



FEEDBACK ON PROGRESS AFTER INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW



LITHUANIA
BUSINESS
COLLEGE

2024

The present report is one of the steps in the follow up, which is an integral part of an external review of higher education institutions (HEI) in Lithuania. The follow up starts after the institutional accreditation decision comes into force and is aimed at implementing recommendations received during the external review. It consists of several steps: an action plan, a follow up report, and external feedback on progress.

*Within six months (in case of a positive external evaluation decision) or three months (in case of a negative external evaluation decision), a higher education institution prepares **an action plan** aimed at enhancement of its activities based on the findings and recommendations of the review.*

*The **action plan** represents the strategic actions and decisions taken by the institution to address the recommendations and suggestions for improvement provided in the review report. **A follow up report** is prepared to reflect the progress achieved by the higher education institution in implementing the action plan.*

*This **feedback on progress report** is an outcome of a peer discussion process between the higher education institution and external peers to reflect on the enhancement efforts and achievements of the higher education institution and adjust its actions, if necessary. The process has been coordinated by SKVC (the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education, Lithuania).*

*The **feedback on the progress report** aims to answer the following questions:*

- *Are outcomes of the review appropriately addressed by the provisioned actions?*
- *Do the actions have clear links with specific outputs aimed at enhancement?*
- *Is there measurable and sufficient progress already achieved?*
- *Are there any suggestions in terms of actions already taken and planned?*
- *Are there any commendations in terms of actions already taken and planned?*
- *Are there any potential challenges in implementing the recommendations?*

Timeline of the Institutional Review

The institutional review visit took place on: 27-29 April 2021

The decision on accreditation came into force on: 2 September 2021 (7 years accreditation granted)

Timeline of the Follow Up

The action plan has been approved on: 4 January, 2022

The progress report has been approved on: 25 January, 2024

The external progress visit took place on: 19 April 2024

The feedback on the progress report has been prepared on 3rd of May by:

- **Dr. Krista Tuulik**, Head of Training and Development at AS Tallink, Member of the Council.
- **Assoc. Prof. Dr. Vitor Braga**, Member of the Scientific Committee of the Politecnico do Porto, Head of the Department of Electronics and Telecommunications, Deputy Director of the Centre for Innovation and Research in Business and Information Systems

Introduction

In 2021 Lithuania Business College (further referred as LTVK) was a subject for Institutional review, that resulted with Institutional Review Report, where the expert panel made in total 23 recommendations (10 in the field of management, 6 in the field of quality assurance, 4 in the field of studies and research and 3 in the field of impact on regional and national development) for further development.

LTVK has created and submitted two following documents based on expert panel recommendations outlined in Institutional review report:

1. Action plan for improving the activities of Lithuanian Business College in 2022-2025 (further referred as AP) and carries the date 4th of January 2022.
2. Progress report of the implementation of the external evaluation recommendations (further referred as PR) and that carries the date 25th of January 2024.

The content of the two documents submitted is largely similar indicating the actions envisaged by the higher education institution to address the recommendation of expert panel, setting the responsible units or persons who are responsible for the respective recommendation, actions/measures envisaged by the institution and measures to implement the recommendations. In AP, created in 2022, the LTVK sets targeted period for implementation of the recommendations and in PR, created in 2024, describes the results reflecting the effectiveness of the actions performed.

Their reports (both i.e., AP and PR) LTVK addressed all the recommendation made by the external evaluation panel and during the progress visit video meeting on 19-th of April 2022, LTVK representatives confirmed that all comments were necessary for the further development of the institution.

Aligned with the external evaluation panel recommendations, the LTKV provided a set of indicators, with target values, that allows to monitor the evolution and development of the institution.

1. Evaluation Area: Management

In the evaluation area management/governance the majority (in total 10) of recommendations for enhancement was made by the expert panel.

Suggestion to implement a structured tracking tool to enable to monitor progress quarterly against the 2020-2025 Strategic Plan, to set key performance indicators in all relevant areas (teaching, research, finance, internationalisation), targets and goals in order to evaluate the development. Need for greater transparency in strategic decision making and institutional level data collection and quality was suggested to ensure the stakeholder needs. More focus on student performance, guest lectures involvement, to incentivise targeted research and proactivity in European funded projects were suggested.

Recommendations related to Vilnius campus, IT and library fundings were based on reports presented also implemented and confirmed during oral interviews on 19-th of April.

In response to each recommendation, LTVK has planned an activity - adapted a tool designed for measuring the compliance of performance indicators (performance indicator monitoring tool program, plan for measures for reducing student decline); modified or made suggestions for adjusting documents (job descriptions, statute); or an order is put in place/resolution made (development of Vilnius branch); review or analyses carried out, assessment rules set or collective decision making rules put in place.

