



STUDIJŲ KOKYBĖS VERTINIMO CENTRAS

Alytaus kolegijos

***ELEKTRONINĖS LEIDYBOS TECHNOLOGIJŲ
PROGRAMOS (653E14002)
VERTINIMO IŠVADOS***

**EVALUATION REPORT
OF TECHNOLOGIES OF ELECTRONIC PUBLISHING
(653E14002)
STUDY PROGRAMME
at Alytus College**

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DUOMENYS APIE ĮVERTINTĄ PROGRAMĄ

Studijų programos pavadinimas	Elektroninės leidybos technologijos
Valstybinis kodas	653E14002
Studijų sritis	Technologijos mokslai
Studijų kryptis	Informatikos inžinerija
Studijų programos rūšis	Koleginės studijos
Studijų pakopa	Pirmoji
Studijų forma (trukmė metais)	Nuolatinė (3), iššęstinė (4)
Studijų programos apimtis kreditais	180
Suteikiamas laipsnis ir (ar) profesinė kvalifikacija	Informacinių technologijų profesinis balauras, inžinierius
Studijų programos įregistravimo data	2007-04-25

INFORMATION ON ASSESSED STUDY PROGRAMME

Name of the study programme	Technologies of Electronic Publishing
State code	653E14003
Study area	Technological Sciences
Study field	Informatics Engineering
Kind of the study programme	Higher education college studies
Level of studies	First
Study mode (length in years)	Full-time (3), part-time (4)
Scope of the study programme in credits	180
Degree and (or) professional qualifications awarded	Professional Bachelor of Information Technologies Engineer
Date of registration of the study programme	25/04/2007

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The Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education

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V. GENERAL ASSESSMENT	Klaida! Žymelė neapibrėžta.

I. INTRODUCTION

The Lithuanian Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education has invited four experts and one representative of students (hereinafter called Expert Team) from Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, to review and assess the *Technologies of Electronic Publishing* professional bachelor non-university study programme (653E14002) at the Alytus College (further AC) The programme is organized by the Faculty of Information and Communication Technologies (hereinafter called Faculty). Institutional structure of AC enables to involve required teachers from all the faculties and departments of AC.

First, the Expert Team met the administrative staff represented by Director of the College Danute Remeikiene, Deputy Director for Strategic Development and Infrastructure Nerijus Cesiulis, Chief Accountant Dale Griškonienė, Head of Career and Public Relations Edita Klimavičiūtė, Head of Distance Learning Centre Dr. Rūta Petrauskiene, Head of Information and Self-study Centre Kristina Plitnikaite, Head of International Office Rozalija Radlinskaite. Overview of the College and its strategy were presented in very impressive way.

At the meeting with staff responsible for preparation of self-assessment (11 persons) the Expert Team was given good, clear and exhaustive answers to the questions concerning less uncovered in the self-assessment report issues.

After that, a meeting with 19 members of teaching staff took place.

The Expert Team conducted also interviews with some students. The group consisted of 9 students among them 2nd, 3rd and 4th (part time students) undergraduates, no 1st-year undergraduate student. The Expert Team was familiarized with students' attitude towards the programme; the students actively expressed highly positive opinions about the study programme. The Expert Team had a possibility to observe various support services (class rooms, computer services, library, self-study centre, electronic publishing centre, sport hall, student parliament room) as well as to familiarize with students' course and final works.

Finally the Expert Team met 16 graduates and 18 social partners. They expressed a very positive attitude about the study program.

At the conclusion of the visit, the Expert Team conducted a meeting with staff of the Faculty and highlighted some strengths and weaknesses of the program under review.

The findings of the Expert Team are reflected in the following. The self-assessment report submitted by Faculty, the observations made at the time of the visit, and the supplementary material received during the visit form the basis of these assessments.

