STUDIJŲ KOKYBĖS VERTINIMO CENTRAS

Alytaus Kolegijos

STUDIJŲ PROGRAMOS *AUTOMOBILIŲ TECHNINIS EKSPLOATAVIMAS (653E21011)* VERTINIMO IŠVADOS

EVALUATION REPORT OF *AUTOMOBILE MAINTENANCE* (*653E21011*) STUDY PROGRAMME

at Alytus College

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DUOMENYS APIE ĮVERTINTĄ PROGRAMĄ

Studijų programos pavadinimas	Automobilių techninis eksploatavimas
Valstybinis kodas	653E21011
Studijų sritis	Technologijos mokslai
Studijų kryptis	Sausumos transporto inžinerija
Studijų programos rūšis	Koleginės studijos
Studijų pakopa	Pirma
Studijų forma (trukmė metais)	Nuolatinė (3) ištęstinė (4)
Studijų programos apimtis kreditais	180
Suteikiamas laipsnis ir (ar) profesinė kvalifikacija	Automobilių transporto inžinerijos profesinis bakalauras
Studijų programos įregistravimo data	2012-01-10

INFORMATION ON EVALUATED STUDY PROGRAMME

Title of the study programme	Automobile maintenance
State code	653E21011
Study area	Technological studies
Study field	Transport engineering
Type of the study programme	College studies
Study cycle	First
Study mode (length in years)	Full time (3) Part time (4)
Volume of the study programme in credits	180
Degree and (or) professional qualifications awarded	Professional bachelor in Automobile Transport Engineering
Date of registration of the study programme	January 1, 2012

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I. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the evaluation process

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

1.2. General

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

No.	Name of the document
1.	College Strategic Plan
2.	Faculty Strategic Plan
3.	College Quality Manual and Action Plan
4.	College Marketing Plan
5.	Department Action Plan
6.	Programme Action Plan
7.	College Staff Development Plan
8.	Individual Staff Development Plans and Records of Attendance at Training Events
9.	Programme Handbook
10.	Placement/Practice methodology

11.	Internal College Thesis Procedures Document
12.	Procedure for Evaluation of Recognised Prior Learning
13.	Minutes of Programme Committee Meetings/Actions

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

Alytus College is a higher education college in the southern region of Lithuania. Its primary goal is to support the educational needs of the local region and to ensure that graduates of the College meet the needs of the local community and social partners. The college has a range of programmes in the areas of business and administration, technology and engineering. In addition, the College is also active in supporting the business, social and applied research activities of the region. Because of the way in which the students of the region are involved in simultaneous study and work as part of their daily lives the college offers many programmes in both Part-time and Full-time modes to support lifelong learning. The College has an Erasmus charter and recently graduated its first international students which emphasises the capacity of the college to look beyond its regional interests and ensure the international relevance of its programmes and accomplishments.

The College has three faculties and nine departments. Its current strategic plan emphasises the objective to modernise its research facilities and services and to enhance and support an appropriately high standard of infrastructure for its students and stakeholders. The College has an approved ISO9001:2008 quality management system for its academic, business and research management.

The principal collegial management structures of the College are the Council and Academic Board. In addition, there is a Faculty council. Each council and board has a well-defined purpose and remit and there is good involvement of students and other stakeholders in the management and oversight of the activities of the College.

In preparation for this evaluation the College conducted a self-evaluation process under the guidance of several well managed self-evaluation working groups each of which took responsibility for review and analysis of key areas of activity in the College. There was good representation on the groups from academic and administrative staff of the college, the student body and stakeholders. The self-evaluation report was thorough and well presented with succinct information.

1.4. The Review Team

The review team was completed according *Description of experts' recruitment,* approved by order No. 1-01-151 of Acting Director of the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education. The Review Visit to HEI was conducted by the team on 25th November 2015.

1. **Prof. Dr. Clive Neal-Sturgess (team leader)** Emeritus Professor of Mechanical Engineering, University of Birmingham (UK);
2. **Prof. Dr. Jochim Haldor** Professor of Railway and Transport Planning, Aachen University of Applied Sciences (Germany);
3. **Mr. Ger Reilly,** Head of School, Mechanical & Design Engineering, Dublin Institute of Technology (Ireland);
4. **Prof. Bojan Dolšak,** Dean of the Faculty for Mechanical Engineering, University of Maribor (Slovenia);
5. **Mr. Audrius Jasėnas,** Director of public establishment "Intechcentras" (Lithuania);
6. **Ms. Monika Simaškaitė,** Student at Kaunas University of Technology (Lithuania).

