



STUDIJŲ KOKYBĖS VERTINIMO CENTRAS

Kazimiero Simonavičiaus universiteto
STUDIJŲ PROGRAMOS "TEISĖ"
(valstybinis kodas 6011KX004)
VERTINIMO IŠVADOS

EVALUATION REPORT
OF "LAW" (state code 6011KX004)
STUDY PROGRAMME
at Kazimieras Simonavicius university

Review' team:

1. **Prof. dr. Jürgen Kohler (team leader)** *academic,*
2. **Prof. dr. Rolf Dotevall,** *academic,*
3. **Prof. dr. Markus Steppan,** *academic,*
4. **Mr. Mindaugas Jablonskis,** *representative of social partners'*
5. **Ms. Vaida Spūdytė,** *students' representative.*

Evaluation coordinator -

Ms. Natalja Bogdanova

Išvados parengtos anglų kalba

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DUOMENYS APIE ĮVERTINTĄ PROGRAMĄ

Studijų programos pavadinimas	<i>Teisė</i>
Valstybinis kodas	6011KX004
Studijų krypčių grupė	Teisė
Studijų kryptis	Teisė
Studijų programos rūšis	Universitetinės
Studijų pakopa	Vientisosios studijos
Studijų forma (trukmė metais)	Nuolatinė – 5 metai, iššęstinė – 6 metai
Studijų programos apimtis kreditais	300
Suteikiamas laipsnis ir (ar) profesinė kvalifikacija	Teisės magistras
Studijų programos įregistravimo data	2003-08-27

INFORMATION ON EVALUATED STUDY PROGRAMME

Title of the study programme	<i>Law</i>
State code	6011KX004
Group of study field	Law
Study field	Law
Type of the study programme	University studies
Study cycle	Integrated
Study mode (length in years)	Full-time – 5 years, Part-time – 6 years
Volume of the study programme in credits	300
Degree and (or) professional qualifications awarded	Master of Law
Date of registration of the study programme	27-08-2003

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I. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the evaluation process

The evaluation of on-going study programmes is based on the **Methodology for evaluation of Higher Education study programmes**, approved by Order No 1-01-162 of 20 December 2010 of the Director of the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education (hereafter – SKVC).

The evaluation is intended to help higher education institutions to constantly improve their study programmes 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) *visit of the review team at the higher education institution*; 3) *production of the evaluation report by the review team and its publication*; 4) *follow-up activities*.

On the basis of external evaluation report of the study programme SKVC takes a decision to accredit study programme either for 6 years or for 3 years. If the programme evaluation is negative such a programme is not accredited.

The programme is **accredited for 6 years** if all evaluation areas are evaluated as “very good” (4 points) or “good” (3 points).

The programme is **accredited for 3 years** if none of the areas was evaluated as “unsatisfactory” (1 point) and at least one evaluation area was evaluated as “satisfactory” (2 points).

The programme is **not accredited** if at least one of evaluation areas was evaluated as "unsatisfactory" (1 point).

1.2. General

The Application documentation submitted by the HEI follows the outline recommended by the SKVC. Along with the self-evaluation report and annexes, the following additional documents have been provided by the HEI after the site-visit:

No.	Name of the document
1	An Explanation of the Recognized Study Subjects

1.3. Background of the HEI/Faculty/Study field/ Additional information

Kazimieras Simonavicius University (hereafter: KSU) is a private limited company of approximately 500 students overall and is located in Vilnius, offering – inter alia – programmes in law, both in Vilnius and in Klaipeda. The KSU Law programme is an integrated programme intended to provide studies for gaining general competence in law, both for the legal professions

and for other jobs which require, or benefit from, legal expertise and modes of legal thinking. With 123 students enrolled in the Integrated Law Programme, the programme represents about a quarter of KSU's students. Therefore, this programme is to be considered to be among the two most important programmes of KSU. Moreover, the Law programme was one of the founding stones of the University and can be considered to be a "flagship" programme of KSU throughout its history.

1.4. The Review Team

The review team was completed according *Description of experts' recruitment*, approved by order No. V-41 of Acting Director of the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education. The Review Visit to HEI was conducted by the team on 31st October 2017.

1. **Prof. dr. Jürgen Kohler (team leader)**, *Former Dean of the Faculty of Law and Business Management at Greifswald University, Germany.*
2. **Prof. dr. Rolf Dotevall**, *Professor of Commercial Law at Department of Law, School of Business, Economics and Law, University of Gothenburg, Sweden.*
3. **Prof. dr. Markus Steppan**, *Head of the Institute of the Foundations of Law at Graz University, Austria.*
4. **Mr. Mindaugas Jablonskis, attorney at law** *associate partner of Glimstedt, Lithuania.*
5. **Ms. Vaida Spūdytė**, *student of Management studies of Kaunas University of Technology, Lithuania.*

II. PROGRAMME ANALYSIS

Preliminary Remark

KSU offers its integrated law programme in Vilnius and in Klaipeda. In essence, the programme provisions are identical. Therefore, the statements made in this report are essentially valid for both sites with regard to the conceptional features of the KSU integrated law programme. However, the evaluation team could not carry out on-site inspection of the KSU premises and learning environment provided at Klaipeda. As a consequence, the evaluation team states that its findings with regard to those elements of its assessment which are closely related to local specifics in Klaipeda are to be understood as being based only on statements made by KSU, either in its self-evaluation report and its annexes or in interviews held in Vilnius. In particular, this qualification applies to matters concerning 'facilities' (point 2.4 below) and to certain elements concerning 'study process and students performance assessment' (point 2.5 below), in the latter case namely with regard to those items which relate to facility or staff specifics in Klaipeda and to other local features (in the main, this applies to sub-items c), e), and i), and – as far as specific societal or economic needs and expectations of Klaipeda and the entire Western Lithuanian region are concerned – aspects dealt with under sub-items g) and h)).

2.1. Programme aims and learning outcomes

The evaluation of programme aims and learning outcomes covers the assessment of the following criteria:

a) programme objective(s) and intended learning outcomes are well-defined, clear and publicly announced: KSU states as the *overarching objectives of the Law programme* “to train top-level lawyers capable of exercising the conceptual way of thinking, identifying and solving problems of legal regulation in various fields and of various complexity, applying legal norms and serving the public and private sectors at the national, regional and international levels, in compliance with professional qualification, social responsibility, quality and ethical standards.”

These overarching objectives are to be seen as consequences of the fact that law is correctly understood by KSU (see p. 6 of the SER) as (1) being an integral part of the social environment that directly reflects the economic, political and cultural development of society; (2) requiring social responsibility in terms of professional knowledge, skill, personal characteristics, values in general and public values in particular, based on the principles of justice, fairness, legality fostering equality, respect for human aspirations, recognition of the rule of law and respect of law; (3) being subject to changing interpretations in changing environments; (4) extending beyond a mere set of positivist norms and not to be seen as an isolated means of social control, but rather as an expression of societal values, creative and social practices, thus serving as a factor of society integration and socialisation, acting in addition to other social norms; (5) is intended to contribute to establishing a favourable environment for entrepreneurship, modern legal and social relations, and the emergence of innovative social ideas; (6) thus helping with the creation of new jobs, provision of high-quality services, and development of a mature civil society, which is in line with the Lithuanian Progress Strategy for the year 2030.

In conjunction with these overarching objectives, KSU – in the opinion of the SKVC evaluation team (hereafter in short: team), correctly – points out that the Law programme meets the requirements for the professional field for which the specialists are trained by means of ensuring adequate learning aims in terms of *concrete learning outcomes*. These requirements and the learning outcomes aligned to these are identified by KSU succinctly on p. 7 of the SER, which is being referred to here.

The team judges that the KSU statement on the *overarching objectives* of the law programme as described above is adequate and sufficiently holistic for a general law programme, with no major aspect omitted and with no unnecessary facet being added.

The team also judges that these overarching programme objectives translate into the general *learning outcomes* which the law programme aims at achieving. These are, when described in short (see p. 8 of the SER): (1) Understanding sources, system, and societal context of law and its application; (2) fostering the ability for text-based and concept-based legal reasoning in theory and application; (3) aiming at practice-oriented, adequate solutions of problems; (4) enhancing creativity in developing legal norms and ability to steer social processes effectively; (5) developing capabilities for conducting social discourse and learning while applying the law in new situations; (6) developing self-management, adaptation to changing environments, and modernization capabilities. The team is of the opinion: These intended learning outcomes are in line with the general objectives of the KSU Law Programme as stated above. The intended learning outcomes are valid as such for general law programmes, both from the perspective of academic aspiration and requirements of legal practice. The intended learning outcomes are sufficiently comprehensive while not containing superfluous aspects *per se*.

Whether or not there is scope for shortening the wording and for streamlining the itemization in order to avoid some overlap and to group some aspects more succinctly is arguable, but this question does not constitute any significant flaw as regards the definition of intended learning outcomes as described by KSU. However, when considering the KSU website and the AIKOS system (in the Lithuanian language), the team found that the aforesaid overarching programme objectives and the aforesaid general learning outcomes are communicated to students and the public via the KSU website only. The information is not provided via the AIKOS system. The team was told by KSU that this is due to lack of access rights to the AIKOS system. The team could not clarify this issue.