II. PROGRAMME ANALYSIS

1. Programme aims and learning outcomes

The programme aims and learning outcomes (LO) are well defined, clear, and publicly accessible in the section “Studijų programos“ of the College’s website. The website has rich content, smart design. However, there is no information about the program’s aims and learning outcomes in English version of College website.

The programme aims and learning outcomes, generally, are based on professional requirements, public needs and the needs of the labour market. However, program’s LO are not based on any normative or recommending document. Instead, they were developed by Alytus College and substantiated by regional poll of employers. The answers in affirmative were given by 50-62%, not very sound result. However, taking into consideration exceptionally high level of collaboration with social partners (local government and employers) such approach seems reasonable.

There is certain inconsistency between LO of subjects (study courses) and LO of the programme - LO in course description are not directly linked with LO of the programme. E.g., it is claimed (Self-assessment, 3 Table) that Mathematics contributes to the programme LO 3, 7, and 8. However, only one of course LO is clearly related to the programmes LO.

Nevertheless, the programme aims and learning outcomes are consistent with the type and level of studies and the level of qualifications offered.

The name of the programme, its learning outcomes, content and the qualifications offered are compatible with each other.

2. Curriculum design

To the best of knowledge of the Experts Team, the curriculum design meets legal requirements set by Lithuanian authorities.

Study subjects and/or modules are spread evenly, their themes generally are not repetitive. However, subjects and themes sequencing is not clearly denoted (e.g., would be reasonable to supplement course descriptions with list of themes/courses that are mandatory before given course).

The content of the subjects and/or modules generally is consistent with the type and level of the studies. However, some non-core subjects (e.g., Mathematics, Physics) do not contribute well to core subjects. E.g., it is highly questionable why computer networks administrator needs knowledge in molecular physics, atomic and nuclear physics, etc.

Some optional subjects are placed in the 1st semester. That is questionable because students generally have no enough knowledge to make reasonable choice.

The content and methods of the subjects/modules are appropriate for the achievement of the intended learning outcomes. Teaching/learning process is organized in the forms: team work, problem-based learning, electronic communication active participation and dialogs. AC uses a mixed learning form in order to make studies more attractive, flexible and efficient, make use of possibilities provided by information and communication technologies and reduce the time of traditional studies in the classroom. All courses of the study programme are placed into the *Moodle* environment, which makes it possible to study independently, communicate and collaborate in virtual environment with teachers and other students.

Students make applied research projects on orders of companies in their professional Bachelor's graduation theses. Student research skills are trained during preparation of statements, course projects, final theses, collecting material for their reports and participating in seminars and conferences. Students contribute to organization of annual Faculty's applied research conferences.

The scope of the programme is sufficient to ensure learning outcomes.

The content of the programme generally reflects state-of-the art in technologies, the latest achievements in science, art and technologies being an issue of higher level studies.

3. Staff

The study programme is provided by the staff formally meeting legal requirements. However, there are less than 10% holders of a scientific degree teaching computing core subjects. Good tendency - 2 of teachers, teaching informatics subjects, recently defended doctor thesis (one in informatics, one in education).

Weak knowledge of English of speciality subjects teachers and because of that only a small number of teachers is participating in Erasmus exchange programme and have lectures in foreign countries.

During the meeting, teachers communicate and exchange information regarding the contents of their subjects very well. Teachers, being responsible for their personal and professional competencies and motivated by the programme coordinator, participate in internships,

training courses and seminars and get recent knowledge on application of the most progressive technologies and innovations as well as their application in company work. AC together with the teachers of the study programme holds annual international IT conference. They are active in cooperation with social partners and scientific and academic staff of higher education institutions implementing similar study programmes. There are good working conditions for teachers (rooms, workplaces for self-learning).

The qualifications of the teaching staff are adequate to ensure learning outcome. However, more teachers at doctoral level would be useful.

The number of the teaching staff (over 30) is adequate to ensure learning outcomes.

Teaching staff turnover is not significant (only 3 have teaching experience less than 6 years), so the staff is able to ensure an adequate provision of the programme.

