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I. INTRODUCTION

Kaunas Technical University consists of 13 Faculties, including the Faculties of the Panevezys Institute, in which there are 73 Departments, 27 Centres, 6 Institutes and 15 Research Laboratories, as well as other key facilities and resources appropriate to an institution of this standing. The stated mission of the University is "to engage in qualitative studies and research, the education of the younger generation, applied, innovative, cultured, and educational activities, fostering of national culture and democracy, creation of a knowledge society and the rise of people's welfare for Lithuania's well-being and the favourable development of world culture and science." The staff team of the University includes 960 teachers and 146 researchers (as at December 31, 2011).

The Faculty of Social Sciences is responsible for the Bachelor study programme in Business Administration, the first of its type in Lithuania and the subject of this evaluation. The Department of Business Administration coordinates the programme, and five of the eight Departments within the Faculty are involved in its implementation.

There has been a significant decline in the number of students applying to join the programme over the past 5 years. The number of students accepted in 2011/2012 was 68, approximately 25% of the total enrolment in the academic year 2008-2009. Student retention averaged 70% over the period 2007-2010, and 62% over the period 2008-2011. The number of students who do not complete their studies is much greater amongst the part-time cohort. The efforts of the University to reduce the drop-out rate are ongoing. Examples of initiatives which have been introduced for this purpose include flexibility in timetabling to allow for public transport arrangements, the availability of most classes in the central part of town, and the transfer of more complex subjects to later semesters.

The panel conducted this evaluation in accordance with the legislation and in line with the guidelines and procedures of the SKVC. Prior to the site visit, the University had provided the necessary documentation, including a self-assessment report. During the visit, panel members discussed the various aspects of the programme with relevant stakeholders, and assessed the learning environment which is provided for students. The programme was examined under the established criteria (1-6 below), and suggestions/ recommendations for further improvements have been incorporated into this report.

The site visit to the University took place on 28 February, 2013 and the panel members wish to thank University staff at all levels for the courtesy and cooperation extended to us on the occasion of the visit. The input to the different discussions from students, alumni and social partners is also much appreciated.

II. PROGRAMME ANALYSIS

1. Programme Aims and Learning Outcomes

In the self-assessment review document produced by the University, the aim of the programme is described as "to prepare Business Bachelors who possess basic knowledge of management and economics as well as other sciences relevant for business practice (psychology, mathematics, informatics, and others); understand conceptions, principles and methods of business development, management and expansion; apply the acquired knowledge, understanding, and abilities in making socially responsible business decisions in a constantly changing business environment; are able to apply complex information, mathematical, analytical, research and other abilities in surveying, analysing and evaluating environment of a business enterprise processes; are effectively communicating with employees and their teams in professional environment, build social relationships beyond the enterprise; consider universally recognised values and have developed abilities of meta learning, creativity and problem-solution, teamwork necessary for professional and personal development."

The aims, objectives and learning outcomes of the programme are focused upon helping the student to acquire and develop:

- Knowledge and its Application
- Research Skills
- Subject-Specific Skills
- Social Skills, and Personal Skills.

In order to ensure the continuing relevance of the programme, the University conducts extensive research amongst stakeholders regarding the content, standard and relevance of the aims, learning outcomes and associated curriculum. The feedback received (including graduate surveys which have been carried out since 1994) has helped to ensure the ongoing suitability of the qualification in preparing students for future employment, regionally and nationally. Of particular significance in this context has been the recommendations contained in a survey of

Lithuanian business enterprises (35) which was undertaken in June and July of last year, and the content of the publication "New Skills for New Jobs Now" produced by an expert group for the European Commission. Progression to a Master's degree programme represents another potential opportunity for holders of this Bachelor degree qualification.

The aims and objectives of the programme are reflected in a carefully designed, integrated curriculum structure which allows for specialisation, depending upon the interests and aptitudes of students.

In terms of the panel's analysis, the aims and objectives are, in general:

- ▲ Clear, well defined, integrated and appropriate for a Bachelor degree in this discipline.
- ▲ In accordance with national and international regulations governing such programmes.
- ▲ Consistent with the type and level of studies, both nationally and internationally.
- ▲ Readily accessible and of direct relevance to the needs of the labour market, as evidenced by feedback to the University from employers and from discussions held with stakeholders on the occasion of the site visit.

