CENTRE FOR QUALITY ASSESSMENT IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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EVALUATION REPORT
STUDY FIELD OF ENVIRONMENTAL ENGINEERING

AT VILNIAUS KOLEGIJA

Expert panel:

1. **Prof. dr. Edoardo Patelli** (panel chairperson), member of academic community;
2. **Prof. dr. Tone Merete Muthanna,** *member of academic community;*
3. **Prof. dr. Toomas Tamm,** *member of academic community;*
4. **Prof dr. Dalia Štreimikienė,** *representative of social partners;*
5. ***Tadas Paukštys,*** *students' representative.*

Evaluation coordinator – Dr. Ona Šakaliene

Report language – English

Vilnius
2022

Study Field Data*

Title of the study programme	***Landscape Design***
State code	6531EX029
Type of studies	College studies
Cycle of studies	First cycle
Mode of study and duration (in years)	Full-time, Full-time organised in sessions, 3 years
Credit volume	180
Qualification degree and (or) professional qualification	Professional Bachelor of Engineering Sciences
Language of instruction	Lithuanian
Minimum education required	If the secondary education was obtained in 2020 and 2019, candidates to a state-funded study place have to pass three state level Matura examinations: Lithuanian language and literature state Matura exam, foreign language (English, German or French) state Matura or international exam, and mathematics (except art studies) state Matura exam; the arithmetic average of the annual assessments of the five compulsory subjects, rounded to the nearest whole number, is not less than 6; competition score is not less than 4.3; candidates to a place not funded by state have to pass one state level Matura examination; competition score is not less than 4.3.
Registration date of the study programme	30-08-2011

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

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I. INTRODUCTION

1.1. BACKGROUND OF THE EVALUATION PROCESS

The evaluation of study fields is based on the Methodology of External Evaluation of Study Fields approved by the Director of the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education (hereafter – SKVC) 31 December 2019 Order No. V-149.

The evaluation is intended to help higher education institutions to constantly improve their study process and to inform the public about the quality of studies.

The evaluation process consists of the main following stages: *1) self-evaluation and self-evaluation report prepared by Higher Education Institution (hereafter – HEI); 2) site visit of the expert panel to the higher education institution; 3) production of the external evaluation report (EER) by the expert panel and its publication; 4) follow-up activities.*

On the basis of this external evaluation report of the study field SKVC takes a decision to accredit study field either for 7 years or for 3 years. If the field evaluation is negative then the study field is not accredited.

The study field and cycle are **accredited for 7 years** if all evaluation areas are evaluated as exceptional (5 points), very good (4 points) or good (3 points).
The study field and cycle are **accredited for 3 years** if one of the evaluation areas was evaluated as satisfactory (2 points).
The study field and cycle are **not accredited** if at least one of evaluation areas was evaluated as unsatisfactory (1 point).

1.2. EXPERT PANEL

The expert panel was assigned according to the Experts Selection Procedure (hereinafter referred to as the Procedure) as approved by the Director of Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education on 31 December 2019 Order No. V-149. The site visit to the HEI was conducted by the panel on 17/12/2021. The visit was organised online using video-conferencing tool (Zoom).

Prof. dr. Edoardo Patelli, *professor at University of Strathclyde (United Kingdom);*
Prof. dr. Tone Merete Muthanna, *professor at Norwegian University of Science and Technology (Norway);*
Prof. dr. Toomas Tamm, *professor at Estonian University of Life Sciences (Estonia);*
Prof dr. Dalia Štreimikienė, *Lithuanian energy institute (Lithuania);*
Tadas Paukštys, *student at Klaipeda State University of Applied Sciences (Lithuania).*

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

No.	Name of the document
1.	

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

Vilniaus Kolegija (hereinafter referred to as VK, College) is a state higher education institution of the Republic of Lithuania established in 2000, which provides higher education college studies, elaborates applied research, experimental development, and professional art. VK is the largest professional higher education institution in Lithuania with 6391 students including 126 foreigners (in October 2020).

The mission of the VK is to train practice-oriented specialists with professional higher education in study field groups of engineering, informatics, social, health, technology, physical, agricultural, veterinary, educational sciences, humanities and arts, business and public management, and to meet the economic and social needs of the Vilnius region and Lithuania as a whole. The studies are organized in seven faculties: Faculty of Electronics and Informatics, Faculty of Economics, Faculty of Business Management, Faculty of Health Care, Faculty of Pedagogy, Faculty of Agrotechnologies, and Faculty of Arts and Creative Technologies.
The university provides 44 study programmes, which are assigned to 12 groups of study fields. The study programmes were accredited for the maximum period in 2005 by the evaluation by national experts and in 2014 by international experts.

The Faculty of Agrotechnologies offers 5 study fields: agriculture (I01), chemistry (C01), veterinary medicine (H01), environmental engineering (E03) and food technology (F06). VK offers one study programme in the field of environmental engineering: Landscape Design (6531EX029). The Programme has been in operation since 1 September 2001, re-registered on 26 June 2002. The Programme was accredited two times in 2009 and 2013. In 2014, the name of the Programme was changed from "Landscape Gardening and Design" to "Landscape Design". Until 2016, the Programme belonged to the field of Engineering Studies (H900), branch of Landscape Design (H930). Currently, the Programme is assigned to the group of Engineering study fields (E), Environmental Engineering study field (E03).

II. GENERAL ASSESSMENT

Environmental engineering study field and **first cycle** at **Vilniaus Kolegija** is given **positive** evaluation.

Study field and cycle assessment in points by evaluation areas

No.	Evaluation Area	Evaluation of an Area in points*
1.	Intended and achieved learning outcomes and curriculum	2
2.	Links between science (art) and studies	3
3.	Student admission and support	3
4.	Teaching and learning, student performance and graduate employment	3
5.	Teaching staff	2
6.	Learning facilities and resources	3
7.	Study quality management and public information	4
	Total:	20

*1 (unsatisfactory) - t*he area does not meet the minimum requirements, there are fundamental shortcomings that prevent the implementation of the field studies*;
2 (satisfactory) - t*he area meets the minimum requirements, and there are fundamental shortcomings that need to be eliminated*;
3 (*good) - the area is being developed systematically, without any fundamental shortcomings;*
4 (very good) - t*he area is evaluated very well in the national context and internationally, without any shortcomings*;
5 (excellent) - t*he area is evaluated exceptionally well in the national context and internationally.*

III. STUDY FIELD ANALYSIS

3.1. INTENDED AND ACHIEVED LEARNING OUTCOMES AND CURRICULUM

Study aims, outcomes and content shall be assessed in accordance with the following indicators:

3.1.1. Evaluation of the conformity of the aims and outcomes of the field and cycle study programmes to the needs of the society and/or the labour market (not applicable to HEIs operating in exile conditions);

(1) Factual situation

The program objectives states that: „the aim of the Programme is to prepare Professional Bachelors of Engineering Sciences who are able to design and implement landscaping of land plots of residential buildings and other small- scale landscape architectural objects; to implement projects of small landscape architectural buildings and create element design of those buildings and landscaping improvement; to participate in the design of engineering systems of plantation territories; to manage green spaces; to organise cultivation of ornamental plants."

