues of the preparation of independent assignments, course papers and final theses according to the schedule. The consultation schedule is presented in the Moodle environment. In addition to individual face-to-face counselling, the students are consulted via email, phone, in VLE Moodle, etc.

#### *(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

UK implements a thorough introduction for the first year students. The HEI provides various forms of student consulting and an accessible way to register and communicate with teachers. The UK has attempted to increase the publicity of the SP, as expressed in the last external recommendation by e.g. consultations for those preparing to take maturity exams, seminars, delivery of lectures at schools and other activities for pupils, organisation of competitions, events, exhibitions for students and pupils, and more for promoting the SPs. Although there is a Career and Communication Department for students, career paths are not clear and structured for students. More career support for students and counselling should be in place. The academic staff is available to periodically consult the students regarding SP processes or study subjects. It was ensured that various information reaches the students via digital channels as well as in person. It was mentioned that the student – administration bond is mutual and strong, because the community is small and tight.

### *Strengths and weaknesses of this evaluation area:*

#### *(1) Strengths:*

1. The UK provides various forms of student support which provides favourable conditions for their development. Students seem to be satisfied with the level of the support received from the UK.
2. The UK offers various types of scholarships and incentive systems as a tool for activating students.
3. Students rate the contacts with the UK very highly, and talk about close relations with administrative and teaching staff, which greatly facilitates the process of acclimatisation and development during their studies.

#### *(2) Weaknesses:*

1. Efforts should be taken to increase the number of state funded places due to the importance of the sector and the high demand for the UK graduates in the industry and business, or increase the number of vacancies financed by the companies.
2. More career support for students and counselling should be in place.
3. Continuously, efforts should be made to increase the number of students participating in the mobility. The UK should also take into account the processes of in-house internationalization, which can also be implemented in the event of a pandemic or other factors that make it impossible to travel outside the country.

### **3.4. TEACHING AND LEARNING, 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*

Students' performance is assessed following Procedure for Assessment of Learning Outcomes, approved by 21 03 2017 resolution No AT- 4 of Utena UAS Academic Board. Learning outcomes are assessed at the levels of study achievements and by the ten-point criterion assessment system, following principles of validity, reliability, clarity, usefulness, impartiality. In the introductory lecture of each subject, the syllabus, its content, assessment criteria and other requirements are introduced to the students.

Participation in seminars, practicals, laboratory work, training practice are mandatory, participation in theoretical lectures is desirable. Between sessions, students study independently. The UK uses VLE Moodle and some lectures can take place online by video conferencing method.

About half of the time in the *Clothing Technologies* SP is assigned to independent work. Teachers acquaint students with the scope of independent work; provide references and a list of required literature.

Students, having obtained a Professional Bachelor's Degree may continue their studies in Lithuanian and foreign HEIs according to the first and second cycle university programmes in the Polymer and Textile Technology study field. In addition, they can continue their studies in other study fields, e.g. Management. Students in the above study field may continue their studies at Kaunas University of Technology and acquire Master's Qualification Degree as well as continue their post-graduate studies.

#### *(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

Students receive periodical information about their study process and outcomes from the teachers and the faculty administration and via other digital channels.

During the onsite visit it was ensured that the UK takes into consideration students who work, live abroad or cannot attend regularly and draws up an individual study and accounting schedule.

Teachers make periodical improvements of study subjects according to student suggestions and take into consideration their opinion which is collected from yearly surveys.

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

#### *(1) Factual situation*

During the admission to the UK, entrants, for whom a level of 0 - 25% working capacity are identified, are exempted from the registration fee; and for entrants, for whom the level of 30-55% working capacity are specified, the registration fee is reduced by 50%. In addition to financial aid, social scholarships are paid to students in need of material support.

Students with special needs are provided with study conditions that would ensure the quality of studies and social inclusion. Some aspects of the study process (study environment, study material, forms of accounting, etc.) are adapted according to the individual students' needs. Students with disabilities, having limited access to the UK, may study in a distant way in VMA Moodle, using a video conferencing system. Individual study and accounting schedules can be made for students with disabilities.

When assessing the knowledge and abilities of students with special needs, appropriate forms and methods of assessment of study achievements are applied, taking into account the individual needs and possibilities of the above mentioned persons.

#### *(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

The UK provides good conditions ensuring access to study for students with special needs. There is financial help and opportunities to individualise the study process and equipment are provided in the libraries and classrooms for students with special needs.