However, aspects of the terminology currently used to describe particular learning outcomes could be strengthened to ensure that all such descriptors reflect the nature and level of the programme. By way of example, it would appear that there is an over emphasis on the use of terms such as 'know' and 'understand' in relation to how these learning outcomes are presented in English. Such expressions can also appear in the descriptors for a study programme at sub-Bachelor degree level.

2. Curriculum Design

Amongst the changes which have been introduced since the last expert panel evaluation are the following:

Subjects withdrawn from the curriculum:

Administrative Language Culture

Evolution of European Integration

Sociology.

Subjects introduced into the curriculum:

Management Accounting

Business and Society
Human Resources Development
Management of Business Projects.

Other amendments which have been implemented since that evaluation include:

- The amalgamation of Mathematics I and Mathematics 2 to form the subject Mathematics (Applied).
- The combination of Information Technology I and Information Technology 2 to form the Innovative Information Technologies subject.
- The subject title Social Statistics now reads Statistics.
- The subject Psychology of Communication now reads Psychology.

In terms of study programme structure, the following adjustments have been in place since September 2011:

- ▲ General subjects are allocated not less than 15 credits
- ▲ Core subjects are allocated not less than 165 credits (work practice, with an assignment of 18 credits, included)
- ▲ Subjects of the study field or minor study field are allocated not less than 60 credits.

These revisions and refinements have strengthened the qualification and are indicative of the University's efforts to continuously monitor and improve the programme.

The programme study plan is structured in accordance with the existing legal regulations governing higher education in the Republic of Lithuania, international requirements and University policy. A strong correlation exists between the programme's structure/content and the prescribed aims/learning outcomes. The inclusion of topics such as social and civil competence, social responsibility, and cultural awareness within the curriculum helps to enrich the qualification.

In summary,

- ▲ The scope of the programme is sufficiently expansive to enable the attainment of the identified learning outcomes.
- ▲ The curriculum is generally up to date and fit for purpose.
- ▲ There is no significant repetition or redundant content across the range of courses/subjects.

- ⤴ The interdisciplinary nature of the courses/subjects and their orientation to business practice applications is evident, although scope exists for the further integration of theory and practice.
- ⤴ In the context of the overall effectiveness of the assessment dimension of the programme, regular monitoring is necessary to ensure that students are not subjected to a multitude of assessment tests, some of which they may find difficult to relate to the learning outcomes of either the particular course/subject or of the entire curriculum. Fewer assessment tests, each with a higher weighting, may be worthy of consideration by programme management. There appears to be a difference across courses/subjects in the weighting assigned to similar, if not identical, assessment instruments. This aspect should be revisited by the University, together with the variation in the weighting of and emphasis placed upon final examinations in different courses/subjects.
- ⤴ Areas which warrant expansion within the curriculum include; a wider coverage of EU structure and policy in relation to business development matters, and a more extensive coverage of the different aspects of law. A more explicit reference to business ethics within the syllabus for particular courses/subjects is also required.

3. Teaching Staff

The composition, age and qualifications of teaching staff meet the requirements of national legislation. Within the academic staff team, there is an appropriate balance between theoretical knowledge and practical experience related to the subjects being taught. The University is stated to be the main place of employment for staff, and their developed expertise is enriched by an involvement in relevant research. In recent years, lecturers on the programme have published 12 books, 20 study books and 6 methodical books in the context of their work

The academic staff of the Department of Business Administration (as at the end of the academic year 2011-2012) consisted of 2 professors, 5 associate professors, 7 lecturers, and one assistant. A total of 7 team members hold the scientific degree of PhD. Academic staff at Doctoral level also participate in the provision of the Master's degree programme in International Services Business which commenced in September 2012. Members of the academic staff team have

undertaken a variety of professional development activities over the past five years. Feedback which the panel received from students reflects favourably on the commitment and performance of teaching staff.