This is a very practical overall aim for a study program. The program presented practical projects with a strong focus on practical design implementation, which is expected from a professional Bachelor degree training program. The SER also clearly states that the preparation of the graduates for occupational activities is the main focus of the program.

The needs for specialists in landscape design who are able to install and maintain green spaces is linked to the increasing number of „area of clean and tidy green spaces" as shown by the Official Statistics Portal (https://osp.stat.gov.lt/statistiniu-rodikliu analize#/), and summarized in Figure 1.1 of the SER, The SP also responds comments received from the survey of the surveyed landscaping companies that employ graduates.

The College reported in the SER that VK „is the only higher education institution in Lithuania where the Landscape Design study programme is carried out". VK clarified that at the time of SER Vilniaus Kolegija offers a Professional Bachelor Engineering degree in Landscape Design. and Kauno Miškų ir Aplinkos Inžinerijos Kolegija offered a study program in Greenery Design ("Želdynų dizainas" in Lithuanian) but presented with the English translation as Landscape Design and therefore not the same study program provided by VK, Since 2020/21 Vytautas Magnus University provides a SP in Landscape Design and Bachelor degree in agricultural science awarded.

In Annex 5 of the SER includes a detailed summary table which provides the links between the program learning outcomes, subject learning outcomes, study methods, student achievements and assessments. This demonstrates a well-planned program with clear plan and connections between intended and achieved learning outcomes. The aim of the Programme, competences, and learning outcomes are reported to be linked to one of the strategic goals of the VK Strategy for 2021–2025, that is to meet the needs of the Lithuanian and international labour market. Moreover, the SER summarises that the programme is formulated so as to ensure proper preparation of the graduate for future occupational activity. This is seen as a very good

strategy and implementation, given the nature of the study programme. This goal is in line with higher professional education and lifelong learning.

The outcomes of the Programme denote knowledge, comprehension and abilities of the graduate. The outcomes of the Programme are achieved by developing critical thinking, ability to communicate in a professional environment in Lithuanian and foreign languages, analyse results of any studies performed, solve problems by integrating knowledge create the design landscaping elements; management of green spaces; organise the cultivation of ornamental plants (SER, Annex 3). There are limited activities/practices related to the engineering (SER, Annex 4).

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The evaluation committee finds the aim and learning outcomes with respect to landscape architecture and planning are satisfactory and consider the need of society and the labour market. However, the panel also finds that the Landscape Design and planning program is only marginally linked to a study program of Environmental Engineering. The SER and the information collected during the site visit has not demonstrated a clear alignment to an Environmental Engineering Program and the expected outcomes.

The study program is focused on landscape architecture and design with too little focus on engineering skills beyond some engineering graphics in the list of subjects and learning outcomes. The panel thinks that more engineering activities are required to fulfil the program aims and developing general competence to understand the impact of engineering solutions on the society or communicate professionally with the engineering community.

The panel recognises that this SP fulfil the requirement of the labour market and expertise in „*install and maintain green spaces*" that do not require necessary a strong engineering background.

3.1.2. Evaluation of the conformity of the field and cycle study programme aims and outcomes with the mission, objectives of activities and strategy of the HEI;

(1) Factual situation

The VK Strategy for 2021–2025 provides the goals which states that the obligation to carry out professional higher education studies and lifelong learning that meet the needs of the Lithuanian and international labour market, to develop applied research, experimental development and efficient professional art relevant to the business world, to strengthen the effectiveness of the impact on the country and region, to cultivate an organisational culture focused on the mobilisation of community members and socially responsible community spirit. Further, the SER described how the strategic goals of the institution are accounted for and coordinating them with the implementation of the aims and learning outcome of the Programme. The SER reports that great emphasis is placed on the internationalisation, promotion and development of applied research preparation and implementation of national and international projects. The professional higher education studies meet the needs of the labour market, continuous development of the student-oriented study process, improvement of the internal quality assurance system of the studies, creation of a modern study environment, involvement of students in the applied scientific and professional artistic activities, purchases of resources necessary to perform these activities.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The expert committee finds that the SER described in a satisfactory manner the conformity of the field and cycle study program aims and outcomes. The impression of the expert group is that the study program is well planned, organised, quality controlled and implemented as a landscape architecture and design program.

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

(1) Factual situation

The Programme is listed in the SER to be compliant with the following legal requirements:

- Description of General Studies Requirements (Order No V-1168 of the Ministry of Education and Science of 30 December 2016) (https://e-seimas.lrs.lt/portal/legalAct/lt/TAD/a4caf862ced511e6a476d5908abd2210/asr);
- Description of the Group of Engineering Fields of Studies, V-964 of the (there is no(https://seimas.lrs.lt/portal/legalAct/lt/TAD/48aa06b058b711e5a9129f08109b20ec/asr);
- Description of Full-Time and Part-Time Study Modes (Order No ISAK-1026 of the Ministry of Education and Science of 12 May 2009) (https://e-seimas.lrs.lt/portal/legalAct/lt/TAD/TAIS.344309), according to which contact hours in both forms of studies have been harmonised;
- The Procedure of Studies at VK (approved by the Academic Council Resolution No ATN-5 of 4 May 2016).
- Description of the Study Cycles, V-1012 seimas.lrs.lt/portal/legalAct/lt/TAD/d32e4f70ad0811e68987e8320e9a5185?jfwid=-9dzqntza2.

The SER reports that one semester is 20 weeks long and one study credit corresponds to between 25-30 hours of study. Full-time studies are organised on weekdays. From 2020, all first-year students were enrolled to study on a full-time basis (according to the timetables for full-time studies and part-time studies are conducted for entrants in 2019, 2018 and 2017 (SER Annex 1). Part-time studies are organised in sessions; between sessions, students study independently in consultation with teachers. The session focuses on lectures, practical classes, practical training and defence of independent work. The Programme is 180 credits in scope, which meets the requirements of Lithuanian higher education and is sufficient to achieve the learning outcomes. The awarded Professional Bachelor's Degree corresponds to the first cycle of the Framework for Qualifications of the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The program is compliant with all legal requirements listed in the SER and the study program appears well organised with respect to study cycles and workloads.