SP facilities, HEI housing and other resource areas are equipped with needed infrastructure for students with special needs. SP staff is also informed and educated to help and assist students with special needs.

### *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*

Studies of the subjects are completed with an exam or a project work. The students' progress monitoring is performed systematically, twice a year, after the autumn and spring semesters. The Department of Studies provides progress summaries of the academic groups to the Dean and to the Department indicating the average students' progress; the progress summaries are analysed during the Department and the Dean's Office meetings.

Students also have access to their metrics via Student Academic Database. In particular, the students with any underachievement are provided additional support. There have been only two dropouts (3.9% of cohort numbers) in the last three academic years. Students' dropout is addressed by creating better student support which involves monitoring of lecture attendance, academic group tutors' work with the students. The Administrator of the Department and the Head of the Department constantly reminding students about the consultations, accounting schedules, flexible payment methods for tuition fees, etc. Feedback on students' study experience is obtained through surveys of students, graduates and teachers. The analysis of the feedback is performed by the Department and the Study Programmes Committee, according to the obtained results, the content of the study subjects is updated, new subjects and topics are introduced. Feedback results are used during teachers' certification. Students are scaffolded with additional support in the first semester.

Furthermore, the details of the programme, learning outcomes and assessment criteria are clearly given.

*(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

There are UK and department level systems in place to monitor the student progress. This includes the monitoring of student outcomes and engagement with the programme, and follow-up mechanism for students with low engagement. The scaffolding of student assessments in the first semester is detailed and mentioned student responsibility, but the concrete examples for student self-reflection have not been provided. It might be useful to use a combination of formative and summative assessment activities to further scaffold the student academic journey.

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

*(1) Factual situation*

Employability rates of graduates of *Clothing Technologies* SP presented in SER are quite high, from 60% in 2018 till 100% in 2020. Graduates are employed according to the acquired profession, and work as technology and production engineers, operators of textile, fur and leather items production machines, mechanical engineers, operators of sewing and embroidery machines, tailors, furriers and masters of hats, etc. (SER, p.27). Career monitoring of graduates is developed.

The graduates' feedback about the demands of the labour market is performed by the UK Alumni Club. Results of surveys show that graduates have the main competencies to enter the labor market, whether it is a private business or an employee's job.

*(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

The statistics of graduates' employability is good. The institution's close relationship with industry and social partners is the basis for good student employment rates. Graduates are prepared in accordance with the needs of the labor market.

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

*(1) Factual situation*

The principles of ensuring academic integrity are implemented in several UK documents: Code of Academic Ethics, Student Internal Order Regulations, Provisions of Academic Ethics Committee Activity, Policy of Equal Opportunities. The UK Academic Ethics Committee is responsible for the implementation of the aforementioned principles. Any requests are forwarded to the Committee within 3 working days. At the start of studies, each student is introduced and signs the Declaration of Integrity, which obliges them to comply with the provisions of UK Code of Academic Ethics and other documents, regulating ethical conduct. There have been no reported cases linked to academic integrity.

*(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

The policies to ensure academic integrity tolerance and non-discrimination are in place, and there are mechanisms to deal with these matters. We find it surprising that there were no reported cases of academic integrity. It would have been useful to get details of the quality checks and any external examination of the programme assessments and teaching activities. There have been no details provided on tolerance and non-discrimination part of the section.

#### *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 students have the right to submit appeals regarding the knowledge assessment score, violations of knowledge assessment procedures or disputing the imposition of penalties. The details of the appeals procedure under UK Study Regulations have been provided including the right to submit an appeal to the Dean of the Faculty within 2 working days from the announcement of the assessment of the examination results. During the reported period, students of *Clothing Technologies* SP have not submitted any appeals or complaints.

##### *(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

The UK has a process in place to handle any appeals. The 2 working days following the announcement of results seems very short for the student to process and take a decision to submit the appeal. The details on the timeframe on the decision to appeal are not provided. There are no details on complaints procedure for other academic matters. We find it surprising that there were no complaints/appeals. Generally, during the pandemic, there have been higher instances of student complaints as the universities transitioned to online/blended learning.

