



STUDIJŲ KOKYBĖS VERTINIMO CENTRAS

Klaipėdos valstybinės kolegijos  
***BURNOS HIGIENOS STUDIJŲ PROGRAMOS***  
**(65308B110, 653A51005)**  
**VERTINIMO IŠVADOS**

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**EVALUATION REPORT**  
**OF *DENTAL HYGIENE* (65308B110, 653A51005)**  
**STUDY PROGRAMME**  
at Klaipėda State College

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## DUOMENYS APIE ĮVERTINTĄ PROGRAMĄ

Studijų programos pavadinimas	<b><i>Burnos higiena</i></b>
Valstybiniai kodai	65308B110, 653A51005
Studijų sritis	biomedicinos mokslai
Studijų kryptis	burnos priežiūra
Studijų programos rūšis	koleginės studijos
Studijų pakopa	pirmoji
Studijų forma (trukmė metais)	nuolatinė (3)
Studijų programos apimtis kreditais	180
Suteikiamas laipsnis ir (ar) profesinė kvalifikacija	burnos higienistas, odontologijos profesinis bakalauras, burnos priežiūros profesinis bakalauras
Studijų programos įregistravimo data	2006-12-27

## INFORMATION ON EVALUATED STUDY PROGRAMME

Title of the study programme	<b><i>Dental Hygiene</i></b>
State code	65308B110, 653A51005
Study area	Biomedical Sciences
Study field	Oral Care
Kind of the study programme	College Studies
Study Cycle	first
Study mode (length in years)	full-time (3)
Volume of the study programme in credits	180
Degree and (or) professional qualifications awarded	Professional Bachelor of Oral Care, Dental Hygienist, Professional Bachelor of Dentistry
Date of registration of the study programme	2006-12-27

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## I. INTRODUCTION

The study programme of Dental Hygiene (DH) is implemented by the Faculty of Health Sciences, Klaipėda State College (KSC). The Department of Oral Health carries out the programme.

In 2009, Klaipėda College was affiliated to Klaipėda Business and Technology College and renamed Klaipėda State College. The status of Klaipėda State College, the legal form of which is a public institution, was approved on August 2011. The DH study programme is implemented by the Faculty of Health Sciences and carried out by the Department of Oral Health. The college has three faculties (Health Sciences, Social Sciences and Technology) and implements 28 study programmes, five of them are biomedical sciences. The Faculty of Health Sciences has implemented five international projects in five years funded by the European Union (EU) Structural Funds.

The procedures evaluation were:

1<sup>st</sup> Reviewing the supplied documents by experts and writing a draft evaluation report. These drafts have been read and discussed by all members of the team before the audit at the KSC took place.

2<sup>nd</sup> Interviewing with administrative staff, programme organizers, teaching staff, students, graduates and employers on October 2 at Klaipėda State College.

The first conclusions have been reported to the stakeholders at the end of this day.

3<sup>rd</sup> Overall discussion on all evaluated study programmes on October 5 and writing the final report by the expert.

4<sup>th</sup> A summary report of the impressions of the audit team obtained for the programme evaluated during their one week stay and their general recommendations has been written.

This evaluation report is prepared on the basis of the DH self-evaluation documents, other documentation provided, and the site visit on 2 October 2012. All arrangements were clear. The chairman/expert team leader was Dr Michael Emery (UK) and the other team members were Ms Kristina Daniunaite (Lithuania), Dr. Odont. Erminija Guzaitiene (Lithuania), Professor Heikki Murtomaa (Finland), and Associate Professor Egita Senakola (Latvia).

## II. PROGRAMME ANALYSIS

### *1. Programme aims and learning outcomes*

The programme aims are clearly defined and they have been formulated based on state and regional frameworks, professional requirements, regulatory documents, and the national science and study mission and also these are publicly accessible. The team emphasizes the potential and significance of this programme within the oral health care system of the country to meet the needs of the population and those of institutions in particular as is proved by the high indication of placement of the first graduates according to the qualification acquired (76.5%).