The team judges that KSU has made the objectives and intended learning outcomes sufficiently public through the KSU website. The team urges KSU to try and make sure that these are also made known via the AIKOS system.

b) programme objectives and intended learning outcomes are linked to the state, societal and labour market needs: As indicated under item a) above, the aforesaid programme objectives and intended learning outcomes link with state, societal and labour market needs. This is the case in two ways. Firstly, the general qualitative features of the graduate expected as the outcome of the programme ensure social benefit of society at large since these graduate qualities will indeed be required to foster societal innovation while securing internal and external harmony and peace. Secondly and more concretely, the programme contributes to educating students as professionals needed as judges, lawyers, notaries, bailiffs, or employees and self-employed personnel engaging in other legal activities in the private or public sector.

From a practical point of view, it must be noted that Lithuanian universities offer only a limited number of integrated programmes of law studies. Apart from the KSU programme, these are provided by Vilnius University and Vytautas Magnus University and the European Humanities University, the latter being a programme on International Law and European Union Law (source: Open Information, Counselling and Guidance System, 2017).

The team judges that, due to this fact, there are solid reasons to assume that the KSU Law programme makes a necessary and valuable contribution to meeting national requirements for fully-fledged professionals in the field of law. It does so in particular since it specifically addressed certain strata of society, namely those who seek further legal qualification after graduating from a law programme of a college in Lithuania as well as those who cannot attend courses during the week and therefore require either part-time teaching at weekends or by means of distant learning. The programme therefore contributes to socially adequate qualification opportunities for specific groups in Lithuania.

c) programme objectives and intended learning outcomes correspond to the mission, operational objectives and/or strategy of the higher education institution: KSU understands itself as being a university providing programmes of academic quality while providing societal and personal relevance, in particular by fostering employability. The KSU Law programme is intended to match this institutional aspiration as expressed in the KSU mission. Providing the KSU Law programme contributes to realizing this institutional aspiration by means of a concrete institutional operation. **Therefore, the team judges** that the Law programme is in line with the general KSU strategy as an institution of academic learning.

d) programme objectives and intended learning outcomes are linked on academic and/or professional requirements: The KSU Law programme objectives and its intended learning outcomes, both as described under item a) above, match academic and professional

requirements. It is the essence of both these requirements that students and graduates need to show competences which combine understanding of legal system(s) and norm interpretation as well as norm implementation, all of these elements being understood and learned as a combination of knowledge and the ability to think and act with both rationality and creativity, with a comprehensive understanding of the embeddedness of law in its environment, be it political, economic, sociologic, philosophic, or historic, and the subsequent need to enable students and graduates to steer social processes adequately, namely through appropriate communication.

From a professional point of view, the labour market expects graduates to show essential professional skills. In essence, this requires the ability to write complex and extensive, yet clear and structured legal texts. The latter encompasses presenting texts in sections or paragraphs which can be clearly identified by adequate titles or by specific opening sentences. The capability to produce legal texts which show these qualitative features need to be developed throughout the study programme, progressing from simple texts to texts which match the features of a court decision. The aforesaid writing capabilities should be reflected in students' term papers and their theses as well as other examination papers, as appropriate. The team sees no indication that the KSU programme does not match these requirements. The programme also fosters practical approach to the law by making extensive provision of internships. These add a tangible element of hands-on experience to the programme, thus contributing to professional requirements.

The team is of the opinion that, as far as the description of its own understanding given under item a) above is concerned and bearing the strong element of internships in mind, the KSU Law programme aspires to accomplishing these objectives and aligned learning outcomes.

e) programme objectives and intended learning outcomes correspond to the type and cycle of studies and the level of qualifications: The KSU Law programme objectives and its intended learning outcomes, both as described under item a) above, are in line with the expectations which an academic programme at master level should fulfil, as defined in the Lithuanian Qualifications Framework (level VII) of 4 May 2010 in conjunction with the Order on Approval of the Description of Study Cycles of 21 November 2011, also with regard to the Order on Approving the General Requirements for the First Degree and Integrated Study Programmes of 9 April 2010 in conjunction with the competence level described in the Order on Approval of the General Requirements for Master Degree Study Programmes of 3 June 2010. In effect, therefore, **the team is of the opinion**: As far as the aforesaid KSU Law programme objectives and its intended learning outcomes are concerned and when considering the aforesaid, defined programme aspirations as well as the competencies expected to be shown in the final (master level) thesis, the programme objectives and intended learning outcomes correspond to the type and cycle of studies and the level of qualifications.

f) the title of the programme, intended learning outcomes, the content of the programme and the qualification to be obtained are well-tuned: The KSU Law programme, i.e. its intended learning outcomes and the qualification to be obtained, and in principle (for detail of content, see item 2.2 hereafter) also the content of the programme, is a programme which is intended to cover academic education in the broad field of legal expertise. It does not aim at training specialists in a particular field of law. **The team is of the opinion** that choosing and using the general programme title "Law" is therefore adequate and serves as a correct indication of the nature of the programme.

2.2. Curriculum design

In essence, KSU describes relations between the aim, learning outcomes and study courses on pages 8 and 9 of the SER, providing an overarching scheme for curriculum design (courses/modules) which is aligned to the aforementioned general programme objectives and intended learning outcomes. The evaluation of curriculum design/programme structure, based on the table mentioned above and additional information given, particularly in the SER and its appendices, covers the assessment of the following criteria:

a) the programme structure is in line with the legislative requirements: The KSU Law programme met legal requirements as indicated on p. 10 of the SER. The KSU Law programme carries 300 ECTS credits, which is based on 8000 academic work hours. Its duration for full-time students is five years, i.e. 10 semesters. The first stage of the studies, i.e. semesters 1-8, includes 240 credit programme, with no more than 7 courses studied during the semester. The second studies cycle, i.e. semesters 9 and 10, includes part of the programme with no more than 5 courses. In detail, the elements of the programme – courses, final thesis and final exam, general academic courses, electives, internship – and the entirety of the programme is structured as indicated on p. 10 of the SER, together with an alignment of the programme features to the relevant legal requirements.

The team judges as follows: The team verified the aforesaid features of the KSU Law programme, based on the curriculum information given. The team took the legal acts into consideration as mentioned above. The data described above and verified show that the KSU Law programme meets legal requirements as outlined in the relevant legal documents indicated above. As has already been stated above under item 2.1 e) in particular, the legal requirements concerning the level of the programme as described by the Lithuanian Qualifications Framework are met.

b) subjects of study (modules) are taught in a consistent manner, subjects or topics are not repeated: The KSU Law programme (as described in annex 1 of the SER) is designed to progress from general university education courses and courses providing fundamental knowledge in the field of law (namely: languages; political, economic, historic matters; legal theory) to studies of the courses in the relevant branches of law, in which case substantive law precedes correlated procedural law, while fields of special interest, courses for deepening insight, and internship elements are located largely in the fourth and fifth year of the programme. Electives are offered in eight fields.

The team judges that the programme as a whole and its compilation in terms of sequencing follows a model of law programmes which is often found in Europe and thus matches standards in terms of completeness and consistency and progression while avoiding undue repetition. - For further comment, see item 2.5 b) below.

c) the content of subjects (modules) corresponds to the type and cycle of studies: The content of the KSU Law programme is described in a full set of module sheets which, in principle and related to each teaching unit, outline (1) name of the course, (2) code, (3) teacher, (unit(s)), (5) study cycle, (6) level of the subject, (7) type of subject), (8) implementation form, (9) implementation period, (10) instruction language(s), (11) requirements for students in terms of prerequisites and associated requirements, if any, (12) scope of the subject in ECTS, (13) total student workload in hours, (14) contact hours, (15) independent work hours, (16) purpose of the subject (course unit): competences sought to be developed, (17) interrelation between the learning outcomes of the study programme with the projected results of the subject, and the

methods of the assessment of the studies and the student achievements, (18) content of the subject, (19) strategy and criteria for the evaluation of students, (20) sources of studies, reference lists.

The team judges: The module sheets – in particular entries under items 16 to 18 mentioned above – provide credible information in detail as to the subject content and learning modalities of each module to be applied in order to contribute to the accomplishment of the overall objectives and intended learning outcomes of the programme. In doing so, the content of each module and the teaching methods are in line with the type and cycle of studies in so far as they all contribute to an integrated academic programme which aims at master level outcomes.

d) the content of subjects (modules) and study methods enable to achieve the intended learning outcomes: As pointed out under item c) above, the content of subjects (modules) and the indicated study methods appear to be suitable for achieving the intended learning outcomes. No. 16 of each set of course (module) description outlines the purpose of the module with regard to overall competence to be developed by the programme, while no. 17 of each set of course (module) description correlates the intended learning outcomes of the programme with the expected results of the given course (module) and the learning methods to be applied in the course (module) as well as the assessment methods, which are oriented towards the intended learning outcomes. The aforesaid descriptions are outlined with a sufficient degree of detail. Intended learning outcomes, indicated learning methods, and assessment approaches are coherent.