#### *Strengths and weaknesses of this evaluation area:*

##### *(1) Strengths:*

1. The UK takes into account the study needs of students (personalise schedules and forms of lectures).
2. Strong student and SP administration mutual relation.
3. There are College and Department level systems in place to monitor the student progress. This includes the monitoring of student outcomes and engagement with the programme, and follow-up mechanism for students with low engagement.
4. The scaffolding of student assessments in the first semester is detailed and mentioned student responsibility, but the concrete examples for student self-reflection have not been provided.

##### *(2) Weaknesses:*

1. The Academic Integrity process needs to be clearly defined, and applied for all submitted work. The students can be provided support and example access to the similarity at the start of the programme.
2. It would have been useful to include details of the quality checks and any external examination of the programme assessments and teaching activities.
3. There have been no details provided on tolerance and non-discrimination part of the section.
4. The complaints procedure needs to be detailed with realistic timelines.



### 3.5. TEACHING STAFF

*Study field teaching staff 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*

#### *(1) Factual situation*

UK employs full-time teachers (15 persons) and also part-time lecturers teaching core and compulsory subjects as well as general subjects of College studies.

The novice teachers receive support from the administration staff and management of the Faculty, including a supervising teacher appointment. All teachers are provided with methodological and didactic support according to their needs: methodological support in preparing study material and they actively participate in the educational events at the beginning and at the end of the academic year. Training for teachers to acquire pedagogical competencies is recommended for the teachers who do not have any pedagogical education and pedagogical work experience (e.g., practitioners).

*Table 2.: Teachers meet the general requirements for the first cycle studies.*

<b>Requirement stated in Description of General Requirements for the Provision of Studies</b>	<b>In the study programme of the first cycle</b>
No less than 10% of study field subjects must be taught by scientists or recognized artists.	P&TT SF employs 20 lecturers (Appendix 4): 10 full-time lecturers teaching core and compulsory subjects, 5 full-time lecturers teaching general subjects of College studies, and 5 part-time lecturers teaching core and compulsory subjects as well as general subjects of College studies. All lecturers working at P&TT SF have a Master's degree or equivalent, 7 out of 20 lecturers working in P&TT SF (35%) have a PHD, 14 out of 20 (70%) teachers of the study field subjects, working in P&TT SF, have at least 3 years of practical work experience, related to the subject taught.
More than half of all teachers of college level study fields must have at least 3 years of practical work experience in the subject of the field being/to be taught.	Out of all the teaching staff, working in the study field, 11 full-time lecturers work at least 0.5 of a labour unit in full-time positions and at least 3 years at Utena College, which amounts 55% of all teachers working in the study field.

#### *(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

The UK employs a very diverse teaching staff to conduct various types of classes with students from SP. The teaching staff consists of people with very extensive teaching experience, as well as people who have only recently started their adventure with teaching and practitioners from the industry. Teaching staff complies with the requirements of national regulations. The meeting during the visit to UAS shows that the College exhibits a very proactive approach to the development of its staff. During a 4-year period, the average ratio of teachers and students in P&TT SF is 1:2 which is low and provides good conditions for students for their individual development. The UK successfully complements the necessary teaching competences by inviting specialists to conduct classes from other universities and centres, as well as from the business and industry environment. The adequacy of the number, qualification and competence of teaching staff within a field study programme at the UK in order to achieve the learning outcomes can be evaluated as good.

### *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*

The UK has procedures and written strategies for employees participation in mobilities in place. The participation of teachers in the Erasmus+ programme is one of the conditions for the certification of teachers.

During 2018-2021, 8 (42%) teachers participated in study visits and 14 (74%) participated in teaching visits. Many in 2020 and 2021 scheduled visits were not performed due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Lectures for students were given by 6 lecturers from foreign education institutions under the Erasmus+ exchange programme. Apart from Erasmus+ programme teachers participate in the various EU-funded projects, including educational and research projects.

#### *(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

The UK offers support for teaching staff to participate in mobility, which takes many different forms, e.g. educational mobility, research mobility, participation in study visits abroad, participation in projects and international scientific conferences, etc. The number of teachers participating in the mobility is acceptable and the scope and type of these mobilities are closely related to the scope of the SP and allow for the increase of many different teaching competences, which can be used in the transfer of knowledge to students within the SP.

This proves a well-thought-out mobility development strategy in terms of field of study development. One should also take into account the fact that the COVID-19 pandemic occurred, which could inhibit the development of mobility or postpone it until the next evaluation. It should be appreciated that during the conversation with the panel of experts, teachers confirmed the multidimensional support of UK not only organizational but also financial, which is offered in addition to the support resulting from Erasmus projects and mobility programs. The conditions for ensuring teaching staffs' academic mobility can be evaluated as good with the note that measures should be taken to increase the participation of teaching staff in mobility in the near future.

