STUDIJŲ KOKYBĖS VERTINIMO CENTRAS

KLAIPĖDOS VALSTYBINĖ KOLEGIJA
STATYBOS STUDIJŲ PROGRAMOS (65302T106, 653H21003) VERTINIMO IŠVADOS

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EVALUATION REPORT
OF *CONSTRUCTION* (65302T106, 653H21003) STUDY PROGRAMME at KLAIPĖDA STATE COLLEGE

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Išvados parengtos anglų kalba
Report language - English

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Studijų programos pavadinimas	*Statyba*
Valstybiniai kodai	65302T106 (653H21003)
Studijų sritis	technologijos mokslai
Studijų kryptis	statybos inžinerija
Studijų programos rūšis	koleginė
Studijų pakopa	pirmoji
Studijų forma (trukmė metais)	nuolatinė (3), ištęstinė (4)
Studijų programos apimtis kreditais[1]	120
Suteikiamas laipsnis ir (ar) profesinė kvalifikacija	Statybos inžinerijos profesinis bakalauras, inžinierius
Studijų programos įregistravimo data	2002-08-30

[1] – vienas kreditas laikomas lygiu 40 studento darbo valandų

INFORMATION ON EVALUATED STUDY PROGRAMME

Name of the study programme	*Construction*
State code	65302T106 (new state code 653H21003)
Study area	Technological Sciences
Study field	Civil Engineering
Kind of the study programme	College studies of higher education
Level of studies	First
Study mode (length in years)	Full-time (3), part-time (4)
Scope of the study programme in national credits[1]	120
Degree and (or) professional qualifications awarded	Professional Bachelor's Degree in Civil Engineering, Engineer
Date of registration of the study programme	29 May 2003

[1] – one credit is equal to 40 hours of student work

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Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education

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I. INTRODUCTION

This report is based on the self evaluation report submitted by the academic team at Klaipeda State College as well as the information gained during the on-site-visit in December 2010 for the accreditation of the Construction study programme at the Department of Construction of the Faculty of technology of the College (state code–65302T106, new state code 653H21003). The report is detailed and comprehensive and does cover all the required fields.

Accordingly the team of experts got a clear insight of the delivery of the programmes in the college from the documents submitted as well as the lively discussions during the visits. All documents and presentations were well prepared and seriously and comprehensively presented. The evaluation of the study programme "Construction (653H21003)" of the College was part of several evaluations of study programmes in the field of construction, building and civil engineering in Lithuania. This gave team of experts an excellent opportunity to view at first hand the state of the education and the delivery of courses in that field in the five study programmes.

In general the quality of the delivery and education is good and adequate to the professional situation in Lithuania. A key issue for all programmes is the question of the setting up and the integration of applied research in the programmes. At the moment there is a clear lack on this level and especially in the field of energy-efficient buildings in general and the specific study-programmes in construction, civil engineering, would be expected to be a vehicle for such work. This would also help to establish this topic as a key aspect for a contemporary education in the field of construction, building and civil engineering.

Another issue that can be applied for all programmes is the necessity of strengthening the teaching of foreign languages, mainly the English language. This is essential to prepare graduates for the international market and for further education of the students. This issue is considered crucial and needs more initiative from all those involved.

From these general issues the panel of experts can envisage a common strategy of the study-programmes in Lithuania emerging in order to ensure the efficient delivery of courses and almost a necessity to establish educational methods of the highest possible quality.

II. PROGRAMME ANALYSIS
1. Programme aims and learning outcomes
1.1. Programme demand, purpose and aims

1.1.1. Uniqueness and rationale of the need for the programme
The self evaluation report does explain the need for such a programme within the Lithuanian market and also outlines the Lithuanian housing strategy and how this will be dependent on the availability of qualified people to implement it. The report also highlight amount of growth in the Lithuanian market and how this has increased the demands for new housing which made the condition to be very favourable for qualifies Construction professionals.

Demand for the programme was stated in the form of a table showing admitted students between 2005-2008. This showed a stable number of students who chose to study at KSC. Also there was a sharp increase in part time students in 2008. This trend was not maintained in 2009 as there was a slight decrease in F/T students (47 compared to 57 in 2008) but there was less than half of those who were admitted in 2008 (30 compared to 74). In 2010 216 students were admitted. Staff explained that confidence is coming back to the sector and hopefully this will be reflected in students numbers, also it is the second highest recruiting programme in the Faculty.