Increasing the number of the students accepted in the programme gives more emphasis and measures on preventive activities, which have been scientifically proven effective and efficient to achieve and maintain good oral health and meet the future challenges in enhancement of oral health of Lithuanians. The connection of and similarities in the aims and learning outcomes of this DH programme with the Odontological Care (OC) programme call for greater cooperation between these two programmes. Eventually the merging of these two similar programmes in the near future is on the agenda of the administration and supported by the staff as well as recommended by the expert team. This will mean that the main subjects are taught jointly and economies of scale will be achieved.

The information regarding the programme and its learning outcomes is accessible on the Department's web pages and through special recruiting campaigns. The expert team welcomes this approach. The learning outcomes are in line with those traditionally found in the countries with similar training programmes. The team considers that they can be achieved within the planned three-year study period. The learning outcomes have been defined based on legal requirements, international research findings, and experiences of international partners and recommendations of the International Federation of Dental Hygienists. This approach offers a solid base for the process. Also the conceptions of the regional dentists and dental hygienists have been surveyed for the formulation of the learning outcomes. The team appreciates the real life feedback method used to regularly appraise this DH programme.

As indicated in the self-evaluation report (SER) the learning outcomes are based on the level of skills described in Bloom's Taxonomy (knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation) and learning outcomes of subjects are consistent with the learning outcomes of the DH programme and as noted before are continuously assessed and revised.

## ***2. Curriculum design***

The DH study programme consists of 180 credits (4800 hours). The full-time form of studies is three years, and the annual volume is 60 credits. All semesters are equal in volume – 30 credits.

The programme consists of the part of general college subjects – 21 credit, study field subjects – 147 credits, among them professional activity practice – 30 credits, internships – 30 credits, preparation for the qualifying examination and for defence of the final thesis – 12 credits and 12 credits are for the elective subjects. Practices and other practical preparation is 30% of the scope of the study programme; the number of subjects studied per semester is 5-7. The expert team agrees that the scope and duration of the programme is sufficient to achieve the learning outcomes and the overall dental hygienist study plan is in compliance with the National Requirements and Regulations.

General college study subjects are dominant during the first year of studies. Study field subjects start in the first semesters, optional are from the third semester. However, it is the opinion of the expert team that the students would enjoy earlier exposure to the practical aspects of their professional work. Furthermore, increasing the vertical integration of the study subjects from the very beginning could increase the motivation for basic studies, and it would enhance the growth of professional identity from early on for the DH students. The scope of practice is constantly increasing every year. The achievement of the intended learning outcomes is facilitated by different modes of studies: lectures, projects, some group work, and individual student work. It also relates to the aims and characteristics of the subject. The expert team advises the review of team work so that it is positioned appropriately within the DH curriculum.

The scope of studies and the sufficiency of the content are based on state and regional frameworks, professional requirements, regulatory documents and these are in conformity with the learning outcomes. The programme content is comprehensive and subjects are evenly distributed in the study plan of this DH programme across the semesters, following the methodological and logical order based on the gradual achievement of the learning outcomes. Descriptions of compulsory and elective subjects are presented and also offer a great choice of topics of the subjects taught as well as a number of study methods. The scope of elective subjects is 12 credits and they may be not related to the main study programme, i.e. they may be from another study field. Lists of elective subjects offered are published on the KSC website.

The subjects like Community Oral Health Promotion (3 ECTS credits). Public Health and Community Oral Health Promotion reflect common European tendencies. In order to ensure that

this DH programme reflects the needs of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the expert team recommends benchmarking it against the best international DH programmes in Europe and elsewhere.

### ***3. Staff***

The qualification of the teachers working in DH programme is sufficient for its successful implementation. It also corresponds with the requirements indicated in legal acts. 25 teachers, 17 of which teach study field subjects, 8 general college subjects and 11 of them are working full time, implement this DH study programme. It also involves teacher– practitioners: 5 dental hygienists and 4 dentists working full-time at personal health care establishments providing dental hygiene services in Klaipėda City and region. Outreach clinical training gives good opportunity for positive competence development but it also carries challenges in terms of student assessment and calibration of the outreach teaching. However, the expert team acknowledges the positive attitude and activities of the social partners of the programme in organizing innovative and uncustomary access to real life experience of the students. The recent turnover of teachers has been high and has made a positive contribution on the study programme creating favourable conditions for the programme's content revision. The experience and age distribution of the staff is favourable for the continuation and further development of the programme. The enthusiasm and dedication of the staff, including the small coterie of dynamic staff members, offers good momentum for further development of this programme; this is commendable and appreciated by the expert team.