The ongoing development of staff must remain a priority for the University. The mobility of academic staff has increased during the past two years, with 5 members of the programme delivery team participating in teacher exchange schemes in 2011-2012. In the context of mobility, it is also understood that 20 additional contracts for Erasmus exchange programmes were signed in the academic year 2011-2012.

The extent of course/subject delivery in the English language needs to be expanded, while the involvement of an increasing number of guest lecturers, particularly from the social partners and international Universities (it is understood that 5 visiting academics lectured to students of the programme in the first semester of 2012-2013) should enhance both the practical and theoretical focus of the curriculum

The involvement of academic staff in conference presentations, both national and international, could be greater, and it is necessary that the output from such research activity is disseminated as widely as possible to benefit student and staff learning. The workload of staff involved in the supervision of final degree theses needs to be monitored carefully to ensure that they are readily available for effective consultation with individual students. In this context, the quality of this project element of student work remains open to further improvement.

4. Facilities and Learning Resources

The learning environment is characterised by a sufficient number of auditoriums and computer laboratories designed to ergonomic standards. The equipment is relatively modern and students and lecturers can use the general software which has been purchased centrally by the University. Collaboration between teachers and IT companies has also helped to expand access to the latest facilities on offer from such suppliers. The panel suggests that a financial allocation towards the purchase of additional specialised software should be included in future budgetary plans.

The University library reading room has 174 work places, 32 of which are computerised; while general access to material is also provided by other higher education and public libraries. While the Department strives to upgrade and increase the number and variety of relevant textbooks

published in English, the panel recommends that greater financial resources be allocated to expand the quantity of updated reading material available for student use.

Work practice is considered an integral part of the learning process, and this element has been assigned a total of 18 credits. Over the past five years, 850 students have completed this part of the programme, and subsequently successfully defended the thesis. Closer collaboration between the University and employers who provide practical student placements has been developed in the current academic year. The outcome is expected to be a stronger focus on the learning dimension of this compulsory work experience, resulting in a higher level of student motivation and enhanced employer commitment to the process. Students also have the opportunity to complete work practice abroad. However, only one student did so in 2011-2012.

5. Study Process and Student Assessment

Admission to the study programme meets the legal requirements of the country and accords with the academic regulations of the University. The learning environment provided for staff and students is kept under regular review to assess whether facilities and resources are sufficient to enable the programme's stated learning outcomes to be achieved. In this respect, the panel suggests that the technology used to assist the learning process should be considered a priority in terms of funding allocation.

The involvement of students in the scientific conference: 'Social Sciences: Challenges for Globalisation' is encouraging (there were 53 participants in the Business Administration section during this 2012 conference). It is also a positive development to have some students from the programme participate in similar events on an international scale.

The University offers a high level of support for students, and provides opportunities for their consultation with lecturers in different ways. In the area of student assessment, the programme follows the academic regulations of the University. In addition to the earlier reference to the assessment process, the panel wishes to reiterate that the justification for the variety of assessment tests needs to be firmly established, and the direct connection between each test and the particular learning outcomes being measured should be made fully clear to students. The allocation of maximum marks for elements of the assessment process suggests perfection or close to it. Other than in exceptional cases, this is difficult to justify. The University does not tolerate any form of academic dishonesty. However, the documentation made available to the

panel did not provide any detailed information regarding how such integrity is achieved or the nature of the penalties which exist to discourage a student from cheating.

In some higher education institutions, study programmes, such as this Bachelor degree, include a module entitled 'Learning to Learn 'or similar. The objective is to help the student to acquire knowledge and develop skills regarding aspects such as: learning styles, note taking at lectures, effective study skills, stress management, and how to prepare for and complete examinations/assessment tests. The outcome benefits the student in terms of developing self-confidence and becoming more highly motivated, with the possibility of an improved academic performance. In this context, the Introduction to Studies(8 hours' duration) element provided for students entering the programme has been noted by the panel.

The University's conclusion that scope exists for improvement in the quality of final degree projects/theses appears to be at variance with a comment in the same document to the effect that the Chairman of the Qualifications Commission regularly praises such work produced by students. The panel agrees that there is room for improvement, and suggests that such apparently diverging viewpoints regarding standards should be explored.