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

#### *(1) Factual situation*

The UK creates favourable conditions for the professional development of the teaching staff and for the performance of scientific and applied research. Teachers have various



opportunities to improve their qualifications – to participate in training sessions, teaching and learning internships abroad, to improve it by preparing methodological material, study programmes, other documents, sharing experience with colleagues, conducting research, which was confirmed during the meeting with teaching staff. Between the years 2018 and 2021, many of the teaching staff increased their pedagogical and subject-related competencies.

The UK developed regulations of professional development which also include the requirement for improvement of their qualifications at least once every 3 years.

The UK covers the costs of expenses for in-service training of teachers which amounted to (in thousand EUR): in 2018 – 71 thousand EUR, in 2019 – 86 thousand EUR, in 2020 – 6 thousand EUR. In 2020 and in 2021 due to the global Covid-19 pandemic, there was no outgoing training. Each employee, not only teaching staff, can plan training annually and the College will cover the costs of such training, thus allowing for an individualized approach to staff development. UK also offers a lot of different courses and activities for its staff centrally.

## *(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

Overall, the UK offers many opportunities for the development of competencies for its staff, not only in teaching, research, but also practical competencies. In particular, novice teachers can benefit from systemic support for the development of their competences and introducing them to the secrets of the teaching profession. In addition, the UK offers a very individual approach to the development of competences of its staff, and allows each teacher to individually report the need for training in a very wide range (didactic, practical, etc.), also in the field of language skills – by offering free courses for staff. The UK also followed the recommendations of the previous evaluation. The UK organizes a lot of different events together with foreign partners and partners from business and industry, which in a way constitute a perfect complement to the process of raising competences and staff development. The conditions to improve the competences of the teaching staff can be evaluated as very good.

## *Strengths and weaknesses of this evaluation area:*

### *(1) Strengths:*

1. The UK offers a wide range of opportunities to develop teaching, scientific and proactive skills for its staff. The process has been systematised and the procedures specifying the requirements for raising competences have been developed.
2. The teachers confirm the very favourable approach of the administration and managers to the development of competences (including scientific promotions), which is manifested in various types of support for the staff, including financial and organisational support, but also related to the change in the distribution of the workload (flexible working hours, lowering teaching hourly workload, etc.)
3. Teachers have very strong contacts with partners from the industrial and business environment, thanks to which they can develop their practical skills on an ongoing basis. A relatively large part of the teaching staff are specialists-practitioners.

### *(2) Weaknesses:*

No weaknesses

### 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*

Lectures are delivered in three classrooms equipped with hardware and software at the Faculty with a total of 94 seats and in two auditoriums of the UK central building with a total of 90 seats for clothing structural modelling, automated embroidery design, material standardization tasks. In total, there are 45 computerized workplaces and 24 computer-free workplaces. There are three key laboratories: Sewing; Chemistry; and Multimedia. The UK has purchased a range of equipment to support the learning of visually impaired, hearing and / or mobility impaired students. "Utena College Student Internship Organization Description" organises the student internships in the companies with bilateral cooperation agreements, and also possible with other companies. The details of books in the library as per subject area has also been provided. The library users can also access electronic databases. Moodle is used for learning resources and online delivery.

*(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

It is evident that the physical infrastructure is sufficient to meet the needs of the students and staff. This includes classrooms, library resources and software access. The provision of specialist laboratories in the field of studies is also visible. The videos do not show the Chemistry laboratory. However, the technical laboratories apparently do not cover all aspects of the field of studies (Clothing Materials and Testing, Textile Industry Equipment). It would have been useful to discuss the overall financial sustainability of the field of study. It would have also been useful to associate Chemistry and Multimedia lab to the relevant modules.

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

*(1) Factual situation*

The study infrastructure is under consideration as per plans of UK for 2019-2021 and 2022-2024. The planning and updating of required resources take place in November- December each year. The department, study programme committee and teachers are actively involved in the planning by submitting applications for the necessary resources. Teachers forward the need for books to the department on a monthly basis, and the department emails the library, which purchases books, magazines and e-resources. Up to EUR 800,000 are expected under the "Modern Technological and Engineering Studies and Creation of E-Training Base in Response to the Needs of the Utena region" project to update infrastructure and laboratories. The SER provides a list of planned works.