Yearly professional development plan includes several opportunities for DH programme teachers to attend continuing development and obtain funding from the College for their participation. The teachers' further participation in pedagogical development seminars organized by Continuing Studies Centre is strongly supported by the expert team. Teachers implementing the DH study programme are actively involved in student consultations and in public activities. There have been increasing activities among the staff for some international cooperation, which should be further supported and regularly increased. Encouragement of the staff members to further develop their skills and confidence in their use of English language also deserves the full support of the Department. This support should also go to increasing the staff's research activities where interesting new projects have been started allowing the staff members and also students to fully participate in these activities. With more resourcefulness, Klaipėda might become an even more important dental education centre in western Lithuania. Teachers' qualifications correspond to their subjects and enable the students to obtain the set learning outcomes from each subject and also the necessary dental skills.

#### ***4. Facilities and learning resources***

The programme has sufficient number of premises for its implementation supported by the cooperation agreements with social partners in outreach centres. The infrastructure within the Faculty includes lecture halls, simulation laboratories and classrooms, clinical units, library, teachers' rooms, and reading and computer rooms.

Computer equipment is suitable and sufficient for learning. Classes of study field subjects and practical professional training take place in fully equipped training dental offices and also phantom classes.

The training base is being expanded within the framework of KSC investment project (2007–2013) adding 6 equipped working spaces. The facility is under the process of being fully equipped in terms of simulation laboratories as well as the clinical units. The total amount 10 fully equipped dental units absolutely necessary for the training programme. The expert team shares the ultimate wish of the staff to have this process completed as soon as possible and strongly recommends so.

The library of the KSC Faculty of Health Sciences has 34 workplaces, 15 of which are with the Internet connection. All necessary information about databases is provided in the electronic catalogue, which and data bases may be used at the college or at home. Most of the periodicals are on-line and may be accessed via electronic resources of the library. Methodological material prepared by teachers is available to students in the virtual learning environment (VLE). However, there needs to be more hard copies of international books and journals to support student research activity. The library hours are minimal.

#### ***5. Study process and student assessment***

Admission requirements are well founded and clearly formulated and also presented on the website of KSC. Students to programme of DH are admitted in accordance with general procedures for joint admission. Despite the first year of programme's implementation, the average competitive score has been growing constantly, indicating its increase of popularity. Students are mostly state funded.

Detailed information about the aims and objectives of a subject studied is provided in the study programme plan published on the website of KSC and in the course descriptions which are constantly updated. There is a possibility to study according to individual study programme for



those who have already completed studies in this study area or precede studies after transferring from other higher schools.

Students participate in research activities by choosing topics for their term papers and final thesis with regard to research fields developed at the department and research results are publicized in College journal. Students participate in conferences in Lithuania. The participation in projects is low and teachers or administration should encourage this activity more. The expert team considers it important that students should have sufficient proficiency in English in order to be able to use the international scientific references and also study and attend conferences abroad. Students do not seem to be enough motivated to participate in exchange programmes. This might be due to difficulties in communication in English as found by the expert team.

Detailed information on psychological student support is provided on KSC and Student Union websites. Group mentors are assigned to monitor student attendance and provide help on study issues during the whole study period. According to the unique study on quality of life among students carried out by KSC, students of dental hygiene express high satisfaction about the general quality of life and environment, which shows their contentment with the studies. Teachers consult students for two hours a week according to the timetable, which is acknowledged by the expert team. The academic and social support is ensured by various means and during the meeting the students met by the experts expressed good satisfaction with the programme and their teachers.