3.1.4. Evaluation of compatibility of aims, learning outcomes, teaching/learning and assessment methods of the field and cycle study programmes;

(1) Factual situation

The Study Programme Committee (SPC) is reported to be responsible for ensuring that the learning outcomes of the Programme meet the needs of the labour market, and in cooperation

with employers and organisations uniting environmental professionals. Until 2018 the study program was modular, however it was then determined to transform it to be subject based. This was done after an in-depth review of the needs and shortcomings as reported in the SER. The responsibility is now as follows: the SPC defines the learning outcomes. The Committee also introduces the study subjects, their place in the study plan and the scope needed to achieve the learning outcomes as described in Annex 4 of the SER. The activities of the subject teachers are coordinated by the Department of Landscape Management and Agribusiness Technology. The subject teachers are also responsible for the relevance of the content of the study subjects.

The content of the Programme is periodically updated in line with regulatory changes, insights of the SPC, as well as the results of surveys of students, graduates and employers. General and specific learning outcomes of the programme are integrated into the content of all subjects and cover the necessary range of professional competences of a Professional Bachelor of Engineering Sciences. Twice a year the SPC assesses the need to adjust the structure of student workload, based on the results of student surveys and monitoring of the Programme.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The expert committee finds that there is a well-planned link between the aims and learning outcomes and teaching and assessment methods. The responsible Department of Landscaping and Agribusiness Technology conducts yearly quality surveys about the program among faculty, students and stakeholders.

3.1.5. Evaluation of the totality of the field and cycle study programme subjects/modules, which ensures consistent development of competences of students;

(1) Factual situation

The SER states that the aim of the Programme defines the competences of the graduate of the Landscape Design study programme and intended learning outcomes. The SER summarises this in two sections; (1) „General competences: to be able to communicate effectively with the engineering community and general public; to understand the impact of engineering solutions on the society and environment; to take responsibility for the results of engineering activities; (2) Subject competences: to be able to apply the technologies of ornamental plant cultivation; to be able to implement projects of small landscape architectural structures and prepare the part of the design documentation for structures and landscaping elements, which covers the development of architecture and design; to be able to design engineering systems for plantation territories; to be able to design and implement landscaping of residential building land plots and small-scale landscape architectural objects; to be able to carry out management of green spaces".

The groups of learning outcomes to define the study cycle of the Programme, learning outcomes of the Programme and study subjects are presented in a tabular format in the SER (table 2).

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The SER gives a solid impression of the overall study program and how they work with aligning intended and actual learning outcomes. This is a good programme with very few

weaknesses. The only thing the expert committee would like to point out here is the mention under Subject competences where there is focus on designing engineering systems, which the committee finds little evidence of in the subjects, curriculum and programme in general, which is a serious problem if the study program should remain an environmental engineering program. However, the committee does not necessarily see this as a weakness, as it is clearly a very strong landscape architecture and urban green infrastructure design study program.

3.1.6. Evaluation of opportunities for students to personalise the structure of field study programmes according to their personal learning objectives and intended learning outcomes;

(1) Factual situation

The SER reports that the students have the opportunity to choose a 4 credit optional subject from the list of all optional subjects offered by the Faculty (Website Development Tools and Management; Food Analysis; Non- Traditional Crop and Livestock Production; Farm Animal Health; Technology and Equipment for Fruit and Berry Storage and Processing). The SER also reports that there are plans in the next academic year to provide students with a general list of all optional subjects offered at the College.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The findings in the SER demonstrate good opportunities for students to customise their studies and focus on specific interest areas.

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

(1) Factual situation

The SER presents the Description of the Procedure for the Preparation and Defence of Final Theses (Projects) and it is available on the College website at the follow address: https://www.viko.lt/media/uploads/sites/3/2014/07/BD tvarkos aprasas 2020-062021 02- sav-patikra.pdf. The methodological recommendations of the final theses are presented publicly on the Faculty page (https://atf.viko.lt/ studentams/diplomantams/).

The 2020–2021 academic years, was the last generation of the part-time student group that could choose the specialisation from the two offered: Small Greenery Architecture and Decorative Horticulture, is completing the studies. These specialisations were abandoned when they left the modular system for the subject based system. This resulted in subjects from both specialisations were included into the Programme, e.g. Ornamental Plant Growing Technology and Engineering, Small Landscape Architectural Structures and Site Amenities, Civil Engineering in Landscaping.

The SER further commented that the observation of the Chair of the Thesis Defence Committee to focus more on estimate calculations and economics was also taken into account in the previous cycle. Practitioners from industry was invited in for estimate calculations, and the integrative lectures on enterprise management and economics were given to students by an entrepreneur, the owner of “Citus Group”, one of the largest real estate developers, the owner of "Profitus", the ten best start-ups in Lithuania.

The final thesis is independently prepared for public defence at the Thesis Defence Committee. Students can choose the topic of the final thesis from the areas of the problematic

research field of the final thesis, published by the Department supervising the Programme. The topic of the thesis, the problematic field area, is proposed by the student in coordination with the Department and the supervisor of the final thesis.

The SER also summarises the comments and recommendations of the previous evaluation with actions taken by the study program as a response. This shows that the recommendations have been incorporated and addressed in the study program in a comprehensive and well planned manner.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

Overall, the expert committee finds that this Study programme showcases good compliance and a very well structured workflow from planning to execution. The programme should continue this strong connection to industry. However, from the information collected during the site visit from students, employers, and social partners there are some concerns about the fitting of the SP in an engineering field. Some considerations should be given to move away from engineering and strengthening the well-developed activities in Architectural landscaping and gardening. This in turn may contribute to increase the number of students enrolled on the SP.

Strengths and weaknesses of this evaluation area:

(1) Strengths:

1. Strong connection between practical skills and the learning objectives and course design.
2. Well-structured and established cycle for plans, revisions and implementation of the intended and achieved learning outcomes.

(2) Weaknesses:

1. Considering the content of the study program and the student expectation, the placement of the study program as part of environmental engineering is not ideal. It appears to fit better within a landscape architecture and maybe a urban green infrastructure program.
2. The alignment of the aim and outcomes of the study programme with the EU long term vision and strategy is not evident and not cover with the sufficient level of details.