The endorsement which the University receives from graduates (formerly full-time and part-time students) reflects well on the knowledge, skills and attitudes which they acquired while completing the programme in preparation for employment and future career progression. In the context of student mobility, it is suggested that an increase in the number of students availing of opportunities to study abroad would represent a further positive development in the evolution of this programme.

6. Programme Management

The management of the programme complies with national regulations and University policy. The principal administrative bodies and structural units responsible are:

- ▲ Studies and Academic Culture Committee (Senate)
- ▲ Student Affairs Committee (Senate)
- ▲ Quality Committee (Senate)
- ▲ Vice-Rector for Studies (Rector's Office)

- ⤴ Strategy Implementation and Quality Assurance Department (Corporate Services)
- ⤴ Academic Department (Corporate Services)
- ⤴ Student Affairs Department (Corporate Services), and the Centre for Academic Advancement.

Students are involved in the decision-making process at every level. The Study Programme Committee is a formal grouping within the Department which functions in accordance with the prescribed regulations. The process for the administration of the programme and for quality assurance is mediated through a virtual environment (ORACLE, since 2003) and this is seen to be working satisfactorily.

As a University committed to quality, KTU regularly assesses the programme at both Faculty and Department levels. Amongst the areas identified in the last expert panel review which have been receiving attention are the following:

- ⤴ The inclusion of core subjects/courses in the first year of the curriculum.
- ⤴ The involvement of a greater number of foreign lecturers and practitioners in aspects of the programme.
- ⤴ A wider use of national and international case studies.
- ⤴ The introduction of stronger incentives to encourage students to go abroad within the duration of the programme.

The strengths of programme management include a focus on quality, and the delineation of clear responsibilities for curriculum review, implementation, and improvement. As the parent institution, KTU deserves commendation for the manner in which this programme is managed.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations, together with the suggestions above, are presented by the panel to improve further what is already a well-established programme:

- ⤴ There is a necessity to expand the law content of the programme, in accordance with international best practice for Bachelor degree programmes in business disciplines. Similarly,

the Accounting/Finance content should be reviewed to determine whether it is sufficient to cater for those students who may wish to qualify subsequently as professional accountants, either in Lithuania or abroad.

- ⤴ The workload of individual academic staff members should be reviewed to ensure that it is not militating against a more extensive involvement in research and personal development. In this context, there appears to be merit in making arrangements which would allow those academic staff members whose forte is research to be given a lesser teaching commitment. This would allow the truly effective teachers to dispense with some of their research obligations and concentrate on utilising their strengths in the area of pedagogy. The learning experience of students would be enhanced accordingly.

- ⤴ The University's plans to manage the students' work experience more effectively are strongly endorsed. Each placement must have clearly defined learning outcomes, in accordance with the needs of the student and the employer, and in line with the learning outcomes of the programme. The effectiveness of the work practice component depends heavily on the perception of the employer regarding its importance – a factor which can be influenced by the extent to which there is a direct involvement from University staff in the process.

- ⤴ An increased number of integrated assignments across courses/subjects within the programme should lead to a more effective learning process and enhanced student motivation. Agreement on additional assignments of this nature could result from consultation between members of the academic staff team responsible for programme delivery.

- ⤴ The gathering of feedback from graduates/other stakeholders should be maintained, as well as the efforts to increase the involvement of alumni and social partners in the development, delivery and review of the programme. The introduction of a special awards scheme in recognition of outstanding achievements by alumni could strengthen further the association of these key stakeholders with programme development, delivery and promotion while also enhancing the status of the qualification.

- ^ The extent to which recognition of prior learning/prior experiential learning may be developed and expanded is worthy of ongoing review and implementation. This system can provide both students and prospective students with appropriate recognition for previous achievements/attainments which clearly meet some of the learning outcomes of the programme. Such an objective, scientifically based policy could attract additional students and also shorten the duration of studies for those entrants who have already attained certain learning outcomes.