The team judges: The description thus provided is realistic and fit for purpose, there is credibility in that it can be, and in fact is, implemented accordingly. Therefore, the team is of the opinion that the content of subjects (modules) and the study methods appear to be fit for purpose, i.e. for achieving the intended learning outcomes.

e) the scope of the programme is sufficient to achieve the learning outcomes: Following from the findings which have been pointed out under b), c), and d) above, the scope of the programme is essentially sufficient for achieving the intended learning outcomes.

It is one of the hallmarks of the KSU Law programme to offer students opportunities for developing special interests through studying specific electives, of which there are eight at present and which KSU wishes to extend. This is a good means for broadening the scope of the programme while making provision for tailor-made personalization of the learning experience of students and ensuring better job opportunities for them.

Student internships cover 18 credits. There are two internships, first in semester 7 and final one in semester 9. Internships broaden the scope of the programme by enabling students to apply their expertise in handling actual legal issues.

To sum up, **the team is of the opinion** that the scope of the KSU Law programme is both sufficiently coherent and broad to ensure the achievement of the intended learning outcomes of the programme.

f) the content of the programme corresponds to the latest academic, artistic or technological achievements: The content of the programme bears indication that the academic reflection offered through each module is up to date. The course descriptions provide ample space for introducing current developments.

As for reading lists given to students, **the team is of the opinion** that the validity of certain literature is questionable. This statement concerns older books in Russian on modern Western European legal issues or the rule of law, or such a case as, for example, entry of a text

book published in 1984 on “Court & Justice in Lithuanian” into the referenced literature for the course Legal Institutions (Code M900T16VNTF006). However, such cases are limited in number, and the team could not fully verify the content of these publications. Therefore, these cases do not disqualify reading lists throughout, in particular since reading lists in general contain valid referenced literature. Therefore, KSU should consider the matter while the team is of the opinion that, in essence, there is good reason to assume that teaching takes place with a view to presenting up-to-date legal and academic developments.

2.3. Teaching staff

The evaluation of teaching staff covers the assessment of the following criteria:

a) the study programme is provided by the staff meeting legal requirements; the number of the teaching staff is adequate to ensure learning outcomes: The KSU Law programme is operated by 36 teachers, with 19 of these having doctoral degrees and 15 master degrees related to subjects which are relevant for the KSU Law programme. In detail, of these 36 teachers there are 6 professors, 12 associate professors, 1 lecturer with doctoral degree and 17 lecturers without doctoral degree, with part of the latter being students of doctoral studies.

KSU employs 6 full time staff to operate the law programme, while out-of-house staff is employed on a part-time base to cover the programme elements not taught by permanent staff, drawing on qualified practitioners and on academics employed at other universities. When compared to numeric and aligned qualitative legal requirements of staff, the information provided by KSU (see p. 13 of the SER) credibly indicates that the law programme matches staff requirements as stipulated by law.

The ratio of the programme lecturers and students is currently equal to 0.2. It is a positive feature of the programme that it provides a student/teacher ratio of 5 to 1.

The KSU Law programme is delivered by staff, of whom most have doctoral degrees, with sufficient expertise and experience in teaching. There are six full-time staff involved in the delivery of the programme while there is a considerable part of teaching personnel who render their services to KSU on a part-time base while maintaining other professional occupations. This factor can be critical in principle, especially in view of limited availability for student consultation (and research capacity). However, in the given case, and in the opinion of students questioned by the team, these effects are not unduly severe, also due to the aforesaid, basically sufficient availability of permanent staff. In addition, flexibility in employing lecturers within non-university occupations enables KSU to select good professionals and to bring together a competent team of professionals and full-time university staff. In addition, in the last five years KSU has strived successfully to raise the number of full-time university employment positions for teaching staff, leading to an increase from 2 full-time lecturers in the academic year 2012–2013 the University to 6 in the academic year 2016–2017.

The team judges: As a result, the KSU Law programme meets the formal legal requirements concerning the provision of staff for operating the programme, as outlined in particular in Chapter 5 of Order No. V-831 of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania of 23 July 2015 “Descriptor of the field of the studies of law;” as amended by Order No. V-1260 of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania of 10 December 2015 “On the approval of the modified description of the field of the studies of law”.

The team qualifies its judgement by stating: It is to be appreciated that KSU has undergone a positive development in recent years as regards addressing staffing issues, namely by raising numbers of permanent staff responsible for delivering the programme. It is also in this light, i.e. with regard to success in increasing KSU's own fully-engaged staff, that the team's judgement on staff matters, while the team nonetheless encourages KSU to proceed yet further along this developmental path.

b) the qualifications of the teaching staff are adequate to ensure learning outcomes: KSU has outlined the qualifications of each member of the teaching staff (for detail, see SER, annex 3, list of academic staff) and particular detail (for detail, see SER, annex 4, curricula vitae). The information thus given indicates that staff members possess the academic background and in many cases also the practical professional experience to teach the fields assigned to them.

As for research qualification of staff, which is essential for teaching in an integrated law programme, KSU points correctly out that its academic staff is involved in research which is (also) related to the implementation of educational programmes of KSU and other educational and research institutions. KSU substantiates this statement by stating a number of names and research activities as examples. Details can be found on pages 14 to 17 of the SER, which is referred to here. KSU also points out and substantiates this on pages 14 to 17 of the SER that its staff are highly regarded both as researchers and as practitioners in their fields, and that therefore teaching staff can rely not only on research but also on the results of practical activities. Furthermore, KSU staff played active roles in social activities. During the analysed period the teachers participated in 22 projects. KSU also organised national and international scientific conferences, serving not only as a means for research but also as a tool for developing teaching qualities.

Enhanced international experience of staff also contributes to staff qualifications in teaching. In recent years KSU has constantly been aiming at further expanding the numbers of incoming and outgoing lecturers. As for staff going abroad, staff improved its expertise by means of study visits to the United States, France, Denmark, Germany, and other countries. Within the last five years, 40 staff members took part in international exchanges and 74 arrived. In addition, KSU hosted 74 foreign academics within the last five academic years – often by using the Erasmus programme based on matching the requirements of the Erasmus University Charter – to introduce new insight into non-Lithuanian developments, which also benefits KSU staff qualification. Details can be found on pages 17 and 18 of the SER.

The team therefore judges that the qualifications of the teaching staff is essentially adequate to operate the KSU law programme in a meaningful way which allows students to accomplish the objectives of the programme and to reach the intended learning outcomes.

c) teaching staff turnover is able to ensure an adequate provision of the programme: The staff participating in delivering the KSU Law programme appears to be stable in terms of individual people and, therefore also, in numbers. KSU secures reasonable stability of external staff, i.e. part-time lecturing capacity, by means of contracts for duration terms long enough for KSU to react by seeking replacements if and when the case of a lecturer leaving the programme should arise. **Therefore, the team is of the opinion** that, in view of the stability of the teaching body and the contractual arrangements, there is no indication that KSU is not able to fill vacancies if these should arise.

d) the higher education institution shall ensure (offer) conditions for professional (subject-matter, pedagogical, personal) upgrading of staff necessary to implement the

programme: KSU points out that, from 2012, the University lecturers' qualification has become one of the most important priorities. The staff management process description drafted in 2012 describes and establishes the annual activities of training for the teaching staff.

In order to ensure the quality of studies, KSU has set up a scheme for the approval of job descriptions of the teaching staff used for selection of teachers. The faculty offering the programme of studies is responsible for selection and certification of teachers.

Since 2012, KSU has periodically organised various events serving teacher trainings, in order to improve teachers' subject, didactic, social and communication competences. Examples are given on page 14 of the SER, which is referred to here for detail. KSU states that a total of 49 events of that kind have already taken place.

In order to ensure the quality of studies, the University prepared the personnel motivation system. Approved job descriptions of the teaching staff used for selection of teachers. The faculty offering the programme of studies was responsible for selection and certification of teachers.

Overall, **the team judges** that KSU has succeeded in ensuring adequate provision for staff development in academic matters and in particular in relation to teaching competence.

2.4. Facilities and learning resources

The evaluation of facilities and learning resources covers the assessment of the following criteria:

a) the premises for studies are adequate both in their size and quality: The spatial situation of the KSU Law programme has considerably changed for the better in November 2016 due to the move of KSU to the new campus building at Dariaus ir Girėno g. 21, which extends to a total of 1700 m². In the new location, KSU provides a sufficient number of auditoria of fit-for-purpose size, workplaces, computer access facilities, runs a cafeteria, provides some small lounge areas and a summer terrace. Students can freely use the wireless internet connection provided in all areas for unlimited duration. They may print and copy their papers. The KSU internet system also provides e-mail services for students and personnel. The disabled with limited mobility are provided with the essentials which allow them to participate and to acquire the necessary competencies. Students and staff can access 2 car parking lots. It is the intention of KSU to keep facilities open for students and staff all day and night every day once the hotel complex which is currently under construction has opened. The team were informed that lectures for Klaipėda students are held in premises rented from the faculty of Marine Engineering of Klaipėda University.