The document also lists the other colleges in the Republic of Lithuania who deliver similar programmes and it states that there is probably 15% difference between the various programmes. The document also states that this difference will give each programme its own uniqueness to distinguish them from the other providers. Within this region of Lithuania this is the only Construction study programme. There is a move to unify the structure of programmes in the country in order to facilitate transfer between the various colleges.

There was no clear answer for equipping the students for their life learning experience once they conclude their studies.

1.1.2. Conformity of the programme purpose with institutional, state and international directives
It stated in the document that the proposal complies with the College Strategic plan for 2010-2013. Also that it is the intention of the programme team to consult with al stake holders in order to ensure the validity of the programme and also to provide equal opportunities of individuals irrespective of their sex, age, ethnicity, religion, political views or social status. Preparations are under way for implementing the ECTS system from next year. Staff are being briefed and prepared for this along with the modules delivered. This is yet to be achieved and will hopefully be implemented in due course.

1.1.3. Relevance of the programme aims
These were clearly stated and explained with the document.

1.2. Learning outcomes of the programme

1.2.1. Comprehensibility and attainability of the learning outcomes
A detailed table listing all learning outcomes is included in the document which lists the knowledge and skills acquired by the students undertaking this programme of study. With regards to the Complexity of the learning outcomes it is deemed by the programme team to be compatible with the learning outcomes for Construction Engineering Graduates.

During the meeting with the local employers (where a number of them were graduates from this college) expressed their satisfaction with the way the college teaches its students. Some employers are also involved in the revision of the curriculum of the subjects taught at the college and they are involved in the final year projects. Most of the employers that were present do offer placement for the students in order for them to gain a very much needed practical experience.

1.2.2. Consistency of the learning outcomes
The learning outcomes are consistent throughout the programmes of the study and this is evidenced in table 6 where a skills matrix has been developed to map the learning outcomes to the various subjects and what level these are acquired.

1.2.3. Transformation of the learning outcomes
The assessment of the learning outcomes is done through the involvement of the local stakeholders in re-evaluation of the learning outcomes by reacting to market changes. This is also accomplish by the formation of working groups made out of students staff and industrialists to discuss any changes within the Industry in order to update the course delivered. The Social partners are actively involved in the preparation of final papers for students which will equip them with the required skills after graduation.

Students' placement is managed through the relationship with the Social partners who provide these places. Placements of 4-9 weeks is provided

A meeting is organised between the social partners and the college to review the year and see what is needed to be added to the curriculum. Also students coming back from their placement in the Industry are evaluated with regards to what additional skills are needed by the Industry.

In summary the programme meets all its aims and learning outcomes and exceeds the expectations. The team should be congratulated for achieving this.

2. Curriculum design

2.1. Programme structure

2.1.1. Sufficiency of the study volume

The subjects offered on the programme are of sufficient details and depth for such a programme of study. They also seem to be compliant with regulation set for such a programme with regards to its content and credit rating. The programme is also compliant with the set learning outcomes. This is detailed throughout the document and is fully implemented within the study programme.

2.1.2. Consistency of the study subjects

There is an explanation of how the subjects are sequenced throughout the programme. There are core and optional subjects. It is deemed that there is a need to concentrate more on the teaching of a foreign languages and the Panel are pleased to see that the amount of credits for teaching foreign languages has doubled in this year. Students are also encouraged to choose a language of study. Most of the students are choosing English as their foreign language.

2.2. Programme content

2.2.1. Compliance of the contents of the studies with legal acts

This seems to be covered as there are clear statements of compliance with national regulations with regards to Construction programmes. Pedagogical approaches are used throughout the programme by facilitating site visits, laboratory activities and project work.

2.2.2. Comprehensiveness and rationality of programme content

This clearly set in the document and during the time of the study over the 6 semesters for F/T and the 8 semesters for P/T students. There are core and optional modules offered in the programme. P/T students are given the same tasks as F/T time students and are always monitored to ensure the same quality of work as their F/T colleagues. There is a concern here concerning P/T students of how the quality is maintained for this cohort of students.

In summary there seems to be a need to give more attention to the teaching of foreign languages and especially English as the visiting team have noticed that not all students can communicate well in a foreign language.

3. Staff

3.1. Staff composition and turnover

3.1.1. Rationality of the staff composition

All aspects regarding this point have been addressed in the self assessment document inn section 3.1. This includes a good set of qualified staff. The student to staff ratio is 17.3 to 1. This is a bit high but in these economically difficult times staff have worked some plans to address this. The percentage of full time to part time staff is 87% which is a good percentage. There are also 14 other employees including librarians, technicians and IT staff.