*(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

The changes are being implemented and there is a significant grant of EUR 800,000 expected. The plan shows that the major focus is on infrastructure and facilities. The use of funds to upgrade existing laboratories or new laboratories has not been included.

### ***Strengths and weaknesses of this evaluation area:***

#### ***(1) Strengths:***

1. The physical infrastructure is sufficient to meet the needs of the students and staff. The provision of specialist laboratories in the field of studies is also visible.
2. The changes are being implemented and there is a significant grant of EUR 800,000 expected. The plan shows that the major focus is on infrastructure and facilities.

#### ***(2) Weaknesses:***

1. There is no significant weakness identified, but attention should be paid to plan investment in the laboratories for knowledge about textile manufacturing. This would support both teaching and research activities.

### **3.7. STUDY QUALITY MANAGEMENT AND PUBLIC INFORMATION**

***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***

In 2013, the UK implemented the study quality management system based on the ISO 9001 quality management standard, the EFQM excellence model and the European Higher Education Quality Assurance Regulations and Guidelines. This includes defined responsibilities, roles and also mechanism to continuously gather student feedback. The Department of Engineering and Technology, the Clothing Technology Study Programme Committee and the Faculty Board are directly responsible for quality assurance of the P&TT study field programmes, compliance with modern labour market needs, scientific achievements and constant updating. The Clothing Technology study programme committee supervises the implementation of the SP, performs the internal quality assessment, updating and improvement of the SP. The committee consists of 9 members, including 3 teachers with experience in pedagogical and scientific work, international academic cooperation, relations with social partners, 2 representatives of social partners, 1 student representative, 3 graduates, and analyses the programme every year in September.

##### ***(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis***

There are College, Faculty and study programme level quality assurance systems in place. The document includes the details of the systems and functioning but there is limited information on the outcomes of these activities. Overall, the committee is balanced with the representation of academic, social partners and students/graduates.

#### ***3.7.2. Evaluation of the effectiveness of the involvement of stakeholders (students and other stakeholders) in internal quality assurance***

##### ***(1) Factual situation***

The students, teaching staff, graduates and employers are involved in surveys to ensure the quality of the studies. Student representatives participate in various governing bodies and committees of UK which ensures direct dialogue with other members. During the survey,

students have the opportunity to assess the quality of teaching and to submit proposals for the improvement of the SP.

As stated in SER the social partners provide proposals, participate in the decision making process on the evaluation and improvement of the SP. Social partners and potential employers accept students for internships, cognitive/review excursions, participate in the qualification commission for the defence of final theses, the Clothing Technology study programme committee, etc. (SER, p.43).

## *(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

Social partners and students are involved in internal quality assurance.

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

#### *(1) Factual situation*

The Department of Studies is responsible for information about students, their progress and result indicators. The main results of the internal evaluation of P&TT study field are discussed at the meetings of the study programme committee, the Dean's office of the Department of Technology and Informatics, the Faculty Board, the Academic Council, and the meetings of the faculty teachers. Updates of P&TT study field programmes, results of admission, results of external expert evaluation of SP, improvement plans, etc. are published on the UK website and in the AIKOS database. The summarized results of the surveys are published on the UK website, and through social media channels. The results all shared with all stakeholder including social partners and alumni.

#### *(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

The section describes in detail the structures in place. This includes the responsibilities of the different College departments. It would have been useful to include the results of the surveys. The link <https://www.utenos-kolegija.lt/kolegijai/kokybe/kokybes-komitetas> did not work for us.

### *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*

Surveys of students at the end of the autumn semester and surveys of graduating students are conducted to assess the quality of studies. The strengths of the studies are the professionalism of the teachers, the assistance of the Faculty administration to the students, the respectful and collegial communication of the teachers with the students, and the benevolent counselling. All students in the survey would recommend their studies to others. The 2018 surveys of graduates and students influenced the relocation of the library, which was far from the city centre. In 2019 the results of the graduate survey showed that students lacked information about the terms of students' accountability for subjects. In response, faculties published detailed information in the Moodle environment of UK. In 2019 and 2020 the results of surveys of graduates and students, discussions with alumni led to several changes in the SP: the number of self-works in study subjects was reduced by combining them with other subjects, for example, one study project was planned for several study subjects to

demonstrate each study subject outcomes (Artistic Finishing of Embroidery; Basics of Composition, Structural Modeling of Clothing). At the suggestion of students, a new internship “Creative Technology Internship” has been added to the above-mentioned SP.