The team is of the opinion that the new premises in Vilnius have improved the conditions of studies. On-site impression gathered by the team underpins this assumption. As for space in Klaipėda, the team could not verify the KSU description above but sees no reason to doubt that these premises should also suffice to operate the Law programme.

b) the teaching and learning equipment (laboratory and computer equipment, consumables) are adequate both in size and quality: Following from the findings described under a) above, work space for students in terms of room for individual or group work is adequate. The same applies to computer equipment and internet access, covering all KSU University premises. This gives students access to all online information for their studies, including the KSU intranet.

Nearly all university auditoriums are equipped with computer workstations. Computerized lecturer workstation includes a computer with internet access, a projector and sound equipment. Furthermore, lecturers can also easily connect their personal computers instead of the auditorium computer. Computers used in the auditoriums and reading rooms provide up-to-date IT technology as stated on page 20 of the SER. Standard internet information resources for the law programme are provided, with a list given on page 20 of the SER. KSU offers access to test databases to its students on a regular basis and provides workstations in the Internet Engineering Laboratory. The lecturer's place is equipped with a demonstrator screen. The laboratory is used for practical classes, research and professional development in the field of internet technology. As for operations in Klaipeda, as a rule premises are equipped with all the facilities required for studies. The rooms used have computerised working places for teachers with internet access, and all the multimedia equipment required for lectures. The computer rooms are equipped with all the necessary hardware and software.

The library space available is small. The printed material provided is basic – as KSU itself correctly describes the situation – in respect to academic, educational, and practical books as well as periodicals. The library is not equipped with recent foreign literature to the extent wished for; also, the literature provided on national law is very basic indeed. However, KSU points out that the university collaborates with the library of the Bureau of Permanent Representation of Lithuania in the European Commission based in Vilnius, which is described as housing an abundant collection of the latest information in paper and electronic forms on various issues of legal regulation and legal matters; the team could not directly verify this statement by means of an on-site visit to the aforesaid Bureau. Furthermore, KSU students have access to other libraries in Lithuania and in Vilnius in particular, also to those with major collections of legal literature. In addition, KSU emphasizes that a considerable part of the materials for studies is stored in e-media (see above) and is therefore easily available to higher number students.

The team judges: The teaching and learning equipment provided by KSU is adequate to operate the law programme in all aspects, with the exception of the library situation. While the team takes into account and can assume that the deficiencies of the library are to a certain extent mitigated by the fact that KSU students have access to other well furnished libraries in the city and, increasingly so, to the aforesaid electronic data resources, and that in effect these factors compensate shortcomings in the on-site provision of books to an extent, there is still a need to enhance library facilities. This pertains to providing basic study literature in particular, such as textbooks in sufficient numbers and, where applicable, of different authors. Such type of literature for daily use, which would also enable students to easy cross-referencing of statements and explanations within a book or between different books on the issue in question, can be used better in paper form. Asking students to make use of other libraries in Vilnius solves the issue only in an insufficient way: Firstly, the new location of KSU in the vicinity of the airport has aggravated the situation as compared to the previous situation before KSU moved since distances to other libraries have expanded, thus making physical availability in an on-hand mode more difficult. Secondly, KSU seeks to address non-traditional learners, namely those in employment and therefore enrolled in teaching modalities concentrating on weekend courses, which makes it more imperative than for more flexible traditional full-time students to ensure on-sight provision of basic juridical literature. Thirdly, basic literature, namely textbooks, need to be made available to students on a loan basis, thus allowing students to use such literature at leisure outside the

university premises and for longer periods; these advantages cannot easily be secured if the KSU library does not provide such literature in-house and under its own auspices.

Following KSU's self-assessment and the impression gathered in the on-site meetings with staff and students, the team underlines that there may be a need to organise ongoing training courses for teachers and students for development and improvement of database searching skills, and to offer foreign language courses for teachers and students in order to improve the knowledge required to master the information in a foreign language.

c) the higher education institution has adequate arrangements for students' practice: Students' practice in law programmes is usually entirely related to student internships. These are a compulsory part of the KSU Law programme (see above). KSU sees internships as an essential part of its programme approach to studies, intended to ensure that the curriculum complies with the needs of the labour market. This is in line with the fact that, since 2012, KSU highlights the development of the social partners network as one of the main strategic lines of action of the Faculty of Law. Special attention is therefore paid to the development of the new active communication for places of internship and closer co-operation. Since partnering is seen as an essential asset, KSU has made cooperative arrangements with numerous partners; these are listed on page 22 of the SER, which is referred to here for detail.

The compulsory internships are operated on the base of the "Methodological guidelines of internship" and the "Procedure for organisation of final internship". These documents define: goals of internship, specific tasks of internship, likely outcomes and achievement assessment system, as well as support for students during the internship, indicating the criteria for recognising and evaluating the skills at the appropriate level acquired by students during the internship. The first internship is performed in semester 7, and the final internship is performed during the semester 9.

Students can choose a place for their internship from a KSU list of partners. However, students may also find a placement for their internship themselves, with approval of the internship supervisor. Working students are offered an opportunity to have an internship in their workplace in accordance with an individualized internship programme. Upon selecting the institution for internship, a tripartite agreement is signed between the student, KSU as represented by the internship coordinator, and the placement institution. It is particularly important that the place of the final internship is aligned with the topic of the final thesis, and is similar to the jobs for which the graduates are trained. Teachers of the Faculty of Law, offering the topics of the final thesis also provide recommendations as to where students can perform their final internships. KSU seeks feedback from the person responsible for the internship in question, thus gaining information on the tasks given to students and on the competencies, or deficiencies, shown by the student.

KSU points out the importance to also provide means for acquiring practical knowledge outside internships. To that end, in 2016 KSU launched a Youth Law Clinic, with one of the main objectives being to assist Law students in consolidating their theoretical knowledge in practice, thus providing a comprehensive legal education and professional ethics. Apart from the internships prescribed as compulsory by the Law programme curriculum, students can also take part in a voluntary internship in a company, institution, organisation or other structure chosen voluntarily at mutual agreement, lasting up to 2 months per year.

The team judges: The opportunities provided by KSU for students to deepen their practical experience in the legal profession(s) by means of internships is fully adequate and a

laudable element of the programme. This applies both in terms of provision of contacts for internships and for safeguarding the fitness of purpose of the internships as a means for contributing to the accomplishment of the intended learning outcomes of the KSU Law programme.

d) teaching materials (textbooks, books, periodical publications, databases) are adequate and accessible: In law programmes, adequacy and accessibility of teaching materials (textbooks, books, periodical publications, databases) are essentially the same. Therefore, the evaluation of this item may refer to the findings and judgement presented under item b) above which relate to adequacy of teaching material provided.

Overall, the team judges: KSU meets the requirements as regards space for teaching and for student learning, and electronic devices are sufficiently available. The internship practice provided in the programme is particularly laudable. However, the library facilities show relevant deficiencies which cannot be sufficiently mitigated by electronic tools and availability of juridical literature in other places in Vilnius.

2.5. Study process and students' performance assessment

The evaluation of study process and students' performance assessment covers the assessment of the following criteria:

a) entrance requirements are well-founded, consistent and transparent: KSU organizes admission to the Law programme by way of competition, following the "Description on ranking of best graduates of the secondary education programme" approved by the Minister of Education and Science. This applies to all applicants, full-time and part-time applicants alike. KSU does not set special requirements for applicants. These must have a high school graduation certificate and fulfil the conditions for admission to the University. There is a competitive score in place, concerning history, mathematics or information technology, other subjects not coinciding with the first, second or fourth subject, and Lithuanian language and literature. Admission to the programme of Law studies is operated in two ways, i.e. either through the LAMA BPO general admission system or by direct application. All direct applicants must participate in the motivation interview with the Admissions Committee.

As of admission of 2017 and thereafter, students may enter the Law programme based on prior additional practice of 2 months in a year. This is a means for KSU, acting in collaboration with its social partners, to have students acquire initial working skills, thus increasing the employability of graduates, in accordance with students' individual needs, through gaining experience in various legal institutions and developing a better understanding of the specifics of future work. Following this practice is encouraged by granting 50% discount on the tuition fee, with the intent to attract talented students to KSU law studies.

Since KSU encourages graduates with a first degree in law from a college to join the KSU law programme, the issue of recognition of prior learning acquired at college arises. KSU has sufficiently addressed this issue by developing a scheme for recognizing certain study subjects which this group of applicants to the KSU law programme will, as a rule, have studied at college. The team was given evidence of this recognition policy and practice on request of the team in that KSU forwarded its document "An Explanation of the Recognition of Study Subjects" immediately after the site visit.

Relations between the student and KSU are formalised in the studies agreement. Standard terms of the agreement of studies are established by the Ministry of Education and Science.

Agreements of studies specify the basic conditions of studies at KSU and obligations of both parties. As for communicating the Law programme and publicizing ways to enrolment in order to enhance enrolment quantities, KSU states that great attention – and successfully so in view of enrolments in 2017/18 – is paid to programme publicity. KSU gives evidence of an impressive abundance of information and marketing operations on pages 24 to 25 of the SER, which is here referred to for detail.