II. PROGRAMME ANALYSIS

2.1. Programme aims and learning outcomes

Overall the programmes aim and the learning outcomes for this programme are quite broad and encompass the function of the programme. The programme is focused on Automobile Maintenance and the core of the programme is organised around this theme. The English translation of the current aim of the programme is too long and it is not very clear. The aim should be succinct and should encapsulate the core elements of the programme, what it will deliver and the rationale. The aim could be broken into clear sub statements so that it is better focused and more accessible to the public, prospective students and employers and the academic community. The learning outcomes of the programme are quite well mapped to the specified learning outcomes domains for this type of study cycle.

There are minor issues with the coherence and clarity of the English translation of the programme learning outcomes. The college also needs to consider how it can implement the changes to programme and module learning outcomes so that the programme more clearly addresses knowledge of the emerging relevant technology in the area of maintenance of vehicles either in terms of the diagnostic and maintenance equipment or the emergence of new technology in motor vehicles.

From the self-evaluation report and the programme improvement plan provided with the self-evaluation report there is evidence that the programme team have paid particular atention to the strategic plan of the college and the needs of the social partners in the development of this programme aim and the learning outcomes. At the meetings with the teachers, students, alumni and local social partners it was unclear that there is sufficient demand for study modules in maintenance of trucks specialisation. On the other hand, there appears to be an increasing need for deepening knowledge in electronics, diagnostics and design areas. The college needs to consider how it can gainfully review the programme learning outcomes to meet these requirements. From the self-evaluation report it is clear that the programme learning outcomes have been reviewed and updated as recently as May 2014 in compliance with:

- Order Nos V-501, V-2212 of Minister of LR Ministry of Education and Science and ISAK-734 and ISAK-2093/11-301.
- Order of Director of the Study Quality Assessment Centre 'On Preparation of Description of Intended Study Programme; methods of its external assessment and accreditation',
- EUR-ACE Assumptions of Standard on Accreditation of engineering study programmes;

From the evaluation meeting with the staff of the college and the social partners it was noted that opinions of social partners participating in the activities of the Study Programme Committee. This was completed through use of a survey in April 2014 and showed that 90% of the learning outcomes were compatible with the partners' requirements. There are also meetings between social partners and teaching staff formally and informally which lead to reviews of the programme content.

There is a good correlation between the programme learning outcomes and the related study domains for this study cycle. Alytus reviewed this programme against similar programmes at this level in Lithuania at Vilnius College of Technology and Design, Šiauliai College, Klaipėda State College, Žemaitija College, Kaunas Technical College, and Marijampolė College. The college found there was a good comparison between its programmes and those in other state colleges. The college has also conducted a comparison of its programme with similar programmes in colleges in Poland and Portugal and found that their programme is generally in line with the objective and educational structure of those programmes which stresses the international relevance of this programme. The outcomes place a good emphasis on the combination of learning through understanding the fundamental concepts and the application of knowledge in work practice in companies. In addition to this the learning outcomes place emphasis on students obtaining transferrable skills in research, business and interpersonal skill areas. These are highly valuable in ensuring that students are flexible in the areas of transport engineering or engineering in which they may be able to gain employment.

The aim and learning outcomes reflect the title of the programme and the content is very relevant to Automobile Maintenance. From the details in the subject descriptors there is evidence of a good range of mandatory and optional modules offered in the programme across fundamental sciences of engineering and general study areas which support the learning outcomes of the programme to create rounded graduates. Work practice is well embedded in the programme and this provides students with the capacity to apply their knowledge gained in the college and to assess their own further learning requirements. The learning outcomes infer a variety of different structured modes of learning and with these go various assessment methodologies. These are such that they enable students who take the programme in Full-time and Part-time mode to achieve the learning outcomes entirely. Therefore, it can be concluded that the learning outcomes are well supported by the teaching process and the assessment and they are very suitable for ensuring the integrity of the award offered.

2.2. Curriculum design

The programme is comprised of 180 ECTS as required and is delivered in 3 years; Full time (FT) Mode and 4 years Part time (PT) Mode. The self-study report and annex with module descriptors demonstrate that the programme meets the legal requirements for a programme of this type. Within these 180 ECTS; 159 ECTS/ (89%) is allocated to study field subjects/practices (minimum requirement 135ECTS) and the remainder is allocated as follows: 15ECTS/ (8%) for general subjects, (minimum requirement 15 ECTS) and 6 ECTS/ (3%), for elective subjects (no minimum requirement). Overall 33 ECTS (minimum requirement 30) are attached to optional modules spread among the general subjects, the specialist subjects and the elective subjects. Furthermore, the programme ECTS attached to final project (12 ECTS) and practical training (30 ECTS) also meet the minimum requirements. The FT programme mode comprises 4800 hours of learning with 50% of the time allocated to each of direct contact learning and self-directed learning. In PT mode the direct contact time accounts for 25% of the total study hours. This means that PT students must achieve more through self-directed learning. From the meeting with students and alumni it was confirmed that there is good support for students in part time study mode and that the college uses Moodle to further enhance teaching and learning for Part-time mode. At evaluation meeting we discussed and reviewed the college policy on recognition of prior learning which appears well structured and adequate.