- ^ In the context of promoting the programme, an expanded delivery by distance learning mode should yield beneficial effects. Equally, the coordination of the electronic business/electronic commerce content of the programme (currently implemented across a range of modules) should increase the relevance and attractiveness of the curriculum for both existing and prospective students, and also lead to enhanced employment prospects for graduates. The use of the Moodle system in programme delivery for distance learning students across 21/40 courses/subjects is also relevant for full-time students.

IV. SUMMARY

This programme is impressive and effective, and the University is committed to the maintenance of high quality standards in its delivery, review and management. Amongst the strengths of the programme are the relevance of the subjects and the attention paid by staff to ensuring its success.

Stakeholders demonstrate substantial goodwill towards helping to ensure that the curriculum remains up to date and relevant, thereby enhancing both initial employment prospects and further career development opportunities for graduates. A positive learning environment exists and relations between staff and students appear to be friendly and mutually respectful.

Suggestions and recommendations for further improvement and development have been outlined above. In addition to these, it is the view of the panel that the level of communication and collaboration between teachers of subjects/courses in KTU and their counterparts in the Panevezys Institute should be developed further in order to benefit programme delivery in the respective institutions.

V. GENERAL ASSESSMENT

The study programme Business administration (state code ó 612N10002) at Kaunas Technical University is given a positive evaluation.

Study programme assessment in points by evaluation areas.

No.	Evaluation Area	Evaluation Area in Points*
1.	Programme aims and learning outcomes	3
2.	Curriculum design	3
3.	Staff	3
4.	Material resources	3
5.	Study process and assessment (student admission, study process student support, achievement assessment)	3
6.	Programme management (programme administration, internal quality assurance)	4
	Total:	19

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

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

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

4 (very good) - the field is exceptionally good.

Grup s vadovas:
Team leader:

John Cusack

Grup s nariai:
Team members:

Prof. Habil. Dr. Csaba Forgács

Dr. Kristiina Tõnnisson

Stasys TMvagfdys

Egl Seili t

**KAUNO TECHNOLOGIJOS UNIVERSITETO PIRMOS PAKOPOS STUDIJŲ
PROGRAMOS *VERSLO ADMINISTRAVIMAS* (VALSTYBINIS KODAS – 612N10002)
2013-05-27 EKSPERTINIO VERTINIMO IŠVADŲ NR. SV4-153 IŠRAŠAS**

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V. APIBENDRINAMASIS ĮVERTINIMAS

Kauno technologijos universiteto studijų programa Verslo administravimas (valstybinis kodas ó 612N10002) vertinama **teigiamai**.

Eil. Nr.	Vertinimo sritis	Srities vertinimas, balais*
1.	Programos tikslai ir numatomi studijų rezultatai	3
2.	Programos sandara	3
3.	Personalas	3
4.	Materialieji i-tekčiai	3
5.	Studijų eiga ir jos vertinimas	3
6.	Programos vadyba	4
	Iš viso:	19

* 1 - Nepatenkinamai (yra esminiai trūkumai, kuriuos būtina pašalinti)

2 - Patenkinamai (tenkina minimalius reikalavimus, reikia tobulinti)

3 - Gerai (sistemiškai patenkinama sritis, turi savitumų)

4 - Labai gerai (sritis yra išskirtinai)

1. IV. SANTRAUKA

Ši programa spėjama ir veiksminga, o universitetas stengiasi išlaikyti aukštą jos vykdymo, profilio ir vadybos kokybę. Tarp programos stiprybių minėtini dalykų aktualumas ir personalo skiriamos pastangos programos sėkmei užtikrinti.

Socialiniai dalininkai demonstruoja didelį geranoriškumą padėti užtikrinti, kad programa išliktų moderni ir aktuali, taip stiprindami tiek absolventų pirminio sidarbinimo perspektyvas, tiek tolesnes karjeros plėtros galimybes. Vyrauja teigiama mokymosi aplinka, o personalo ir studentų santykiuose vyrauja draugiškumas ir abipusė pagarba.