Staff practical experience is renewed through the undertaking of consultancies and presentation of scientific papers at conferences.

3.1.2. Turnover of teachers
New lecturers are given a number of sessions with experienced teachers to help them in their first year of employment. They are also sent to specialist courses to upgrade their abilities in the taught subjects. No formal teaching qualification is required.

3.2. Staff competence

3.2.1. Compliance of staff experience with the study programme
The programme team is made of experienced staff with many years of experience. Staff are encouraged to renew their practical experience but it is not compulsory and is done on ad hoc bases. Also recently the college has been involved in an EU project to place staff at local businesses to update their practical skills. Also evident that some of the staff are research active and they do try to feed back their research back into the teaching. As an example staff are involved in creating a data base for the city's local heritage this resulted in a conference article and third year students were involved in this project. This practice is always encouraged and student participation is always important.

3.2.2. Consistency of teachers' professional development
There is good detail included in the documents submitted and this issue was also discussed at length during the meeting with the staff and administrators and the panel were assured that this is an important development issue and the panel are satisfied with the level of support that is offered for staff development.

One slight concern here is the issue of staff renewing their practical experiences as the mechanism for this was not very clear.

4. Facilities and learning resources

4.1. Facilities

4.1.1. Sufficiency and suitability of premises for studies
The lecture rooms are adequate and seems comfortable for teaching purposes with good equipment. Students are disciplined in the class. Perhaps one point to note is the lack of white boards as they are still using choke boards.

4.1.2. Suitability and sufficiency of equipment for studies
There is a wide spread of pc's, projectors which are used for teaching purposes. Also a good range of teaching aids to demonstrate construction material.

4.1.3. Suitability and accessibility of the resources for practical training
There seems to be a good programme for cooperation between the Course team and the local and national Industry. This is reflected in the laboratories where a large number of exhibits are donated from the local Industry.

4.2. Learning resources

4.2.1. Suitability and accessibility of books, textbooks and periodical publications
This seems adequate and upon visiting the learning resources facility it was evident that there is good support for the students where there are a good number of books available for students and staff to borrow for a maximum period of three months. Various resources are in English and are regularly accessed by students.

4.2.2. Suitability and accessibility of learning materials

All learning material is available in the library and also on the University website where they can be remotely accessed. This is very useful for all students especially the P/T ones.

This are was well covered with one issue with regards the use of white boards instead

5. Study process and student assessment
5.1. Student admission
5.1.1. Rationality of requirements for admission to the studies

It is interesting to note that the entry standard was generally lowered since the transmission of admission to a centralised system. There was no indication of special requirements.

5.1.2. Efficiency of enhancing the motivation of applicants and new students

This looks fine as there are several initiatives for students' induction and motivation building during the course. New students are taken to site trips at the beginning of their studied to introduce them to the subject and the construction industry.

5.2. Study process

5.2.1. Rationality of the programme schedule

This is presented in the document with good detail. It was preferred to offer a day off in the time table to give students some time to conduct research or catch up on course work. It was reported that this is possible and sometimes students are given time to conduct their activities.

Each P/T student has their own staff tutor who looks after them to ensure that the learning outcomes of the programmes are delivered.

5.2.2. Student academic performance

One reason for the high dropout rates is student motivation and dedication to the programme. However in recent years this has decreased due to the implementation of the new admission system. Also first year students go through an induction program to increase their motivation and interest in the course.

It is interesting to note that parents are informed of low academic performance of students. This is not according to the Freedom of Information Act. The staff have replied that they do this with approval of the students since the parents are paying for their students and they do want to know about their children's' progress. The course team were warned about this practice as it may lead to students suing the University for doing this.

5.2.3. Mobility of teachers and students

This looks fine and is fully operational within the European Community ERASMUS programme. There have been some recent changes this year and there has been some activity of staff mobility. It is intended to concentrate more on this aspect. Language is still a problem and may necessitate language tuition for both outgoing and incoming students. Also there are occasion where one to one tuition is given due to the language problem. This is a problem and will result in keeping this sort of activity very limited.

5.3. Student support

5.3.1. Usefulness of academic support

The issues regarding the dissemination of information to the students looks fine and is well covered.

Students have reported that computers are old and need to be renewed. Also the sport facilities although they are operational they are also old and need renewal.

Students reported that the placement part of the course is very important and give them good experience to be used later in their career.