3.2. LINKS BETWEEN SCIENCE (ART) AND STUDIES

Links between science (art) and study activities shall be assessed in accordance with the following indicators:

3.2.1. Evaluation of the sufficiency of the science (applied science, art) activities implemented by the HEI for the field of research (art) related to the field of study;

(1) Factual situation

Research and experimental development and artistic activities carried out in the Colleges are subdivided into: 1) scientific works; 2) outsourced project based activities and applied arts activities; 3) other outsourced project based activities (monitoring, analysis, research study);

4) provision of additional competences, qualification improvement, seminars; consultations; other educational activities.

The HEI in 2016–2017 participated in the Action Management Committee of the COST (European Cooperation in Science and Technology) TD1304 programme ,,*The network for the biology of zinc (zinc-net)".* Applied research is carried out in order to identify growth possibilities for rare and protected plants in urban areas also supported by students (during their final thesis projects). Other applied studies included the ,,*Use of Mineral Mulch in Naturalistic Greenery*" and „*Assessment of the Biological Potential of Plants Grown in Vertical Systems*". Applied research activities are also supported by the local government (Vilnius City Municipality). Field experiments of medicinal horse mackerel (Gratiola officinalis) and medicinal hard grain (Lithospermum officinale) were performed in the educational nursery, modelling different growth conditions. Educational theoretical and practical seminars for the public are planned but not delivered yet. The VK also submitted 3 applications for Strategic Partnerships for higher education as part of ERASMUS but not funded.

In 2019, the international project ,,*Refurbishment Design Proposals of Ozas Park in Vilnius*" was carried out in collaboration with the Faculty of Horticulture and Forestry at the Banat University of Agricultural Sciences and Veterinary Medicine in Timisoara, Romania (Universitatea de Stiinte Agricole si Medicina Veterinara a Banatului din Timisoara).

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The panel recognises the activities in applied research and artistic activities carried out in the College. These contribute to the quality of the studies by exposing the students to real-world activities and understanding of the requirements and expectation from the society. There are also continuous activities to increase the internationalisation of the research activities.

3.2.2. Evaluation of the link between the content of studies and the latest developments in science, art and technology;

(1) Factual situation

As stated in the SER the content of the SP is constantly updated in line with the latest scientific and technological achievements. Examples include the inclusion of innovative ornamental plant growing technologies in Ornamental Plant Growing Technologies and Engineering, review of soil humus restoration research for the module Soil Science and Landscape Management and Environment subject also now include landscape monitoring, scientific substantiation of biodiversity conservation.

Student's research competencies are developed by studying the Research Methodology subject. Research programmes are prepared as part of practical classes. The educational nursery sets up the conditions for the implementation of self-created research projects and carry out research such as the Study of Flavonoids in Black Elderberry (Sambucus nigra) Depending on Habitat, Application of Thyme (Thymus Serpyllum) in Green Spaces, Study of Growing Herbaceous Ornamental Plants in Mineral Substrate, Study of the Effect of the Biological Preparation ,,Baikal EMI" on the Growth of Sprouts and Seedlings.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The expert panel finds the content of the study programme partially aligned with the current development in technology and science with limited use of modern digital solutions, integrated design and virtual reality for design and visualisation. The commission appreciates the use of the AutoCAD software in the Final thesis and the introduction of SkechUp, Lumion and Relux computer programs. All these software are important and essential for any architectural program but not sufficient to cover the computational competences required by any modern Engineering degree. The panel also thinks that the inclusion of modern technologies in the study programme also requires innovative teaching methods. Instead, the information from the SER and from the site visit does not provide sufficient evidence of the used of innovative teaching methods.

3.2.3. Evaluation of conditions for students to get involved in scientific (applied science, art) activities consistent with their study cycle.

(1) Factual situation

Laboratory for applied research, where students shape the skills of researchers and conduct research are available as stated in the SER. A scientific conference is organised annually where students make presentations and submit articles. The Student Scientific Society operating in the Faculty unites students who actively conduct applied research and seek to improve knowledge and practical skills. Students participate in the European Waste Reduction Week; participate in the expeditions of the social club „Medumėlė" (preservation and cognition of rare species). Students also independently participate in volunteer programmes and internships in Lithuania and abroad (e.g. international group volunteering in Italy, intercultural sustainability and recycling factory FIERi).

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The expert panel finds the conditions for students to get involved in scientific activities adequate and in line with the expectation.

Strengths and weaknesses of this evaluation area:

(1) Strengths:

1. Involvement in the ERASMUS programme.
2. Substantial number of consulting and artistic activities.
3. Good number of support activities to engage with students in scientific/artistic activities.
4. Good use of visualisation software.

(2) Weaknesses:

1. Limited facilities and equipment for scientific research such as virtual labs, advanced software, sensors, ets.
2. Scientific outputs are limited by the number of teachers holding a PhD degree.

3.3. STUDENT ADMISSION AND SUPPORT

Student admission and support shall be evaluated according to the following indicators:

3.3.1. Evaluation of the suitability and publicity of student selection and admission criteria and process;

(1) Factual situation

The general admission is organised and coordinated by the Lithuanian Association of Higher Education Institutions. There is a minimum requirements decided by the Minister of Education, Science and Sports to consider the application to e first cycle studies at higher education institutions. The minimal competitive entrance score to state-funded and non-state-funded places was set to 1.6 in 2017, 2.0 in 2018, and 4.3 in 2019-2021. The admission procedure at VK complies with the General Admission Procedure.

The SER also provides the competitive score of the entrants to the SP in 2020. Mathematics has the highest score (coefficient 0.4), followed by Lithuanian language and literature (coefficient 0.2), Physics or Chemistry (coefficient 0.2), The College received more than 100 application per year (169 in 2020) but with very few offers made (15 in 2020). There is a levelling up of the entry score of students (i.e., the difference between the best and the worst entry score). The procedure for student selection and admission is public and available for instance on the VK website, on the Lamabpo.lt website and in magazines (Where to Study?, Rasos, Savaitė, Namai ir sodas) or meetings with students and social partners.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

As expressed by the students during the visit, the panel finds that the student selection and admission criteria and process are acceptable and fair. VK students find the entry requirement challenging, especially in Maths. It is not clear why such high coefficient is used for Mathematics considering the content of the SP that is more architectural and gardening oriented. This is a serious issue since there is a clear discrepancy between the students' aspiration and the entry requirement. In addition, the employers and social partners are also expecting experts in landscape design and gardening rather than engineers with strong mathematical skills. It is good to see more homogeneous class (i.e., similar entry level score) but this can only be achieved using different weighting factors about the subjects.