The higher education institution creates conditions for the professional development of the teaching staff necessary for the provision of the programme. Staff members usually pass different courses every year. However, only one pursues doctoral studies.

The teaching staff of the programme is widely involved in research. Number of projects performed by the staff is impressive. However, the research mainly does not include core fields of computing, thus not being at doctoral level.

4. Facilities and learning resources

The premises for studies are adequate both in their size and quality. New facility has been reconstructed for the Faculty since previous accreditation. So, lecture and laboratory space was doubled.

The teaching and learning equipment (laboratory and computer equipment, consumables) are adequate both in size and quality. Computer laboratories very good, spacious.

List of software rather big in the self-assessment report, however, students specify only less than 25% as used in classes. Mainly mentioned design-related software. Students could not mention a single English textbook they were using. Though, library has rather modern programme-related textbooks in its possessions.

The higher education institution has adequate arrangements for students' practice.

Teaching materials (textbooks, books, periodical publications, databases), generally, are adequate and accessible.

5. Study process and student assessment

The admission requirements are well-founded.

The organisation of the study process ensures an adequate provision of the program and the achievement of the learning outcomes. The students emphasise possibility of Erasmus exchange (e.g., LAUREA University of Applied Science (Finland), Media House Ltd., (Ireland, practical training), friendly atmosphere, open teachers, active student parliament and entertainments, feeling like at home, open administrative staff, teachers contactable also by phone and email, accessible databases, impact on practicalities.

Some subjects (Mathematics, Foreign language – full/part time studies; Electronic publishing, Image processing and composition, Layout – part time studies) are studied through two semesters. Assessment form of 1st semester is credit and assessment form of 2nd semester is exam. In subjects' descriptions, is not mentioned what is the part of 1st semester assessment in the final mark of the subject.

Students are encouraged to participate in research, artistic and applied research activities.

Students have opportunities to participate in student mobility programmes (e.g., Erasmus). However, few participate (four in 2011-2012, nobody in 2010-2011). According to the Self-assessment Report, problem arises due to student lack of self-confidence, lack of foreign language skills, and fear of changes.

The higher education institution ensures an adequate level of academic and social support. However, there is no canteen in the new building.

The assessment system of students' performance is clear, adequate and publicly available. The assessment system is based on the accumulative grade which ensures regular assessment of students achievements throughout the semester. The final assessment consists of the sum of grades of intermediate tests and examination. Intermediate tests and knowledge checking (e.g. seminars, laboratory works, practical work, projects, individual work and course papers) and examination give assessment of students' knowledge, skills and abilities according to the objectives defined in the study course programmes. A teacher prepares examination assignments, defines the aim and tasks of the examination and supplies theoretical and practical problems. The size of the assessment of the part of knowledge, understanding and skills for the final assessment depends on the course of studies. It is proposed that the weighing coefficient of the examination is no less than 0,6, while in assessing the results of special studies and general subjects of fundamentals of engineering (including practical and laboratory works and, if defined, course projects) the coefficient of examination is 0,5 of the final assessment. Such structure of the accumulative grade allows comprehensive and objective assessment of all student results during the

course of studies. Professional activities of the majority of graduates meet the programme providers' expectations. Drop-out is rather low: significantly more than 50% receive diploma.

Asked for eventual improvements students also mentioned: lack of parking places near the Faculty, somewhere missing wireless internet, some computers out of use, accessibility of library also from home, too few chairs in corridors, too small sport hall, too late (few days before) announcing of next semester schedule (part-time students), lack of leisure room in the Faculty, willing to use acquired laser equipment also in study process, wishing more literature in Lithuanian.

6. Programme management

Responsibilities for decisions and monitoring of the implementation of the programme are clearly allocated. The Study Programme Committee, whose structure is confirmed by an order of the College's Director, is responsible for the exact implementation of the programme and continuous quality supervision and assurance of the programme. The Committee consists of no less than 6 people: the coordinator (teacher of the department of the study programme)–chairperson of the Committee, the faculty dean, a student representative, an employer or other representative of social partners whose professional activities is connected with the study programme and its goals. The Committee also invites other specialists for work of the Committee.