The team judges: The admission process is fit for purpose with regard to the requirements and demands of the Law programme. KSU provides a high degree of programme marketing, thus ensuring transparent and wide-spread information on the opportunities offered by the Law programme and the modalities for entering it. This is particularly praiseworthy, as is the aspiration of KSU to consider reasons for dropout. Also, encouraging students to gain practical experience in the academic field prior to enrolment is a meaningful and laudable innovation. It is particularly appreciated that KSU offers an opportunity for further academic and professional development of graduates who completed a college programme in law. In this context, however, KSU should pay extra attention to making sure that there is a fit-for-purpose process in place to assess and recognize prior learning of these students properly in order to place these students adequately in higher years of study.

b) organisation of the study process ensures proper implementation of the programme and achievement of the intended learning outcomes: As for the structural organization of the study process as a whole, the description and judgement as presented under item 2.2 b) and 2.2. e) above applies here, too: The KSU Law programme (as described in annex 1 of the SER) is designed to progress from general university education courses and courses providing fundamental knowledge in the field of law (namely: languages; political, economic, historic matters; legal theory) to studies of the courses in the relevant branches of law, in which case substantive law precedes correlated procedural law, while fields of special interest, courses for deepening insight, and internship elements are located largely in the fourth and fifth year of the programme. Electives are offered in eight fields.

Concerning the organisation of lectures, these are offered according to semester-based study schedules, which indicate types of classroom work, time, duration and location. For full-time studies, the schedule provides teaching units on weekdays from Monday to Friday, for part-time students for the three days from Friday to Sunday. Full-time session type studies were launched in 2014 as an alternative to the full-time studies and are adapted for employed persons. Requirements for full-time studies and full-time session type studies are the same.

Concerning the final thesis and the final examinations, the process is clearly and adequately defined: Students defend their final theses and take final examinations in their last year of studies. The procedures of organisation of final examinations and preparation and defence of the final theses are established in KSU regulations.

As for sabbaticals for students, there is a process in place: Students can be allowed to suspend studies for no longer than one year, for instance for reasons of health, child care or other objective reasons. This period can be extended if there is proof of objective reasons to extend the leave.

The team judges: The programme as a whole and its compilation in terms of sequencing follows a model of law programmes which is often found in Europe and thus matches standards in terms of completeness and sequencing. For detail and evidence, Annex 1 of the SER is referred to here.

Notwithstanding this fact, KSU might consider (1) if there may be an advantage in rearranging the sequencing by offering more concrete hands-on legal modules of current law earlier in the programme while shifting general (contextual and theoretical - basic courses on political, economic, historic aspects and on legal theory) modules into the middle semesters of the programme (as has already been done with the module on “History of Political, Legal, and Economic Theories”). This re-arrangement may motivate students better and also serve better for preparing students to cope with fundamentals which they might at present find difficult to relate to tangible legal experience. (2) Also, there may be a need for strengthening private law elements. Just two modules on civil law and contract law (plus family law, which is rather a special field) are only few in order to thoroughly familiarize students with the high degree of complexity which characterizes the entire field of private law, and whether real estate law, which is a central element of private law, should be seen as a matter of electives only. In that context, labour law should be taught after the basics of civil law since the latter forms the platform upon which (individual) labour law rests. (3) KSU should consider clustering courses into more comprehensive learning units by moving to a system of modularization, i.e. a cluster of courses which together shape a specific area of knowledge, thus presenting the programme in fewer items of bigger, consistent topical units while reducing the number of examinations. (4) KSU might consider the establishment of a “mobility window” in its curricular arrangement by, in particular, aggregating elective elements in one or two higher semesters, in order to foster mobility. (5) In terms of teaching methodology, there may be room for enhancing problem-based learning, thus also strengthening student-centeredness of the learning experience, while the team appreciates that KSU has already moved considerably in that direction. The team particular notes that, in line with student-centeredness and qualifying students in terms of research and writing competence, KSU undertakes to develop students’ abilities to write legal texts needed for the research work, and that they do so gradually during the entire process of studies, starting from papers, abstracts, course papers in semesters 4 and 8, and ending with the final thesis.

In effect, it is to be noted that the items mentioned above may only be seen as suggestions for further improvement rather than as disqualifying elements of the KSU Law programme. The current programme shows a proper study process in line with often-practiced approaches in Europe, matches the (over-burdened) legal requirements stated in the “Descriptor of the Study Field of Law” (Order No. V-831 of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania of 23 July 2015), and is to be seen as fitting for accomplishing the intended learning outcomes.

c) *students are encouraged to take part in scientific, artistic or applied science activities:* Law students are encouraged to participate in science, art and applied science activities. In general, KSU states that lecturers encourage students to engage in research and creative projects related to their field of study, inter alia by offering opportunities to perform research in the field of law.

Since 2010 the Law faculty has been carrying out open lectures and lecture cycles under the auspices of its unit called Scientific Society of Students of the Faculty of Law, which brings together students who seek high academic results and participating in scientific activities and teachers and researchers who wish to transfer the experience of scientific and applied research organization. Examples are given on p. 27 of the SER. Students are also actively involved in the events organised by KSU in cooperation with the university’s social partners; examples for that are given on p. 27 of the SER.

In terms of focussing on applying legal competence, KSU operates a Youth Law Clinic, and since 2016 there is an Interdisciplinary Research Centre for Children Rights (IRCCR). The Youth Law Clinic provides primary legal aid, which includes legal information, legal advice and preparation of documents submitted to state and municipal institutions, with the exception of procedural documents. In addition, this legal assistance includes advice on the resolution of out-of-court dispute resolution (mediation, negotiation) and preparation of the settlement agreement. The Law Clinic also helps customers to prepare procedural court documents. The IRCCR is an academic centre engaged in academic research and seeking an integrated and comprehensive approach to the rights of the child. It is the first centre of its kind in Lithuania, seeking to draw attention to the relevance of the topic of the rights of the child, promoting the scientific evidence-based policy-making and proving the qualification of people working in the child protection field.

The team judges that the aforesaid institutional endeavours are meaningful tools to encourage and enable law students to seek active participation in legal research and in acquiring practical experience in terms of applied law. Both elements constitute a valid approach to Encouraging students to take part in legal research and in applying the law actively. Therefore, the KSU law programme meets the requirements of this criterion.

However, the team recommends KSU to reconsider the modalities of making provision for creating a “research mind” by not only operating the aforesaid activities (which should be maintained) but by introducing more elements of problem-based learning and case study learning. This may imply a certain shift from lecturing to guided independent learning in seminar-style or tutor-led learning opportunities. Doing that may also help to broaden the number of students who can be integrated into a research link of their study experience.

It is in this context that the team particularly appreciates KSU’s endeavour to strengthen students’ research capabilities in legal methodology and legal writing, and that theoretical work in these areas is accompanied by, in particular, compulsory writing of course papers in semesters 4 and 8, and ending with the final thesis.

d) students are provided conditions to take part in mobility programmes: Promoting the internationalization of education, advanced students having no academic debts can be sent to periods of study to higher schools of other countries and Lithuania according to international, inter-departmental, inter-university and other cooperation agreements and student exchange programmes, based on the conditions of cooperation agreements or student exchange programmes, or for partial studies is freely moving students to independently selected a recognized institution of higher learning. The University participates in the Erasmus programme and has entered into co-operation agreements with 120 universities worldwide; the countries concerned are listed in annex 9 of the SER. KSU sees international mobility as an important feature of its policy. Following in this line, KSU was awarded the Erasmus University Charter in 2012, and particularly since then KSU has engaged in active preparation for international student exchange. KSU organised information sessions for students on international exchange opportunities, and it began to offer subjects in English.

Erasmus exchanges started in 2013. Since 2014 students are offered to have internships in companies and other organizations in foreign countries under the Erasmus+ programme. KSU also operates co-operation under bilateral agreements with universities in Taiwan (National Kaohsiung University, National Kaohsiung University of Applied Sciences, National Pingtung University of Science and Technology) and in the United Kingdom (Kingston University).

However, despite KSU's efforts to enhance international mobility, as for the period 2012 to 2017 the number of outgoing students has oscillated between zero and two, and the number of incoming students between three and, lately, twelve. The recent increase in numbers of incoming students can be seen as an indication of the growing popularity of the Law programme abroad. Still, KSU frankly realizes that the number of law students who took part in international exchange programmes is not high. KSU explains this with the low total number of students in the law Programme. Moreover, reasons can be found in students wanting to maintain their employment, personal commitments, lack of confidence in English language skills and financial reasons.

The team appreciates the efforts which KSU is making to enhance international mobility of students. In this context, KSU has gone a long way by defining international mobility as an institutional interest, by seeking partnerships, by making provision for funding, by informing students, and by enhancing students' language capacities. There is some, though humble progress in internationalization, especially with regards to incoming students. Making arrangements for international internships is a particularly positive feature which should be maintained and enhanced as much as possible. **The team therefore judges** that KSU has been doing a lot to foster internationalization, while limits to success are largely outside the scope of its responsibility and manageability. The quality criterion is therefore met.