3.3.2. Evaluation of the procedure of recognition of foreign qualifications, partial studies and prior non-formal and informal learning and its application;

(1) Factual situation

*The r*ecognition of the learning outcomes of partial studies and practises acquired abroad complies with the regulations of VK (Description of the Procedure of Crediting Learning Outcomes). Credits are recognised without limitations in case of an agreed study programme. 5 students received the recognition of the studies in other Lithuanian higher education institutions in 2017-2018, 21 in 2018-2019 and 23 students in 2019-2020. 4 students received the recognition of competences acquired through formal education during the period 2017- 2020. In 2017-2020, 83 ECTS credit scope subjects (modules) have been credited according to Erasmus+ studies or practises. No cases of non-recognition of learning outcomes or nonrecognition of professional competences during the period of evaluation.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The panel finds that the procedures for the recognition of foreign qualifications, partial studies and prior non-formal and informal learning and its application are adequate. There is a positive increase in credited students since 2017.

3.3.3. Evaluation of conditions for ensuring academic mobility of students;

(1) Factual situation

Students have the opportunity to acquire part of the learning outcomes in a foreign institution according to a coordinated programme. This gives to the students the opportunity for a deeper understanding of others' cultures, and improves foreign language skills. Erasmus + programme is the main program that supports mobility. Students do not need to pay tuition fees during their mobility period.

The College has a relevant number of agreements with recognised international institutions as part of the Erasmus + programme including Anhalt University of Applied Sciences, The University of Greifswald, The Polytechnic University of Valencia, University of Genova, Università degli Studi di Milano, University of Pisa, Latvia University of Life Sciences and Technologies, Slovak University of Agriculture in Nitra, Mustafa Kemal University and others. 5 outgoing students were reported in the 2017–2018 academic year for Erasmus practice placement and only one in 2018/2019. In 2019/2020, 2 students were selected for the Erasmus practice placement, and 2 for studies. Due to the pandemic in 2020 only one student took up an Erasmus practice placement at DEULA-Nienburg, and one student took the opportunity for studies at Anhalt University of Applied Sciences.

No incoming Erasmus students over the last three years under consideration.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The panel finds that the College has a significant number of agreements with recognised institutions across Europe as part of the Erasmus+ program. This provides excellent opportunities for students. However only a very small number of students took that opportunity (12 outgoing students in total in the entire period and no incoming students).

3.3.4. Assessment of the suitability, adequacy and effectiveness of the academic, financial, social, psychological and personal support provided to the students of the field;

(1) Factual situation

Students at the College are represented by an independent Student Representation with representation in the VK Board (one student) in the Academic Council (seven students).
Career Centre provides advise and information for students to support them on practice and job search issues, career planning and on the development of students' entrepreneurial competences.

VK students also receive free advice from a psychologist. The Physical Education and Sports Centre promote and support, sports and wellbeing.

The College provide accommodation to students from outside of.

In 2017, a total of 487,200 Euro was given to the students of the Landscape Design study programme from the scholarship fund. Nominal scholarships are awarded to talented students, especially those who are distinguished in their studies, scientific and social activities (typically 1-2 scholarships per year). There is also a targeted scholarship to people with

disabilities (one scholarship awarded). The most advanced students are given the opportunity to occupy a state-funded place when it becomes open. On average, 1-2 state-funded places are filled by 1-2 students in the spring semester.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The panel recognises that VK provides representation and adequate support for students. There is a financial support for students provided in form of incentive, bonus and one-off social benefit. There are also scholarships for talent students and students with special needs. There is also a partial support for accommodation.

3.3.5 Evaluation of the sufficiency of study information and student counselling.

(1) Factual situation

Support to students is provided by the teaching staff during consultation hours, via email or in a virtual learning environment Moodle. Additional support is provided to those students that fail to engage or with learning difficulties or academic debts. The College provide an induction programme for first-year students which included a welcome week and following up events including collection of student feedback.

Students receive support from the library staff on the use of the electronic catalogue Aleph, databases, information search, and other issues. Students are also consulted on career planning issues by the VK Career Centre.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The panel finds evidence that academic support to students is provided and adequate. There is also a good support from library staff. The monitoring of students engagement and performance allows to provide targeted support.

Strengths and weaknesses of this evaluation area:

(1) Strengths:

1. Good academic, financial, social, psychological, and job support for students.
2. Good number of Erasmus+ agreements.
3. Good sufficiency of study information and student counselling.

(2) Weaknesses:

1. Mathematics is not a popular subject among student interested in this SP. Nevertheless the mathematics maturity exam (coefficient 0.4) is the most important subject in the completive score. The consequence is a large number of applications not being accepted to the SP.
2. There are very few students studying abroad and none as incoming students.

3.4. TEACHING AND LEARNING, STUDENT PERFORMANCE AND GRADUATE EMPLOYMENT

Studying, student performance and graduate employment shall be evaluated according to the following indicators:

3.4.1. Evaluation of the teaching and learning process that enables to take into account the needs of the students and enable them to achieve the intended learning outcomes;

(1) Factual situation

From 2020, the studies are also available on a full-time basis. Two forms of study organisation: are applied: contact work and students' self-study work. The study plan provides self-study work hours for each study subject. The teacher assigns tasks for the independent work and chooses methods to assess the assignment.

The main study methods are: interactive lecture, discussion, group work, practical work, situation analysis, information search, individual consultations, projects, etc. With the introduction of distance learning during pandemics, new interactive study methods were introduced: various video lecture products using virtual environments. The cumulative and criterion-based assessment is applied.

For the student's self-study tasks different assessment methods are applied: assessment of personal progress during the semester, active participation in practical classes and demonstrating the performed independent work tasks, presentation, etc.
Graduates can continue second cycle studies in universities. After one year of practical work experience in this field (or after bridging studies), graduates can apply for a Master's degree in related fields at Vilnius University or other universities.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The panel finds that mainly classical teaching methods are used. This includes interactive lecture, discussion, group work, practical work, situation analysis, information search, individual consultations and projects. Though with the introduction of distance learning due to lock down, new interactive study methods were introduced, some courses are being taught by applying traditional teaching methods.

The performance assessment based on cumulative score encourages students to be active in the study process. The organisation of student's individual work is well-described as acknowledged by the students as well as the further opportunities for graduates to pursue studies.

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

(1) Factual situation

There buildings like Faculty building (at 39A Studentų Street and 2 Dvaro Street) adapted for students with special needs. Socially vulnerable groups (orphans, the disabled, students from large families and low-income families) may be subject to a deferral of tuition fees or payment in instalments, as well as 50-25 per cent reduced dormitory tax.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

There are some conditions established to ensure access to study for socially vulnerable groups and students with special needs; however during the period under evaluation, there were no students with special needs or socially vulnerable students among those enrolled in the SPs.