The timetable, intensity of the study subjects, the distribution of study workload in a week is designed properly and according National Regulations and the General Requirements for the College Studies of Lithuania and also students are provided with all necessary information regarding studies and examinations. Students' classroom working day mostly lasts not more 8 academic hours, which ensures time for students' independent work. Studies of every subject (module) are completed with an exam or an assessment of student's independent work (project). Results of studies are analysed and discussed, students' achievements are evaluated, problems of poor progress are discussed and ways of solution to problems are planned. The assessment principles are defined in the Procedure for Evaluating Learning Outcomes and information about the assessment criteria of achievements is acceptable to students; it is, clear, flexible and easily accessible on the KSC website. Learning outcomes are assessed according to the criteria-based ten-point system, which is clear and adequate. Final thesis is evaluated according to the Description of the writing and Evaluation of Final Theses. The Description of Organisation of a

Qualifying Examination defines the evaluation of the qualifying examination. Assessment methods are chosen according to Bloom's taxonomy of educational aims of cognitive area.

Students are provided with social support and advanced ones are awarded incentive grants. Social scholarships can be granted to students who correspond to criteria set by the Government. Students can participate in different cultural and sports activities and may apply for accommodation at the KSC dormitory, which has 220 places. At the meeting with experts students stated that the need for hostel accommodation is satisfied. The dropout in the year 2009 was 13,8% (Admitted 36 students) and in the year 2011 was higher at 15% (admitted 20) mostly 10-11% on personal request. It seems that there was insufficient motivation for some students to study on the DH programme. Students' employment and further studies after completion of the DH study programme is good. In 2011, five months after graduation 76,5 % (13 persons) of students worked according to their speciality; two students continued studies at Lithuanian universities; two were on maternity leave.

#### ***6. Programme management***

Appropriate academic and administrative bodies are in place and their responsibilities are clearly and also executed in due manner as the expert team learned during the site visit at KSC. The DH study programme (together with the OC programme) is managed at department, faculty, and college levels. The supervision of the DH study programme lies mainly on the Study Programme Committee (SPC), chaired by the Head of the Department of Oral Health. SPC consists of representatives of administration, one student, three teachers, and one representative of social partners. SPC is responsible to update the DH study programme, and assure and improve its quality. The teachers and administrative staff, despite their young age, show strong commitment and motivation for developing programme and work together with SPC in improving study programme. The Study Quality Committee ensures supervision of the quality system at the College level. As noted, the dedicated and enthusiastic staff members have justified visions for future development. Regardless of the future challenges, and as also noted, it is planned to integrate the two similar study programmes and the prospect from the managerial point of a view is deemed promising.

The quality of the DH study programme is regularly assessed by surveys carried out using instruments created at the college (electronic surveys) and the subject content is evaluated by surveying students upon completion of the subject at the end of every semester. External social stakeholders (social partners and employers) are involved in producing of recommendations on

organisation of studies, establishment of students' evaluation criteria and development of students' competences. The information on the implementation of the programme concentrates on the quality of the running process; it is able to detect irregularities and problems, and what is the basis for improvement. The representatives of the social partners are represented at SPC and participate in designing the programme, which is commendable. Every year the Student Union organises meetings with Faculty Administration to discuss study-related issues. The outcomes of internal and external evaluations of the programme have been used for the improvement of the program. The internal quality assurance measures are efficient enabling monitoring of important aspects of teaching process and study programme. Mechanisms to correct the discrepancies in teaching quality, if discovered, are in place. These processes auger well for when the two programmes are integrated.

### III. RECOMMENDATIONS

After careful considerations the expert team proposes the following recommendations:

1. Combine the two similar DH and OC programmes. This will achieve significant economies of scale for the Department and provide an improved and more relevant programme overall.
2. Benchmark the curriculum against the best international DH programmes and introduce the clinical practice earlier into the curriculum, as well as further consideration be given to ergonomics and to the position of team work activities within this DH curriculum. The amount/volume of Histology in the curriculum also needs consideration too.
3. More international mobility and exchanges are needed by the DH programme teaching staff (and also by the DH students). The teachers require additional tuition in English in order to increase their language skills and confidence. These would bring much more prestige to this DH programme, to KSC and to enhancing Klaipeda as an important and possibly developing dental education centre in western Lithuania.
4. Wider ranges of patients including those with special needs are required for student practice. The programme would also benefit from more practice in the community, for example, providing more opportunity to work with geriatric patients and those with special needs.