The team however recommends KSU to encourage students even more by means of (1) introducing and communication a clear process for recognizing externally gained study experience, and by (2) providing and indicating „mobility windows“ in the curriculum, e.g. in the middle or higher semesters, and which could in particular be linked to students' electives. Moreover, KSU might consider (3) strengthening elements of „internationalization at home“, e.g. by strong support for learning foreign languages, English in particular, and by more learning experience, e.g. lectures and seminars, offered by guest lecturers.

e) the higher education institution ensures proper academic and social support: KSU provides a number of support devices along the entire student life cycle. There are in general and specifically.

In general: The University develops individualisation and a tutorship culture with particular focus on individual educational and consultation work and enhancement of academic communication ethics. Student consultations procedure consists of student notification tools, consultation supply of the study process and consultation services for career planning. Consultation tools cover any mode, such as information and consultations by phone and e-mail, individual lecturer acceptance hours, administrative staff consultation.

In particular, the following support systems are in place:

Introduction to the Law programme: Students are given general information on their, covering KSU procedures, the most important aspects of the study and the ongoing proceedings, their rights and duties. The process of studies is explained by the Head of the Studies Development Department and by the coordinators of studies.

Throughout studies: Students are advised on academic and methodological issues by the management and teaching professionals of the faculty. Academic assistance is provided by means of seminars on “Features of writing course papers”, “Methodology of Law research and peculiarities of writing final thesis”. Course descriptions, course materials, assignments are uploaded on the electronic environment using the Moodle system. Notification about open

lectures and events of social partners is given. In general KSU offers the opportunity to address the management of the Law faculty and the University on any issues and at any time.

Mode and time of delivery: KSU ensures maximum adaptation of teaching time to students' needs. This is done by offering courses at weekends, and by distance learning through streaming of lectures. These opportunities, namely use of distance learning, enhances flexibility to benefit students with particular restrictions to their availability on the KSU premises at specific times during daytime on working days.

Teaching units: Lecturers introduce students to the course by informing on the requirements of the course, the procedure of delivery and sources of studies. Course lecturers advise students on tasking issues, recommend literature, prepare individual tasks, take part in non-formal education process, both directly and in the digital Moodle environment. Communication of lecturers and students in various forms is encouraged: meetings, e-mail, telephone, tour lectures, instant messaging programmes.

Personal development support: The Competence Development Centre and the Entrepreneurship and Innovation Centre at the University provide students with opportunities to engage in active complementary activities in terms of non-formal education, thus contributing to personal development, employability, and entrepreneurship, thus enriching students with informal learning.

Career support: In 2013, the Law Faculty of Law implemented an innovative student placement projects in co-operation agreement with the organisers of the project "Opportunity Academy". "Opportunity Academy" is the name of a long-term project intended to train prospective inexperienced lawyers in the practical field, as well as highlight the competencies of young lawyers, survey skills, professionalism, enabling to become preferred workers for employers. – Furthermore, the University implements a student career planning programme "Career path", the objective of which is to develop individual career prospects for every KSU student. This is done by organizing a variety of activities and projects designed to expand the horizons of students who choose a particular professional field. An example is the open lecture of the manager of the Youth Work Centre of Vilnius Territorial Labour Exchange Jolanta Skirmantienė "Job interview: come out the winner".

Leisure: KSU offers comprehensive leisure options for students such as a photo club, a line dance group, a theatre group, and others. KSU offers training of social and civic skills of students.

Accommodation: KSU provides very little accommodation to local students. However, this is not seen as a significant disadvantage since KSU and its students consider opportunities for rented accommodation on the market to be sufficient.

Catering: There is a small canteen in the university building to meet the essential. The opening of the adjacent hotel currently under construction is expected to improve the situation further.

Fee system: The University provides financial assistance to students in order to increase academic achievements of students and reduce social exclusion. It applies a differentiated financing system of studies, which can be found in detail on pages 29 and 30 of the SER. Inter alia, KSU sees attraction and promotion of the most advanced students as one of the key priorities. Due to this aspect of the fee policy, at present 7.4% of students can study free of charge.

The team judges that the support schemes provided by and for the students of the Law programme is holistic and meets the requirements.

f) the system of assessing student achievements is clear, public and appropriate to assess the learning outcomes: The KSU law programme operates an assessment system which applies cumulative scoring for study courses. The score is based on interim assessments (colloquiums), work and presentation of performed tasks, written papers, essays, summary reports, applied research, projects during lectures and seminars; these elements constitute 35–45 % of the student's final grade for a study course.

Gaining and applying knowledge acquired in additional study courses and practice activities during lectures and seminars on the study subject often constitute 10 % of the student's final grade. This element of grading is based on KSU's intention to promote students' active participation in extra-curricular activities, thus deepening students' knowledge and introducing the latest news on the subject; to that end, students may attend visiting professors' lectures, participate in study visits to public and private institutions etc., upon prior approval and based on cooperation with other external partners participating in the study process.

Each course is finalized by an examination which tests students' knowledge and understanding of the subject. Usually an examination consists of a written test with one or more possible answers and open questions/tasks. This element of final course assessment represents 55 – 65 % of the entire assessment.

The elements described above, which constitute the overall assessment, are published and thus made known to students in each course description (item 19 of the course description form). This description covers the assessment methods as outlined above, states the percentage which each of these elements contributes to the overall assessment, makes the time of the assessment known, and outlines the assessment criteria, both in terms of assessment method – written, oral, through contribution to the teaching process (in class) and substantive expectation of achievement).

The organization of the study process is aimed at adapting the teaching and learning methods to different student learning styles and needs. During the whole study period, seeking for more efficient and extensive assimilation of knowledge and active involvement of students during the entire study semester, the university applies cumulative scoring for many study courses as described above. The specific assessment system of student achievements in the programme is described for each course of studies and presented in the enclosed course descriptions in Annex 2 of the SER.

The team judges: The assessment system as described above is appropriate in that it follows KSU's intention to activate students beyond mere participation in the standard programme. It is also suitable in that it enables students to show their different capabilities by using various assessment methods. In principle, the assessment system allows to monitor students' progress in achieving learning outcomes, detect deficiencies in a timely manner, maintain feedback, and create preconditions for adjustments, both at an individual level and with regard to the programme structure and teaching methods. Therefore, the team is of the opinion that, as far as assessments related to each module (course unit) are concerned, the assessment methods applied by the KSU law programme are appropriate to assess students' accomplishment of learning outcomes, and that it is clear and communicated to students. There is scope for gaining even more clarity and transparency if the assessment criteria were presented in more detail by stating the substance of subject-related content of each course assessment and the

competences expected to be shown by students in more specific terms in writing in the course description rather than by lecturers' oral explanation given to students. In terms of due process, KSU should make sure that the reasons for grading are given and also documented in a reliable way in particular as regards assessments of oral performance (in as much as this is possible for this element), in order to be able to consider the case if there were to be an appeal concerning this element of the assessment.

g) professional activities of the majority of programme graduates correspond to the expectations of programme operators and employers: The KSU Law programme appears to match employers' expectations. Attractiveness of the University graduates is best demonstrated by the opinion of the employers. According to the 2017 Reitingai survey which ranks all universities in accordance with various quality parameters, KSU was ranked top as regards the added value brought by, or through, KSU graduates. This applies in terms of knowledge and skills of graduates with regard of the needs of the enterprise, and whether employers would recommend the university to others.

KSU also evaluated the number of its students who did not find employment after graduation within 9 months of graduation, using labour exchange (Lithuanian Labour Exchange) data. Only 1.8% of the law students did not find employment. These data are confirmed by the graduate surveys conducted by the University after graduation. The 2016 survey showed that 86 per cent of graduates participating in full-time studies began to be employed even during their studies and were in employment at the time of graduation; with part-time students, even 100 per cent of graduates were in employment. This suggests that the graduates of the KSU Law programme can succeed in establishing themselves in the labour market.

The team judges that KSU has evidence of the Law programme's appropriateness to match employers' and graduates' expectations to make provision for employment, and that this expectation is in fact supported by the high number of graduates in employment with in relatively short period of time after graduation, and even at the time of graduation.

h) the programme corresponds to the state economic, social and cultural and future development needs: The high number of employment of graduates indicates that Lithuanian society needs graduates of the KSU Law programme. This applies in various ways. Basically, the graduates of the KSU Law programme, being a general law programme with scope for specified electives to make provision for specialization, are educated to meet the requirements of standard professions in the field of law. In addition, law graduates possess abilities for steering social processes also outside formal legal professions, be it in companies, in social or political organizations, or in media work, etc. It should also be in the national and societal interest to offer learning paths to students who are non-traditional in the sense that they seek further qualification after graduating from a college law programme, or in that they seek study opportunities while working. The KSU modes of access and of programme delivery make good provisions for these social groups. **The team therefore judges** that the KSU Law programme corresponds to Lithuanian economic, social and cultural needs of today.

i) fair learning environment is ensured: As described above under items 2.3 and in particular 2.4., the KSU Law programme provides adequate staffing and also, in essence with some desiderata mainly concerning library equipment, a learning environment which gives students a fair opportunity to conduct their studies successfully. Staff are accessible to students, both personally and via various media, thus enabling students to voice their concerns, and there

is no indication that students are not treated in an adequate, friendly manner. The team heard from students that the aforesaid is affair description of their experience.