3.4.3. Evaluation of the systematic nature of the monitoring of student study progress and feedback to students to promote self-assessment and subsequent planning of study progress;

(1) Factual situation

Monitoring of student study progress is carried out in several stages. First, the student is personally responsible for monitoring the progress of his studies through the Academic Information System (AIS). Also, the teachers should inform the Head of the Study Department on a monthly basis about non engaging students (e.g. missing interim and final examination). The Head of the Study Department contacts the student (by e-mail or telephone) to identify the reasons for their absence, to motivate the student to cope with his work on time, and to improve student progress. At the end of the semester, the Study Department performs an analysis of students' progress, informs students about their study achievements for the purpose of preventing dropouts and makes a timetable for examinations related to academic debts. Also, at the end of the semester, the teacher gets acquainted with the results of the teaching quality assessment survey, which is periodically conducted by the Faculty. If necessary, appropriate changes are implemented. Finally, a list of students with academic debts is compiled, and the subjects/modules where students have the highest number of academic debts are identified. The summarised results are examined by the Faculty Council and used to improve the study process and to plan student assistance.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

VK has a well-established system for monitoring student study progress which is regulated by the Study Procedure and Description of the Procedure for Assessment of Learning Outcomes. Communication with underachieving students is also well-developed helping to find out the reasons for their underachievement and additional consultations are provided for such students. The results of the monitoring are efficiently applied by teachers to plan measures to improve the subject and increase student progress. There is an efficient system in place for ensuring feedback to students and to promote self-assessment as after completing each individual task.

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

(1) Factual situation

Every year a survey about the Study Programme is carried out. In this survey graduates are asked to evaluate the applicability of the knowledge and skills acquired during their studies in the labour market, as well as provide feedback to the Faculty on how the study programme

and the quality of studies could be improved. Surveys are conducted through a direct survey service provided by email. The results of the surveys are published on the Faculty webpage. The career monitoring of graduates is also carried out every year on the basis of the data of the Employment Service under the Ministry of Social Security and Labour of the Republic of Lithuania, Career Management Information System (KVIS, Sodra). In 2017, 2018 and 2019, graduate employment rates before the pandemic were high enough (90-100%). In 2020, it dropped to 53.9%.

The VK Career Centre and faculties organise career management skills training seminars, meetings with employers, lectures, practical professional activities, tours to companies to familiarise with real working conditions. The Career Centre provides individual career consultations regarding a CV, job or practice place search, self-introduction during the job interview, etc. Students have access to the Career Management Information System, allowing students and graduates to use career planning tools, to perform tests to explore Interests, Talents, Career Values, Career Management Situations and Career Management Competences, monitor personal changes, create a personal career plan, provide information about themselves to the potential employer, learn meaningful practical advice, take advantage of job offers and practice placement opportunities.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The panel finds the support provided to students and graduates adequate and useful for developing their career and supporting them to find jobs.
The employment rate of graduates was excellent before the pandemic in 2020.Summarising the data of the survey of 2017–2020, it appears that the study Programme was evaluated as good by the graduates. Preparation for future professional activities according to the acquired qualifications they were also evaluated as good. Social partners have positively evaluated the readiness of Landscape Design students for professional activities.

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

(1) Factual situation

There is the main document regulating academic integrity in VK, i. e. the Code of Academic Ethics which is supervised by the Committee of Academic Ethics. Every student gets acquainted with and signs the Declaration of Academic Honesty, in which the student declares on his honour to comply with the provisions of the VK Code of Academic Ethics.

Provisions of tolerance and non-discrimination in VK are also established in the Study Procedure. According to this procedure, the students have the right to freely express their thoughts and views; to receive social and material support in accordance with the established procedure; to complete the assignments in alternative ways etc.

Annual student surveys are conducted to assess the effectiveness of policies to ensure academic integrity, tolerance, and non-discrimination.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The panel finds that all the required procedures are implemented to ensure the academic integrity, tolerance and non-discrimination. The teachers and students are aware about these

procedures. So far, there have been no cases of academic dishonesty among Landscape Design students over the past three years.

3.4.6. Evaluation of the effectiveness of the application of procedures for the submission and examination of appeals and complaints regarding the study process within the field studies.

(1) Factual situation

The main document that provides the procedure for submission and examination of appeals is the Regulations on Appeals of VK. According to this document, a student may submit an appeal regarding the assessment of the interim and final examination of the subject, the assessment procedure, the assessment procedure of the final work, crediting of learning outcomes, assessment and recognition of learning outcomes acquired in non-formal adult education institutions.
The appeal must be reasoned and submitted in writing within a specified time. Depending on the nature of the appeal, it is submitted to the Dean of the Faculty or the Rector of VK. Upon receipt of the appeal, a 5-member Board of Appeal is formed to examine it. The decision of the Board is final and not subject to appeal.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The procedures implemented are adequate to support the effectiveness of the application of procedures for the submission and examination of appeals and complaints. There have been no appeals or complaints about the study process in the Landscape Design study programme over the past three years.

Strengths and weaknesses of this evaluation area:

(1) Strengths:

1. Career development and planning, and job search is supported by the Career Centre and by the Career Management Information System established by VK.
2. Graduates and employers are very satisfied with the professional preparation and acquired competences of graduates.

(2) Weaknesses:

1. In some courses traditional teaching methods are dominating. Novel teaching approach should be encouraged by providing opportunities for teachers to share know-how and good practises.

3.5. TEACHING STAFF

Study field teaching staff shall be evaluated in accordance with the following indicators:

3.5.1. Evaluation of the adequacy of the number, qualification and competence (scientific, didactic, professional) of teaching staff within a field study programme(s) at the HEI in order to achieve the learning outcomes;

(1) Factual situation

The study programme is implemented by 13 teachers, 5 of whom have a doctoral degree and all have the position of Associate Professor. Six of the eight lecturers have a Master's degree, two have an education that corresponds to a Master's degree. Two of the teachers involved in teaching have an education in architecture, one in geomatics and geodesy, the others in biology, agronomy, in natural sciences and social sciences. There are no teachers with background in Civil Engineering or any other relevant engineering fields. The vast majority of teachers have 6 years or more of practical work experience. The requirements on the General Requirements for Study Implementation („*at least 10 % of the volume of higher education college study subjects must be taught by scientists or acknowledged artists (art subjects). More than a half of higher education college study field lecturers must have at least 3 years of practical work experience in the subject.*") are met.