5. More consideration should be given to immediate completion of unfinished facilities. These planned improvements are required now to improve the learning environment and the students' learning experience. Currently, more rooms are required for practical training.
6. Students' international mobility needs improvement; more students need encouragement for exchanging with DH students in other countries through Erasmus. Ability and confidence in using foreign languages, particularly English, needs improvement to make exchanges easier and to assist with more research activities.

#### IV. SUMMARY

##### ***1. Programme aims and learning outcomes***

The aims and learning outcomes of the programme are clear well described and are visible to applicants as well as social partners and are in accordance with Bologna guidance. The aims and learning outcomes are very similar for this DH programme and for the OC programme. According to the needs of the changing world, it is strongly recommended that the two programmes be combined. This will also provide a much improved dental programme overall for the students. The Department already has a mind to undertake this action.

##### ***2. Curriculum design***

The programme meets the requirements set by the National regulating documents and follows the Bologna proposals; also the scope of programme is sufficient to ensure the learning outcomes. Increasing vertical integration of the study subjects from the very beginning would increase the motivation for basic studies; as well, it would enhance the growth of the professional identity from early on for the students. Consideration should be given to the position of team work within the curriculum and also ergonomics and the volume of histology. This programme should be benchmarked against the best international DH programmes in Europe to ensure it reflects the requirements of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

##### ***3. Staff***

The teaching staff working in the program is active and has a sufficient experience; staff also attend relevant conferences in Lithuania. There is a good collaboration with the social partners and also good relations with the students. There is very low participation of the teachers in Erasmus financed international exchanges; this is partly due to insufficient collaboration with

foreign partners and lack of language skills and confidence in the staff's use of English. The expert team recommends a much more positive and resourceful attitude to engaging in international exchanges by more of the teaching staff as soon as possible. This would add more prestige to the programme and to KSC. It would also enhance the position of Klaipeda dental programmes within Lithuania and, maybe in future, the development of a full dental school.

#### ***4. Facilities and learning resource***

The programme has sufficient number of premises for its implementation supported by the cooperation agreements with social partners i outreach centres. The infrastructure within the faculty includes lecture halls, simulation laboratories and classroom, clinical units, library, teachers' rooms, reading and computer rooms. The facilities for practical training is under the process of being fully expanded and equipped in terms of simulation laboratories as well as the clinical units; these are absolutely necessary now for the training programme and the expert team strongly recommends such action. The outreach centres need to be also increased in order to provide the DH students with a wider range of patients for increased practice. The facilities of library are barely adequate; opening hours are minimal; more international book and journal stock is needed to support this DH programme and student learning. However, there is a wide provision of databases for use by students for research activities and other libraries within Klaipėda for possible students' use.

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

The study programme is presented in publication and Internet portal and admission requirements are clearly defined. The programme is well organised and structured with regard to the learning outcomes and according to the requirements for the Higher Education Studies of the Lithuania. International mobility of students should be increased. Improved abilities in foreign languages, particularly English, are needed. This would help internationalise the programme, an important aspect as Klaipeda has strong international connections by sea, air, and road. It would also support more research activity into international topics. The evaluation system is clear and understandable for students and also related with the learning outcomes. According to the unique study on quality of life among students carried out by KSC, students of the DH programme express high satisfaction about the general quality of life and environment, which shows their contentment with the studies. The outlook for work or further studies is good for the DH graduates.

## ***6. Programme management***

The DH study programme (together with the OC programme) is managed at department, faculty and college levels. The quality of the DH study programme is regularly assessed by surveys carried out using instruments created at the College and also external social partners are involved. The outcomes of internal and external evaluations of the programme have been used for the improvement of the programme. The internal quality assurance measures are efficient and effective. It is planned by the coterie of visionary and committed staff to integrate the two similar programmes. The programme managerial features are in place to undertake this task successfully. As noted above, the expert team recommends this move.

## V. GENERAL ASSESSMENT

The study programme *Dental Hygiene* (state codes – 65308B110, 653A51005) at Klaipėda State College is given **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	2
5.	Study process and assessment (student admission, study process, student support, achievement assessment)	3
6.	Programme management (programme administration, internal quality assurance)	4
	<b>Total:</b>	<b>18</b>

\*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.

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