Pasiūlymai ir rekomendacijos dėl tolesnio programos tobulinimo ir gerinimo pateikti aukščiau. Be to, ekspertų grupė susidarė nuomonę, kad KTU dėstytojų ir kolegų iš Panevėžio instituto bendravimas ir bendradarbiavimas turėtų būti toliau plėtojami siekiant geriau vykdyti programą institucijose.

2. III. REKOMENDACIJOS

Be aukščiau išdėstytų pasiūlymų, ekspertų grupė pateikia rekomendacijas, padėsiančias toliau tobulinti puikiai parengtą programą:

- ▲ Reikia išplėsti teisinį aspektą nagrinėjant programoje remiantis tarptautiniais verslo disciplinų bakalauro laipsnio programų gerosios patirties pavyzdžiais. Reikėtų patvirtinti

apskaitos / finans dalyk turin ir nustatyti, ar jis pakankamas tiems studentams, kurie po studij nor s tapti profesionaliais apskaitininkais tiek Lietuvoje, tiek ufsienyje.

- ▲ Reik t perflir ti pavieni d stytoj darbo kr v siekiant uftikrinti, kad jis netrukdyt daugiau dalyvauti tiriamojoje ir asmeninio tobulinimosi veikloje. Praverst susitarimai, pagal kuriuos tie d stytojai, kuri stiprioji pus yra moksliniai tyrimai, tur t maflesn d stymo kr v . Tai leist i-ties veiksmingai dirbantiems d stytojams vykdyti kai kuriuos savo mokslini tyrim sipareigojimus ir susitelkti savo pedagogin s kompetencijos stiprybi i-naudojim . Atitinkamai b t sustiprinta student mokymosi patirtis.
- ▲ Labai pritariama universiteto planams veiksmingiau valdyti student praktin patirt . Kiekviena praktika turi tur ti ai-kiai apibr ftus numatomus studij rezultatus, atsifflvegiant student ir darbdavi poreikius, ir atitikti programos numatomus studij rezultatus. Profesin s praktikos komponento veiksmingumas labai priklauso nuo to, kaip darbdavys suvokia jo svarb , ó -iam veiksmui didel s takos turi tai, kiek universiteto personalas yra tiesiogiai sitrauk s proces .
- ▲ Didesnis skai ius uflduo i , apiman i du ar daugiau dalykus, tur t padaryti mokymosi proces efektyvesn ir padidinti student motyvacij . Susitarim d l papildom tokio pob dffio uflduo i galima pasiekti ufl programos vykdym atsakingiems d stytojams konsultuojantis tarpusavyje.
- ▲ Reik t ir toliau rinkti absolvent / kit socialini dalinink atsiliepinimus, taip pat d ti daugiau pastang labiau traukti absolventus ir socialinius partnerius programos tobulinimo, gyvendinimo ir perflir os procesus. Speciali apdovanojim ufl ypatingus absolvent pasiekimus teikimo sistema ir toliau stiprint i pagrindini socialini dalinink ry-ius su programos tobulinimu, gyvendinimu ir reklama, taip pat stiprinant kvalifikacijos status .
- ▲ Reik t perflir ti ir pl toti ankstesnio mokymosi / patirties pripaflinimo sistem . TŲ sistema gali atitinkamai pripaflinti tiek esam , tiek b sim student ankstesnius pasiekimus, kurie ai-kiai atitinka kai kuriuos programos numatomus studij rezultatus. Tokia objektyvi, moksl-i-ka politika gal t pritraukti papildom student ir sutrumpint studij trukm tiems stojantiesiems, kurie jau yra pasiek tam tikrus studij rezultatus.
- ▲ Reklamuojant program praverst platesnis nuotolini studij paslaug teikimas. Taip pat programos elektroninio verslo / elektronin s prekybos turinio (-iuo metu gyvendinamo per vairius modulius) koordinavimas tur t padaryti program aktualesn ir patrauklesn tiek esamiems, tiek b simiems studentams, ir padidinti absolvent sidarbinimo perspektyvas. šMoodleō sistemos naudojimas teikiant programos 21/40 kurs / dalyk nuotolini studij studentams taip pat aktualus ir nuolatini studij studentams.

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