*(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

It is highly commendable that all students would recommend their course to prospective future students. The surveys are implemented and more importantly there are clear examples of making changes in response to survey feedback. This includes improvement/relocation of the facilities, and in the SP.

***Strengths and weaknesses of this evaluation area:***

***(1) Strengths:***

1. There are College, Faculty and study programme level quality assurance systems in place. Overall, the committee is balanced with the representation of academic, social partners and students/graduates.
2. It is highly commendable that all students would recommend their course to prospective future students. The surveys are implemented and more importantly there are clear examples of making changes in response to survey feedback.
3. Social partners and students are involved in internal quality assurance.

***(2) Weaknesses:***

No weaknesses

## IV. EXAMPLES OF EXCELLENCE

**Core definition:** Excellence means exhibiting exceptional characteristics that are, implicitly, not achievable by all.

If, according to the expert panel, there are no such exceptional characteristics demonstrated by the HEI in this particular study field, this section should be skipped / left empty.

- There are College, Faculty and study programme level quality assurance systems in place. The HEI has implemented the study quality management system based on the ISO 9001 quality management standard, the EFQM excellence model and the European Higher Education Quality Assurance Regulations and Guidelines. Social partners and students are involved in internal quality assurance. The surveys are implemented and more importantly there are clear examples of making changes in response to survey feedback.

## V. RECOMMENDATIONS\*

Evaluation Area	Recommendations for the Evaluation Area (study cycle)
Intended and achieved learning outcomes and curriculum	<p>Some suggestions for further improvement of SP to reach excellence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proceed with the continuous improvement of SP by including the latest digital software for textile and fashion design and newest technologies emerging in the field, including circular economy.</li> <li>• Further, pay attention to include intended learning outcomes related to development of research skills in the study subjects and SP.</li> </ul>
Links between science (art) and studies	<p>Improvements suggested in order to reach excellence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The UK should constantly make efforts to expand its base of the newest visualisation and design programs suitable for the sector and in the field of study, in order to offer its students and external partners the latest IT solutions in this field.</li> </ul>
Student admission and support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Efforts should be taken to increase the number of state funded places due to the importance of the sector and the high demand for the UK graduates in the industry and business, or increase the number of vacancies financed by the companies.</li> <li>• More career support for students and counselling should be offered to the students.</li> <li>• Continuous efforts should be made to increase the number of students participating in the mobility. The UK should also take into account the processes of in-house internationalisation, which can also be implemented in the event of a pandemic or other factors that make it impossible to travel outside the country.</li> </ul>
Teaching and learning, student performance and graduate employment	<p>Improvements suggested in order to reach excellence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It might be useful to use a combination of formative and summative assessment activities to further scaffold the student academic journey.</li> <li>• The complaints procedure needs to be detailed with realistic timelines.</li> </ul>
Teaching staff	<p>Improvements suggested in order to reach excellence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Constantly improve the language competences of the staff, perhaps by increasing the intensity of language courses, but also by introducing some modules of classes conducted in English – it will be a benefit for students, but also a motivation for the teachers themselves.</li> </ul>

Learning facilities and resources	<p>Improvements suggested in order to reach excellence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is no significant weakness identified, but attention should be paid to plan investment in the laboratories for knowledge about textile manufacturing. This would support both teaching and research activities.</li> </ul>
Study quality management and public information	

\*If the study field is going to be given negative evaluation (non-accreditation) instead of RECOMMENDATIONS main **arguments for negative evaluation** (non-accreditation) must be provided together with a **list of “must do” actions** in order to assure that students admitted before study field’s non-accreditation will gain knowledge and skills at least on minimum level.



## VI. SUMMARY

### **Main positive and negative quality aspects of each evaluation area of Polymer and Textile Technology field study at Utenos Kolegija:**

The expert panel gives a positive evaluation of the 1st cycle *Clothing technologies* study programme (SP) at the Faculty of Business and Technology, Utenos Kolegija (UK), with all areas of evaluation assessed as “good” or “very good”.