KSU operates a Code of Ethics, which regulates modes of communication between lecturers, administrative staff and students. This code sets out the values of KSU activities and regulates the important norms of unwanted behaviour in as far as this is not directly established by legal acts of the Republic of Lithuania; furthermore, it regulates employment contracts and documents of internal university procedure. The code is based on the principles of respect, impartiality, benevolence, non-discrimination and tolerance, academic cooperation and transparency.

The team is of the opinion that KSU provides a fair learning environment for the students enrolled in the law programme.

j) students are provided opportunities to make complaints and lodge appeals in accordance with clear, public and transparent procedures. There is a general provision for making complaints in that KSU organises meetings with the faculty management with the students of each programme of studies in the second month of each semester in order to discuss student expectations, complaints and suggestions regarding the content and organization of studies. In addition, coordinators of study and supervisors of the programmes of studies as well as individual staff can generally be approached in cases when students want to lodge complaints or appeals.

While the SER did not contain information on a regular appeals process, the team was informed during the site visit that such a regulated scheme is in fact in place. There is an appeals committee which students can appeal to within three labour days after receiving examination results, stating their reasons for appeal. After hearing the examiner, the appeals committee will pass judgement within a month and make a statement to the student, giving reasons for the decision.

The KSU Code of Ethics (see item 2.5 h) above) makes provision for a complaints process to be called upon in cases when a student sees a case of unethical behaviour.

The team therefore judges that KSU meets the requirement to establish a sufficient, regulated complaints and appeals system exists in substance and meets the requirements to be expected.

2.6. Programme management

The evaluation of programme management covers the assessment of the following criteria:

a) responsibilities for decisions and monitoring of the implementation of the programme are clearly allocated: The hands-on management of the study programme, both in Vilnius and in Klaipeda, is ensured by the Study Programme Committee. Its composition and functions are defined by the regulations of the KSU Study Programme Committee, the Description of the Procedure of Study Programme Preparation, Approval and Improvement, the Description of the Procedure of Internal Study Programme Quality Monitoring and Evaluation, the Description of the Process of External Evaluation and Accreditation of Study Programmes and by the Quality Manual of the University. The Study Programme Committee has eight members; these are listed on page 34 of the SER. The Study Programme Committee has the following roles and responsibilities:

- permanent body for preparing, improving, performing and ensuring quality of study programmes, for distribution of responsibilities and making programme-related decisions;
- planning and requesting preparation of learning resources, and evaluating these;
- considering, accepting, and preparing proposals regarding involvement of social partners into the study programme process, strengthening connections between academic and professional institutions, private and public sector;
- evaluating changes and innovations in the field of study, considering possibilities of their application, in order to ensure the quality and innovation of the study process;
- considering, implementing, and ensuring openness to application of new management models, creation of European modules, encouraging internationality and mobility of students.

This managerial setup follows an overarching understanding of programme quality and the modalities to ascertain quality. These features are as follows:

- The KSU Law programme is subject to the overall KSU study quality assurance system, which is constantly operated at university and faculty level. KSU states that its main quality criterion which is applied in the evaluation both of the entire study programme and of each of its courses is maximum compliance to the learning outcomes and the quality of competences to be given to students.
- The KSU Law programme strives to take note of, and to include into the programme, the continuous changes which take place on a global scale, and to introduce the latest academic advances into the learning and the assessment content and processes. The essential factor of ensuring the quality of the Law programme is seen in feedback from students, alumni and social partners. In development, improvement and evaluation of the programme, students, alumni and social partners are invited to faculty meetings, raise issues concerning necessary innovation in view of their experience, and participate in taking decisions related to the management of the Law study programme.

As for management of the study schedule (see item 2.5 b) above), there is an organizational process in place: Study schedules are drafted at the beginning of August and January, each per semester. The Law faculty approves the projected lecturers and indicates dates and timing of course offers. Schedules must be published two weeks before the beginning of the lectures or examinations session in the semester. Approved schedules are posted on the KSU website and on KSU billboards.

With regard to graduation, especially as far as this issue is related to the final thesis and the final examination (see item 2.5 b) above), there are regular procedures in place: Requirements are checked and a decision on granting a qualification degree is taken by the qualification commission for granting Master's degrees. KSU teachers and teachers of other higher education institutions, researchers of scientific institutions, social partners can be members of the qualification commission.

The team judges that there is clear allocation of responsibilities for decisions and for monitoring programme implementation.

b) data and other information regarding programme implementation are collected and analysed periodically: KSU collects systematically and repeatedly data on the performance of the programme. Evidence of this is the presentation of numerous tables in the SER which portray the Law programme features in the relevant aspects. Among these are:

- Admissions, scores of accepted students, number of dropouts and graduates and ratio of admitted students and graduates in the academic years 2012–2017;
- Graduate employability information, based on Labour Exchange Agency data;
- Defence of final theses, numbers and scores;
- Incoming and outgoing students in international exchange programmes.

KSU collects student and graduate feedback on a regular basis by means of ongoing discussions and regular surveys. The scheme operates as follows:

- In the second month of each semester KSU organises meetings with the Law faculty management and the students of each programme of studies to discuss student expectations, complaints and suggestions regarding the content and organization of studies.
- At the end of each semester a student survey is carried out in order to evaluate the quality of teaching and organisation of each subject of studies on the basis of a questionnaire
- The study experience is eventually completed with the survey of graduates to evaluate the overall quality of the programme of studies.

The University's Student Association also implements student survey projects, for instance, the initiative "Throughout a problem" allowing students to provide anonymous information about problems during the course of studies. Results of this initiative are presented to the management of the University and its divisions, and that considered in the organisation of the process of studies and improvement of the quality of studies programmes.

KSU cooperates with the University Student Association, involving representatives of students in all University management processes. If necessary, KSU organises meetings of students with KSU and law faculty management, the Studies Development Department and other departments.

There is regular feedback from employers on programme qualities or deficiencies with regard to success factors. Introducing the latest developments is sought through communication with social partners participating in the study process. Graduates surveys have been established for monitoring student success and feedback on programme qualities. These data and information are routinely analysed by the faculty management and the aforesaid committee in particular.

The team judges that there is a sufficient system of collection and periodic analysis of data and other information on programme implementation in place.

c) the outcomes of internal and external evaluations of the programme are used for the improvement of the programme: KSU uses the outcomes for internal and external programme evaluations as described under item 2.6 b) above for improving the programme. Doing so is mainly the responsibility of the faculty Study Programme Committee, as mentioned under item 2.6 a) above. There are concrete examples of quality improvement measures, such as: Teachers were requested to improve their teaching methods, or teachers were not invited back for lecturing in subsequent years; practice-oriented elements were added to the programme, such as site visits to relevant institutions or establishments (e.g., prison).

The team is of the opinion that KSU meets the expectation to use the outcomes of internal and external evaluations for programme improvement.

d) the evaluation and improvement processes involve stakeholders: Stakeholders – graduates and social partners, namely employers – are involved in the improvement process by

means of inviting these groups to provide feedback, mainly in relation to fostering employability (see item 2.6 b) above). The reports on internships can serve as a useful tool.

However, while there is stakeholder involvement, KSU does not demonstrate to what extent external stakeholders are also actively and continuously involved not only in feedback but also in actual decision making processes which aim at improving the programme, and if KSU ensures feedback to stakeholders in order to inform them of the improvement measures taken as a result of their input. In particular, since KSU is a private limited company, its sole shareholder must be seen as an important – probably the most important – stakeholder, while the team did not hear about the shareholder's role in evaluation and improvement processes.

The team judges that KSU involves stakeholders in the evaluation and improvement processes in an elementary sense. This is sufficient for the time being. The team nonetheless recommends KSU to extend external involvement by defining a place and voice in the actual change process, reaching from decision making to information on improvement.

e) the internal quality assurance measures are effective and efficient: Quality culture, quality policy, quality focus: KSU and its law faculty identify their ambition to provide a quality culture, striving towards everyone's engagement in constant improvement of the law programme by paying attention to needs of students, social partners and developments in the field of law. KSU describes itself as being guided by the values of openness and accessibility, and that therefore students can address the law faculty management on any issues and at any time. In the context of quality culture and subsequent policies, KSU has clearly identified specific focal points for development; these are: (1) development of the internationalization of the programme, opportunities for double diploma and joint degree programmes; (2) increase of the programme's innovation and direct application of competences in developing and creating jobs in this field, in particular by applying latest results of scientific research and experimental development; (3) improvement of the process of studies, using new technologies of studies and learning environments; (4) transformation of the programme on the basis of student oriented learning didactics and methodologies.

Informal quality enhancement processes: Students are – successfully – encouraged to provide direct feedback to programme coordinators and supervisors or voice suggestions for improvement, whereupon optimisation is sought within short, if necessary by adjusting the relevant legal acts of KSU.