Based on the information of PR results section all the action performed have produced outcome. The functions are better defined, performance indicators systemized; performance indicators meet the expectations; scientific results achieved or even exceeded; new members of academic staff who meet the expected criteria and carry out expected actions are recruited; applications for international alliances are submitted, accepted, and implemented; budget for IT and library are allocated and access to databases is guaranteed.

Based on above mentioned recommendations, actions derived from recommendations and results presented by LTVK it can be concluded that LTVK has taken all comments very seriously and planned activities to ensure the realization of the proposals made by the evaluation committee. Sufficient progress is achieved *if* outcomes of the review are appropriately addressed, and actions taken.

In verbal conversations, it was confirmed that all comments have been considered relevant and contribute to the college's development. In response to the question of whether LTVK agrees with all comments made by the panel, there was only one - quarterly monitoring - which initially seemed an unduly frequent monitoring step, but it has now been understood that such frequency has also contributed to development.

The question may remain whether changing documents (such as updating job descriptions) ensures transparency or systematization in real life? It is not possible to assess this based on a written report and a brief online interview, therefore, this aspect can be best evaluated by the next institutional accreditation evaluation committee.

2. Evaluation Area: Quality Assurance

In the evaluation area quality assurance 6 recommendations for enhancement was made by the expert panel: concerning English language requirements; responsibility for the accuracy of marketing materials; academic integrity; proposal to increase transparency roles and responsibilities supporting the quality, welfare and academic success of students including the students appeals and complaints and once again a proposal for the implementation of structured tracking tool to monitor quarterly progress.

Considering the recommendations, the study programmes are accompanied with language requirements and admission rules are specified. The accuracy of marketing materials in in the responsibility area of Director of Studies and Quality via update of job description.

Supporting the student welfare and progress of students is divided between several positions indicated in PR. As this progress evaluation/visit does not contain the review of additional requested material, the assessment remains superficial, and we have to admit that the recommendation to support student welfare and progress is taken into account.

In this area improvements have been made. Quality assurance mechanisms have been bolstered by detailed monitoring of the activities carried out both educational and administrative standards. This aligns with the 2023 action plan's focus on increasing the transparency and distinction of roles, enhancing both student welfare and academic success. This also relates to an adjustment in the job descriptions, increasing transparency for the functions and responsibilities.

3. Evaluation Area: Studies and Research (Artistic Activity)

In subsection studies and research 2021 expert panel made six recommendations for development. Targeted research and internationalisation strategy and action plan with annual KPI-s was suggested, to establish clear explicit research-based teaching plan, greater transparency, and distinguished role model for prior and non-formal reading.

Detailed activities for monitoring of research results, ensuring alignment with international standards and promoting growth in research output and international collaboration has been implemented. This meets the 2021 recommendations for a targeted research and internationalisation strategy with measurable KPIs.

According to PR there is a set of actions for outsourced research that is implemented reflecting an integrated approach to enhancing the research capacity and capabilities of LTVK. Based on PR the results are not only achieved, but in some cases exceeded. Based on the above, it can be argued that there is a link with 2021 panel recommendations, provisioned actions by LTVK and measurable progress is demonstrated.

Recognition of international qualifications and prior learning with necessary formal documentation is established according to expert panels recommendations.

4. Evaluation Area: Impact on Regional and National Development

Structured monitoring of the college's impact on the region through cooperation and agreements for consultations, seminars, refresher courses together with outsourced applied research are put in place according to PR report. All these community engagement initiatives directly respond to the 2021 recommendations for evaluating regional and national impact.

The action plan's focus on establishing KPIs to measure this impact ensures that the college remains aligned with regional development goals and contributes effectively to national priorities.

A particular attention on the impact of the development of the Vilnius branch through development strategy of Vilnius branch has been paid to ensure a regional role in development, which was also part of the 2021 proposals.

Last comment by 2021 expert panel suggested more evidence of lifelong learning impact monitoring on regional and national level. Considering the before mentioned recommendations, LTVK has created a procedure where actions and responsibilities are defined.

General Commentary and Reflections

Overall, the reports provided by the college demonstrate efforts to meet the external evaluation panel recommendations. During the meeting, evidence was provided regarding the monitoring process and the new governance model implemented after the previous evaluation.

The evolution made during this period indicates the possibility of the development of LTVK, given that they have considered the recommendations made by the external evaluation panel. Additionally, it was clear that the college has been making efforts towards incorporating in their governance model the results of external evaluation processes, as well as it was clear, that the college accepted and valued the recommendations made.

LTVK is striving for excellence and strategic growth and underscores the importance of a dynamic and responsive governance structure in achieving long-term success in the competitive field of higher education.

It is important that LTVK is internally convinced that the entire process that it has gone through is necessary for the development and sustainability of the higher education institution, to ensure the competitiveness of the country and the region.

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