#### **Major positive aspects:**

- The aim and learning outcomes of *Clothing technologies* SP are in conformity with the needs of the Uthena region and Lithuanian labour market and are in line with the UK aim, to train specialists in the clothing sector as one of the needed professions in the region. Besides knowledge and professional competences, students gain general competences needed for life-long learning.
- The structure of SP is well designed, balanced, newest topics, such as digitalisation, innovations and sustainability are included to a sufficient extent. Specialization is part of the SP, as well as personalization of study, which gives students the opportunity to personalize the structure of SP according to their individual learning objectives and intended learning outcomes.
- Cooperation with social partners is very well developed, a lot of activities are devoted to the general public, which shows social responsibility and incorporation of SP in the local community.
- A very tight cooperation with partners from industry and business who actively participate in the creation of the SP, its modification, and processes related to the evaluation of students' work. This allows for the assumption that the studies offered by UK are characterized by an exceptionally high practical level and allow students to acquire skills that are extremely important in terms of opportunities on the labour market.
- Many different opportunities for students to engage in various types of scientific and research activities.
- The UK provides various forms of student support which provides favourable conditions for their development. Students seem to be satisfied with the level of the support received from the UK.
- The UK offers various types of scholarships and incentive systems as a tool for activating students.
- Students rate the contacts with the UK very highly, and talk about close relations with administrative and teaching staff, which greatly facilitates the process of acclimatisation and development during their studies.
- The UK offers a wide range of opportunities to develop teaching, scientific and proactive skills for its staff. The process has been systematised and the procedures specifying the requirements for raising competences have been developed.
- The teachers confirm the very favourable approach of the administration and managers to the development of competences (including scientific promotions), which is manifested in various types of support for the staff, including financial and organisational support, but also related to the change in the distribution of the workload (flexible working hours, lowering teaching hourly workload, etc.)

- Teachers have very strong contacts with partners from the industrial and business environment, thanks to which they can develop their practical skills on an ongoing basis. A relatively large part of the teaching staff are specialists-practitioners.
- The physical infrastructure is sufficient to meet the needs of the students and staff. The provision of specialist laboratories in the field of studies is also visible.
- The changes are being implemented and there is a significant grant of EUR 800,000 expected. The plan shows that the major focus is on infrastructure and facilities.
- There are College, Faculty and study programme level quality assurance systems in place. Overall, the committee is balanced with the representation of academic, social partners and students/graduates.
- It is highly commendable that all students would recommend their course to prospective future students. The surveys are implemented and more importantly there are clear examples of making changes in response to survey feedback.
- Social partners and students are involved in internal quality assurance.

### **Suggestions for improvement:**

Expert panel didn't find any significant weaknesses. Instead, we are giving some suggestions for further improvement of SP in order to reach the excellence.

- Currently, emerging themes, such as digitalisation and sustainability are already included in SP, but with the fast development in these areas, the monitoring on annual basis is recommended in order to include the latest digital software for textile and fashion design and newest technologies emerging in the field into the SP constantly.
- Further improvement of SP, which is already very good, would be by including more research related learning outcomes in order to develop critical thinking and reasoning skills and gain problem-solving skills to a greater extent.
- Mobility of student could be more evident, also by introduction of mixed types of mobility adjusted to the needs and conditions of the situation (virtual, half-virtual, short mobilities, in-house internationalisation and etc.) which would increase the chances of students and graduates on the international markets.
- Efforts should be taken to increase the number of state funded places due to the importance of the sector and the high demand for the UK graduates in the industry and business, or increase the number of vacancies financed by the companies it cooperates with.
- More career support for students and counselling should be in place.
- Continuously, efforts should be made to increase the number of students participating in the mobility. The UK should also take into account the processes of in-house internationalization, which can also be implemented in the event of a pandemic or other factors that make it impossible to travel outside the country.
- It is necessary to constantly improve the language competences of the staff, perhaps by increasing the intensity of language courses, but also by introducing some modules of classes conducted in English – it will be a benefit for students, but also a motivation for the teachers themselves.
- The Academic Integrity process needs to be clearly defined, and applied for all submitted work. The students can be provided support and example access to the similarity at the start of the programme.
- It would have been useful to include details of the quality checks and any external examination of the programme assessments and teaching activities.

- It would have been useful for the process of evaluation to include the results of the surveys.
- There is no significant weakness identified, but attention should be paid to plan investment in the laboratories for knowledge about textile manufacturing. This would support both teaching and research activities.

**Expert panel leader**

**Professor dr. Diana Gregor-Svetec**