Formal quality assurance practices: KSU applies formal quality assurance methods. These are: (1) KSU uses collected data (see item 2.6 b) above) for qualitative analyses in order to feed into quality enhancement, in particular for effective management of the study programme and associated learning activities. (2) KSU also operates formalized quality assurance processes internally, using ISO 9001:2008) with a focus on distribution of responsibilities for programme quality. In that respect, namely the Study Programme Committee (see item 2.6 a) above) seeks to improve the curriculum content and organization of studies. In accordance with the KSU quality manager, this committee has implemented the quality indicator measurement system, based on which the key programme indicators are monitored and evaluated. In implementing ISO 9001:2015 standard, KSU carries out an annual audit, covering the implementation procedures and results of the programmes of studies.

In terms of *concrete quality issues*, KSU pays specific attention to the certain specific features. These are: (1) Study outcomes; (2) lecturers' competence and performance; (3)

resources of studies and support for students; (4) internships. For detail, reference is made to the SER, p. 36.

Tangible improvements: Improvements following from these types of feed-back or other sources are visible, though minor. For instance, a call for introducing more modern, student-activating teaching methods was taken up; visits to external institutions of relevance for law studies, such as prisons, were introduced.

The team is of the opinion that KSU has established the standard elements required for operating internal quality assurance processes, largely by applying ISO 9001 devices. This covers installation of surveys in particular. KSU's aspiration to establish quality culture and specific quality policies, the latter namely with regard to focussing on specific fields that require special attention, is praiseworthy. The KSU Law programme therefore meets the standards of quality assurance in line with average practice in Lithuania.

KSU is nevertheless recommended to consider (1) a "teach the teacher" system operated on a regular base (possibly in cooperation with other higher education institutions) in order to ensure full teaching capabilities of staff, namely of externals, and with a specific view on problem-based and student-centred learning and competence-oriented student assessment. (2) KSU is also recommended to consider further involvement of students and external stakeholders in the actual improvement processes and decisions, namely in the relevant committee. (3) Finally, though most significantly, KSU is advised to establish a more comprehensive quality assurance approach which goes beyond the current focus on course-related assessment of teacher performance by also (1) assessing the holistic features of the programme, i.e. the validity of its objectives and aligned learning outcomes, the curricular content, its clustering its sequencing and progression, and (2) evaluating all items which occur along the s-called "student life cycle", i.e. access, enrolment processes, academic and social support and guidance, ancillary teaching and research elements such as information technology and libraries, internationalisation practices, assessment rules and their application, career service.

f) the information about the study programme is public, relevant and easily accessible: KSU publishes up-to-date and unbiased quantitative and qualitative information about the law programme and the qualification which the programme leads to. Documents on study regulations are published on the KSU website. Students are informed about changes of the study regulation or methodological requirements by email. Information about studies, study programmes, schedules, current affairs and events, research and student achievements is regularly made available by means of the KSU website, KSU social network accounts under www.facebook.com, www.twitter.com, www.youtube.com, and during meetings with the academic community and social partners. **The team therefore judges** that KSU matches the expectation to provide programme-related information in an adequate way, while there is scope for improvement by utilizing the AIKOS system more comprehensively as another information channel (see paragraph 2.1.a) above).

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. KSU should communicate its overarching programme objectives and the aforesaid general learning outcomes more explicitly to the general public and in effect, to prospective students and employers, by entering information on programme objectives and the intended learning outcomes of the law programme into the AIKOS information platform, too.
2. Concerning the teaching/learning modalities, KSU could consider the rearrangement of sequencing modules by bringing forward more concrete law modules, by strengthening private law modules, by considering curricular “mobility windows” in order to enhance mobility opportunities, and by shifting towards problem-based, student-centred learning even more strongly.
3. Research capacities of students could be enhanced further by adopting research-type modalities of teaching more comprehensively, namely by means of student-centred, problem-based (inductive) teaching methods.
4. While KSU has already made considerable progress towards employing more in-house teaching staff and has established sufficiently reliable working relations with external teachers, there is scope for enhancing the number of in-house permanent staff further.
5. Library facilities (literature and space) need to be expanded considerably, especially as regards qualitatively and quantitatively sufficient provision of student-centred learning material, namely textbooks, for all academic areas relevant for the law programme.
6. Assessment practices should be developed further to ensure fully documented objectivity in particular by introducing robust devices for ensuring fair, transparent and fit-for-review grading with regard to the oral elements included in the assessment practice.
7. Quality assurance elements and processes should be extended to reach beyond teacher performance evaluation at course level. This should include holistic programme assessment, namely aspects of programme compilation and progression as well as course interaction, and various analyses along the so-called student life cycle, reaching from admission to academic, ancillary, and social support systems, examination practices. Students and stakeholders should be integrated more comprehensively in the processes and in the decisions of the quality committee.

IV. SUMMARY

The *Law* programme of Kazimieras Simonavicius University shows a number of positive aspects. Among these are the following:

KSU is aware of, and has identified, the overarching objectives of a general law programme in an adequate, holistic way, with no major aspect omitted, thus presenting a meaningful starting point for the programme design and for fitting learning outcomes.

KSU operates an extensive system for advertising its programme throughout Lithuania, using various channels successfully. Due to a high degree of programme marketing, KSU ensures transparent and wide-spread information on the opportunities offered by the programme. Moreover, KSU has made it possible for students who finished law studies at college to pursue further qualification in law, and to provide flexible learning opportunities for those students who cannot attend classes during weekdays. Offering such multiple entrance points and various study processes should be in the overall social interest of Lithuania since it offers non-traditional students pathways into university education in law.

Opportunities provided by KSU for students to deepen their practical experience in the legal profession(s) by means of internships are adequate to foster employability. KSU offers exceed usual expectations, both in terms of provision of contacts for internships and for safeguarding the fitness of purpose of the internships as a means for contributing to the accomplishment of the intended learning outcomes. Students appreciate practice-orientation of the programme, e.g. through developing negotiation capabilities, or by being introduced to corollaries of law, namely business and economics. KSU provides meaningful tools to encourage and enable students to seek participation in legal research and in acquiring practical experience in terms of applied law.

Student support schemes are comprehensive and appear to be useful for students. There is a differentiated fee system and mobility funding scheme in place in support of students who either show excellence in their studies or may need support on social grounds.

KSU makes institutional provision for addressing quality enhancement, namely through developing meaningful quality assurance policies and practices, and by establishing a committee to oversee quality improvement issues.

KSU is formulating and implementing an internationalization strategy which may lead to enhancing internationalization of the programme in mid-range perspective, while the nature of law programmes in general and personal circumstances of students will most likely be obstacles to achieving sizeable success in mobility.

The *Law* programme of Kazimieras Simonavicius University and the way it is operated has scope for improvement as regards the following desiderata:

KSU should communicate its overarching programme objectives and the aforesaid general learning outcomes more explicitly to the general public and in effect, to prospective students and employers, by entering information on programme objectives and the intended learning outcomes into the AIKOS information platform, too.

Concerning the teaching/learning modalities, KSU could consider the rearrangement of sequencing modules by bringing forward more concrete law modules, by strengthening private law modules, by considering curricular “mobility windows” in order to enhance mobility

opportunities, and by shifting towards problem-based, student-centred learning even more strongly.

Research capacities of students could be enhanced further by adopting research-type modalities of teaching more comprehensively, namely by means of student-centred, problem-based (inductive) teaching methods.

While KSU has already made considerable progress towards employing more in-house teaching staff and has established sufficiently reliable working relations with external teachers, there is scope for enhancing the number of in-house permanent staff further.

Library facilities (literature and space) need to be expanded considerably, especially as regards qualitatively and quantitatively sufficient provision of student-centred learning material, namely textbooks, for all academic areas relevant for the law programme.

Assessment practices should be developed further to ensure fully documented objectivity in particular by introducing robust devices for ensuring fair, transparent and fit-for-review grading with regard to the oral elements included in the assessment practice.

Quality assurance elements and processes should be extended to reach beyond teacher performance evaluation at course level. This should include holistic programme assessment, namely aspects of programme compilation and progression as well as course interaction, and various analyses along the so-called student life cycle, reaching from admission to academic, ancillary, and social support systems, examination practices. Students and stakeholders could be integrated more comprehensively in the processes and in the decisions of the quality committee.

V. GENERAL ASSESSMENT

The study programme *Law* (state code – 6011KX004) at Kazimieras Simonavicius university is given **positive** evaluation.

Study programme assessment in points by evaluation areas.

No.	Evaluation Area	Evaluation of an area in points*
1.	Programme aims and learning outcomes	3
2.	Curriculum design	3
3.	Teaching staff	3
4.	Facilities and learning resources	2
5.	Study process and students' performance assessment	3
6.	Programme management	3
	Total:	17

*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.

Grupės vadovas:

Prof. dr. Jürgen Kohler

Team leader:

Grupės nariai:

Prof. dr. Rolf Dotevall

Team members:

Prof. dr. Markus Steppan

Mr. Mindaugas Jablonskis

Ms. Vaida Spūdytė