P/T students do not interact with the full time cohort. Perhaps this is a point that needs looking at. However they seem to be happy enough and are getting all the support they need.

Students are involved in the assessment of the courses at the end of the academic year by the way of questionnaires. Students are also well represented in the academic process and the organisation various student centred events.

The library stock is made of hard copies and electronic resources and also access to other academic institutions in the region. The students reported that they do have enough resources and most are electronic. It is felt that there is a dependence on electronic resources more that hard copies of academic textbooks.

5.3.2. Efficiency of social support
This looks fine.

5.4. Student achievement assessment

5.4.1. Suitability of assessment criteria and their publicity
This look that it conforms to the regulations of the college and also is well disseminated to the students. There is no formal system for compensating failing students. However student performance is reviewed as individual cases and compensation may be offered.

5.4.2. Feedback efficiency
Students reported that staff feedback on their course work is quick and efficient.

5.4.3. Efficiency of final thesis assessment
This seems to be well documented and formalised.

5.4.4. Functionality of the system for assessment and recognition of achievements acquired in non-formal and self-education
This issue was not covered during the visit.

5.5. Graduates placement

5.5.1. Expediency of graduate placement
During the employers meeting it was categorically expressed that employers are very happy with the graduates from this college and they would not hesitate to employ these graduates once the need arises preferring them to other larger University graduates. Employers also outlined that they can see some upward movement in the construction industry and they are optimistic that there will be more improvement in the jobs market for the Construction Industry. They also expressed that they will have positions for new staff within their companies and hopefully graduates from this college will have a good chance in being chosen. They also expressed the importance of learning a foreign language such as English and Russian as a lot of products and contracts are done with other countries which need this knowledge. I was also highlighted that the proficiency of a foreign language should be in technical terms as well as a communication tool.

In summary there are a couple of issues with regards to students confidentiality and IT equipment as stated above. However overall it is satisfactory.

6. Programme management

6.1. Programme administration

6.1.1. Efficiency of the programme management activities
This is well documented and seems to conform to all regulations. Experienced staff are managing the programmes led by Ms Vizgirdiene.

6.2. Internal quality assurance

6.2.1. Suitability of the programme quality evaluation
The annual review of the programmes looks satisfactory. This is supplemented by student and employer surveys.

6.2.2. Efficiency of the programme quality improvement
This looks to be covered**.**

6.2.3. Efficiency of stakeholders participation
The internal participation of stake holders into this process looks ok and local employers are involved is the updating and revision of the programmes offered by this college.

This area is well covered and has expected the visiting team's expectations, well done.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

General Reccomendations:

1. Beside the given orientation toward practical knowledge, the programmes have to strengthen the scientific development of students, for their further learning activities (Lifelong learning).
2. The effectiveness of the teaching of foreign languages within the programmes has to be increased.
3. The pedagogical approaches have to be systematically evaluated within the school. This has to include the methods of assessment.
4. In the programme the integration between the two groups of students (fulltime and parttime) has to be strengthened, in order to let the two cohorts to share ideas and discuss issues related to their studies. Also it will be good if each P/T can be assigned a personal tutor so that he/she can have a point of contact within the college.
5. A clear and formalized procedure for the renewal of the practical experience of staff needs to be established in the programme.
6. A conclusive agenda of real applied research has to be established and the transmitting into the teaching process needs to be established and assessed on a regular base.
7. Staff and students mobility has to be increased with special initiatives. This is a general problem within the evaluated programmes in Lithuania and therefore nationwide actions should be initiated.

Specific Reccomendations:

1. To renew the IT facilities in order to provide students with better resources to aid their studies.

2. As stated in the general recommendations above it important to concentrate more on the teaching of Foreign Languages, especially English and to some extent Russian to give students a better chance to understand international developments and also to practice outside of Lithuania. The same can be said about staff as it would be advantageous for them if they can communicate in English.
3. To ensure the implementation of International standards to all programmes so that students will be able to transfer between EU institutions.

IV. GENERAL ASSESSMENT

The study programme Construction (653H21003)is given **positive** evaluation.

Table. *Study programme assessment in points by evaluation areas*.

No.	Evaluation area	Assessment in points*
1	Programme aims and learning outcomes	4
2	Curriculum design	3
3	Staff	3
4	Facilities and learning resources	3
5	Study process and student assessment (student admission, student support, student achievement assessment)	3
6	Programme management (programme administration, internal quality assurance)	4
	Total:	20

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

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

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

4 (very good) - the area is exceptionally good

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