The ratio between the number of teachers for the 1st cycle is 1:7. Teachers are considerably more focused on teaching than on science. At the meeting with the SP staff, we received proof that it is considered more important to emphasise practical skills and experience, including inviting teachers-practitioners to implement the curriculum.

The staff wants to train a professional bachelor in landscape design, but it has a horticultural sound that may reflect the history of the curriculum and the interest of students and graduates. The academic activities of lecturers are evaluated every year which is meant to ensure the systematic improvement of qualification.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The panel finds that the provided indicators of the program staff number, qualification, and competence are at least in accordance with Lithuanian standards. Lecturers of the SP are rather active in their professional field and have good practical qualifications in accordance with the subjects taught, particularly those who work part-time.

None of the teachers has a diploma in civil engineering, but today the features of landscaping enhance the built environment. The scientific visibility of staff is low and engineering competences limited.

3.5.2. Evaluation of conditions for ensuring teaching staffs' academic mobility (not applicable to studies carried out by HEIs operating under the conditions of exile);

(1) Factual situation

38% of lecturers participated in outgoing mobility in 2018-2019, in 2017-2018 it was less, and in 2019-2020 outgoing mobility ceased due to the COVID-19 situation. Those who have the closest contact with subject teaching, i.e. thesis supervisors, are most active in mobility. The extent of incoming mobility is similar to that of outgoing mobility, but countries are different (Ukraine and Romania are dominant for incoming mobility). Scientific mobility is not highlighted in the SER, so it is recommended to increase it.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

According to the report, mobility is mainly linked to teaching visits. Given the number of participants, it cannot be much more active. If research is to evolve, mobility opportunities should be added.

3.5.3. Evaluation of the conditions to improve the competences of the teaching staff;

(1) Factual situation

In 2018, the university initiated an action plan for competence development. According to this plan, the university has centrally organised didactics, distance learning and competence development events for the teaching staff. In SER, the development of competence is expressed in the total number of hours spent in internships and seminars, which is not as revealing as the topics of the trainings (e.g. Innovative teaching methods, Problem-based learning, Teamwork empowerment, etc.) and the number of participants in each training.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The panel finds evidence of a support system provided to improve staff mobility and a competency development plan. The indicators used are very generic and do not fully disclose the content.

Strengths and weaknesses of this evaluation area:

(1) Strengths:

1. Teacher-practitioners have an important role to play in imparting both theoretical and practical skills to students

(2) Weaknesses:

1. There are no employees with a real background in civil engineering in the curriculum of Landscape Design; however the SP is listed as a professional bachelor's study in engineering. Landscape design and the built environment are not inseparable today.
2. Teaching staff are not very active in research and therefore not exposed to the latest developments in the field.

3.6. LEARNING FACILITIES AND RESOURCES

Study field learning facilities and resources should be evaluated according to the following criteria:

3.6.1. Evaluation of the suitability and adequacy of the physical, informational and financial resources of the field studies to ensure an effective learning process;

(1) Factual situation

General subjects of the SP are conducted in the central building of the Faculty of Agrotechnology, most of the theoretical and practical classes take place at so called Field Laboratory and at educational plant nursery.

The soil chemistry laboratory has a modern look with a number of necessary equipment and working places. An agreement has been signed with the Vilnius College of Technology and Design to teach geodesy. Students will gain practical experience in landscaping technologies, practising ornamental plants, caring for trees and shrubs, as well as irrigating and draining, building walls and paved garden paths. The VikoFlora practice centre was established in 2017 for practical activities. In general, the focus seems to be on gardening, ornamental plants and the care of trees and shrubs, and secondly, there is good practical experience in surveying, i.e.

these areas are well equipped with tools and instruments. Available software for engineering-architectural graphics includes AutoCAD 2020, Sketch up 2020, Adobe Photoshop, Relux, Lumion. There are recreation areas adjusted for project activities and group work at the College.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The panel finds the facilities, equipment and tools for practical training, information resources available for the learning process adequate. The facilities are suitable for practical gardening and measurement activities. Architectural software is used in the bachelor's thesis.

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

(1) Factual situation

The lecturers of the Department of Landscape Management and Agrotechnology submit proposals for the acquisition of the necessary equipment every year, the department prioritises the list. The ERASMUS+ project „Innovative Rain Gardens“ „Methodologies in Training of Environmental Design Specialists” was submitted as a potential source for infrastructure modernization.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The panel has not found a clear and visible funding for the purchase of new equipment, maintenance of existing equipment and other costs.

Strengths and weaknesses of this evaluation area:

(1) Strengths:

1. Good opportunities for practical gardening and measurements (i.e. geometrical measurements, stake out).

(2) Weaknesses:

1. Engineering part of the SP is not as visible as gardening which may be related to the main expectations of students and graduates.

3.7. STUDY QUALITY MANAGEMENT AND PUBLIC INFORMATION

Study quality management and publicity shall be evaluated according to the following indicators:

3.7.1. Evaluation of the effectiveness of the internal quality assurance system of the studies;

(1) Factual situation

The SER reports that the internal quality assurance system of the studies has been developed in accordance with the Law on Science and Studies of the Republic of Lithuania, the European Higher Education Area Quality Assurance Regulations and Guidelines, the European Higher Education Quality Assurance Register, the Bologna Process and other documents supporting European Union’s higher education. The internal quality assurance system of the studies is

based on orders of the Minister of Education, Science and Sports of the Republic of Lithuania, the orders and regulations of VK, and the regulations of the Lithuanian Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education (SKVC).

The internal quality management system of the studies involves all stakeholders: the administrative and academic staff of the institution, students, graduates, employers, professional associations and trade unions, representatives of public institutions, etc. In accordance with the long- term strategic planning document approved in 2012, the *Integrated Development Strategy of VK until 2020* (https://www.viko.lt/media/uploads/sites/3/2014/07/Strategija-iki-2020.pdf), a permanent monitoring and publicity system has been created. The internal quality assurance mechanism of the studies is based on a regularly updated quality management model. As the provisions of normative documents change, internal documents are constantly updated. On 18 November 2020, a new document of the internal quality assurance of VK study fields was adopted, and approved by the Resolution No ATN-7 of the Academic Council.

VK has a document management system called Kontora, which stores orders, legal acts and other documents of the Rector of VK and the Deans. All study-related information: subject / module descriptions, student achievement assessments, etc., is provided in the Academic Information System (AIS).

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The SER demonstrates that there is a good system for quality control and evaluation of the study program.

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

(1) Factual situation

The SER reports that the students are involved in most of the quality management processes. The students participate in regular surveys, meet with the Programme coordinator at least twice a semester, and at least once with the Faculty administration to discuss issues concerning the quality of studies and receive feedback. Students are responsible for the quality of learning and academic achievement. Students' participation in the Programme management is broadly in line with their commitment to "study" and "participate in practical activities".