Twice a year the Committee analyses information on the study programme, its implementation and organization of the study process, supplies proposals to the Faculty Council on improvement of the study programme and its renovation. The Committee analyses information on the studies and shortcomings of the study programme which were discovered during exterior assessments; in the spring semester, it performs self-assessment of the study programme and presents it to the study quality assurance centre (at least once in three years); discusses and certifies the requirements of making final projects and assessment criteria (every year), analyses, accumulates, systematizes the information received from social stakeholders on the need or necessity to improve the study programme. The Committee continuously communicates and cooperates with members of College's community.

The outcomes of internal and external evaluations of the programme generally are used for the improvement of the programme.

The evaluation and improvement processes involve stakeholders. The Study Committee consults with associations of business structures, managers and employees of SMEs and large companies, e.g. Vilnius Chamber of Commerce, Confederation of Lithuanian Manufacturers,

Association *Žinių ekonomikos forumas*, Lithuanian Innovation centre, UAB ATEA, etc. Communication with employers, professional associations, research institutions helps constitute and improve study programmes of professional higher education, adjust them to the changes that take place in the environment.

The internal quality assurance measures are effective and efficient. In order to assure qualitative execution of the study programme. at the end of a calendar year, each teacher presents his/her reports and plans which are discussed at a Department meeting. Having considered the certified teachers plans, the Head of the Department prepares the Department Report and plans, discusses them at a Department meeting and presents to the Dean. The Dean supplies the Faculty Report and development programme to the Faculty Council which considers it and supplies its conclusion on certification. After the Faculty Council confirms the Dean's report, it is presented to the Department of Quality Assurance to be used for preparation of AC Annual Statement that includes the study quality assessment. AC Director presents the Annual Statement to AC Academic Board and Council that consider it and make conclusions on the AC annual performance. After analysis of statements and identification of shortcomings, proposals on improvement are supplied and a plan of fault removal is made.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Increase proportion of holders of scientific degree within teaching staff, especially in informatics core fields.
2. Supplement course descriptions with information on mandatory courses to be taken before the given one. Based on this check whether every course or part of it contributes to the program's learning outcomes.
3. Reconsider programming language to be taught for basics of programming.
4. Correct the study plan moving free optional subjects to later semesters.

IV. SUMMARY

Alytus College actively supports and implements the main strategy requirements of the rapidly developing knowledge society: to form new analytical abilities of trained specialists - perception and distinguishing of the essence and intensive thinking. The institution provides a specialists with higher non-university education being in permanent contact with the business and academic community of the Southern Lithuanian region and the country in realizing new scientific knowledge, applying modern information technologies and assuring effective study organization.

AC has good infrastructure (significant facility improvement since the previous accreditation) and learning materials that are continuously improved, well-organized study process, highly motivated teachers and students, exceptionally strong collaboration with regional government and employers. The Experts Team acknowledges exceptionally strong AC management.

However, still there is a need to increase proportion of holders of scientific degree within teaching staff, especially in informatics core fields, and to supplement course descriptions with information on mandatory courses to be taken before the given one; based on this, to check whether every course or part of it contributes to the program's learning outcomes.

V. GENERAL ASSESSMENT

The study programme *Technologies of Electronic Publishing* (state code – 653E14002) at Alytus College is given **positive** evaluation.

Study programme assessment in points by fields of assessment.

No.	Evaluation Area	Evaluation Area in Points*
1.	Programme aims and learning outcomes	3
2.	Curriculum design	3
3.	Staff	3
4.	Material resources	3
5.	Study process and assessment (student admission, study process student support, achievement assessment)	4
6.	Programme management (programme administration, internal quality assurance)	4
	Total:	20

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

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

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

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

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