The SER reports that all surveys are followed up by sharing the results with the respondents and updates on implemented actions. The quality assurance surveys are undertaken on a yearly cycle. The following areas of activity are assessed on an annual basis: management, studies and achievements, human resources, applied research, material and financial resources, international mobility, participation in national and international projects, professional development and organisational activities. Annual plans are drawn up having regard to strengths, weaknesses and planned improvement measures. The implementation of the plan is monitored each year. The Study Programme Committee, which is responsible for the quality assurance of the Programme, consists of seven persons. The responsibilities of the members of the Committee are defined in the Study Procedure at VK and the Regulations of the Study Programme Committee. Representatives of the social partners support the introduction of innovations that meet the needs of employers, into the Programme (e.g.

company representatives are invited to teach certain topics of the subject), and identification of the need for specialists. Members – teachers supervise the academic content of the subjects, compliance of the subject learning outcomes with assessment criteria, applied research activities, mobility of students and teachers, relations with social partners.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The panel of experts finds evidence that the program has a good system for information flow and surveys collecting feedback from students and stakeholders.

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

(1) Factual situation

The SER reports states that information about the study program is available on the website of the Ministry of Education and Sports of the Republic of Lithuania and the VK contain information about the Landscape Design Programme implemented in the field of environmental engineering (https://www.viko.lt/studijos/studiju-programos/krastovaizdzio-dizainas/). The information includes learning outcomes of the Programme, study subjects and their arrangement in semesters, and the acquired qualification degree are indicated. Information on how the competitive score is formed, and for the convenience of entrants, a competitive score calculator is provided. In addition, the program produced a publication which is distributed to gymnasium students during the career events, in addition to international and other national events (Poland, Belarus, UK, and China).

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The panel finds evidence that the program has a good system for information about the study program nationally and internationally. The program should investigate where they get the most students from, and why to further tailor their marketing potential to continue to secure student recruitment to the program.

3.7.4. Evaluation of the opinion of the field students (collected in the ways and by the means chosen by the SKVC or the HEI) about the quality of the studies at the HEI.

(1) Factual situation

The SER reported that the internal quality assurance system of the studies is based on measuring the opinion of students, teachers, graduates, employers and other participants in the study process. The obtained data are used to improve the quality of the organisation of the study process, study programmes, academic staff, infrastructure and administration of the VK activities. The survey "*Opinion of the graduates of the Landscape Design Programme on the programme, acquired competencies and establishment in the labour market*" presented in Annex 13 in the SER, revealed that the quality of studies of the Programme students' (ZD17 and ZDI16 groups) is assessed as good. The professional training according to the acquired qualification was assessed as good too. The mentioned shortcomings due to insufficient quality of the equipment (outdated computers and poor condition of drafting desks) are no longer relevant, because 8 new computers have been purchased and drafting desks have been repaired. VK clarify that when specific groups are not sufficient large, the whole general

population of students is used for the survey. The participation to the survey is voluntarily and there are also other forms of feedback although those have not been specified.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The panel finds that the SER reported opinion of students matches the impression of the study program as a very good and solid program. As a minor weakness it can be mentioned that the SER does not specify how the students are invited to give feedback, and in the case of interviews how do they select the students who are asked/given the opportunity to participate.

Strengths and weaknesses of this evaluation area:

(1) Strengths:

1. Clear and coherent plan for communication and information.
2. Broad representation in stakeholders and students in the feedback system.

(2) Weaknesses:

1. The selection process of students participating in the surveys is not specified.

IV. EXAMPLES OF EXCELLENCE

Core definition: Excellence means exhibiting exceptional characteristics that are, implicitly, not achievable by all.
If, according to the expert panel, there are no such exceptional characteristics demonstrated by the HEI in this particular study field, this section should be skipped / left empty.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS*

Evaluation Area	Recommendations for the Evaluation Area (study cycle)
Intended and achieved learning outcomes and curriculum	The study programme should focus more on architecture and design and less on Engineering. Students and employers want more landscape design, horticultural and gardening. There is not much interest in the engineering part of the study programme and also not much competence available in civil engineering. The placement of the study program as part of environmental engineering appears misplaced, and it appears to fit better within a landscape architecture and maybe urban green infrastructure program.
Links between science (art) and studies	The research output from the teacher needs to increase. This can only occur if the number of teachers with PhD qualification increases.
Student admission and support	Removing engineering from the programmes allows to relax the entry requirements for Maths. This in turn may contribute to increase in the number of enrolled students.
Teaching and learning, student performance and graduate employment	Novel teaching approach should be encouraged by providing opportunities for teachers to share know-how and good practises in teaching.
Teaching staff	A choice should be made between strengthening the curriculum with engineering-educated staff or focusing on horticulture, which is also the desire and understanding of students and graduates of the curriculum.
Learning facilities and resources	As landscape design is part of the built environment (e.g. keywords SuDS, heat islands), it is necessary to strengthen the teaching of hydraulics and environmental physics, accordingly to acquire suitable study stands.
Study quality management and public information	There is a need to specify the selection process of students participating in the surveys, and broaden the participation for feedback in general. Basing feedback solely on surveys and questionnaires does not ensure broad participation.

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

VI. SUMMARY

Main positive and negative quality aspects of each evaluation area of the study field Environmental engineering at Vilniaus Kolegija:

Main positive quality aspect of the study field.

- The study programme is unique and specialised and it seems to be very attractive for part-time students thanks to the flexibility offered by the programme. The study programme covers the needs of the society as highlighted by the social partners and employers.
- The number of students (except for 2020) seems to be good and sustainable.
- Students are happy about the SP. They really appreciate the competence, passion and appreciability of the teaching staff. Students also appreciate the involvement in research activities (for instance attending conferences).
- Good engagement with social partners and employers and good internationalisation with invited lectures.

Room for improvement.

- The current status of the facilities and availability of the software seems to be not adequate.
- The study programme is delivered using traditional teaching methods. This is appreciated by some students and certainly keeps the teaching staff in their comfort zone. However, we believe that innovative teaching approaches should be also considered.
- There are some concerns with the fitting of the SP to an engineering programme. The SP seems closer to agriculture and landscape architecture where there is no need for strong mathematical requirements. Students also do not like maths and they would like to have more design and practical classes and less maths. This is also reinforced by comments of the alumni that studied gardening and landscape design and it seems is what they are expecting from the study programme.

Expert panel leader

Prof. dr. Edoardo Patelli