The programme has a well-defined structure. Students undertaking this programme spend the first two semesters studying basic sciences of engineering and general subjects. Some of the larger subjects (9 ECTS) are spread over two semesters; e.g. physics, automobile repairs and foreign language. Study of the main automobile systems precedes or runs parallel to the study of system fault diagnosis and maintenance which is appropriate. There is no evidence of repetition of modules in the structure of the programme or the module content except as might be necessary for revision of prerequisite content.

Overall the subject content is very relevant to the programme type and level of studies. Students engage in independent, team and group based learning and are assessed in many ways including regular examinations methods, personal and group assignments, laboratory work and thesis and defence of same. Work practice is well assessed by the college and social partners. The level of the key subjects that contribute to the formation of the engineer in technical and professional competency are well defined.

The organisation of the programme in large coherent chunks around the specific competencies of the graduating engineers gives the programme a good structure. This is interspersed with other subject matter which supports the achievement of the programme learning outcomes in the management skills areas such as Corporate Economy and Management and Business Planning and social/interpersonal skill areas such as Environmental and Human Safety and Languages and Language and Document Management. The assessment methods are satisfactory and well varied in the subject descriptors and there is a significant emphasis placed on use of dependent and independent learning. This gives students who have varied learning

requirements and abilities a good chance to achieve the minimum requirements and it also enables the examiners to separate the examined students on basis of overall ability.

There are some opportunities as outlined previously to enhance the content of this programme but the scope of the programme at present is adequate in full time and part time mode across all key areas such as subject matter, pedagogical and assessment methods and alignment of subject matter to overall programme outcomes.

Over the standard of this programme is good and there are a few suggested improvements outlined below which the panel feel could help the programme to achieve a higher level:

- There are two elective subject groupings in the programme; automobiles / motorcycles and truck maintenance. From the meetings with employers, students, alumni and staff it seems that few students choose the latter option. The college could consider if they should continue to support this latter option or increase the emphasis on diagnostics and electronics which appears to be in demand among social partners, alumni and students.
- In the module Computer Engineering Graphics there is an opportunity to further increase the emphasis on CAD, engineering component drawings and automobile components and schematics which are a key part of the representation of automobile systems in a graphical sense.
- In the module on Construction and Maintenance Materials there is scope to increase the depth of subject matter covered on polymers, non-ferrous alloys, ceramics and composites which are standard materials in all vehicles. There is no content on emerging materials as would be used in modern fuel cells, photovoltaics, smart materials etc.
- Many Final Projects have incorporate design of a product or process or system. There is no significant evidence of design processes being taught to students in the programme and this needs to be addressed to ensure that students can meet all learning outcomes to a high level.
- Some learning outcomes use verbs such as ‘understand’, ‘generalise’ which can be difficult to assess and are not among those defined by Blooms Taxonomy. This should be reviewed for all subjects.
- There is no module on research methods in the programme though it merits a programme learning outcome of its own. Research methods are central to the achievement of the student learning outcomes on final project and this should be reviewed.

2.3. Teaching staff

From the self-evaluation report and the associated annex providing details of the staff and their professional achievements and experience there is sufficient evidence that staff meet the minimum requirements for the delivery of the programme and staff teaching on the programme have either a minimum of Master’s degree or equivalent. 68% have over 3 years’ practical experience in the specialist field (minimum requirement 50%). A small number of staff

(3 in total) teaching on the programme have PhDs and these staff teach 29% of the programme in total (minimum requirement 10%).

The self-evaluation report and the annex of staff details shows that staff are very well qualified in the areas in which they teach on the programme and that overall they have a good combination of knowledge and some staff have skills across multiple areas of the programme. There is evidence in the Curriculum Vitae of staff that they have a good combination of work experience in pedagogical areas and the technical specialism of the programme. Staff teaching on modules that make up the large specialist components of the programme (some modules are 9 credits) appear to have good practical experience and capacity to carry the breadth and depth of subject matter associated with these elements of the programme.

The breakdown of the programme for delivery ensures that there is adequate staff to teach the programme. There are 15 students in practical / laboratory environments and some staff supervise as many as 8 project students. This appears quite high but from the meeting with the self-evaluation group and staff it was noted that the norm is more likely to be 5 project students which is more reasonable. The theoretical student staff ratio of 5 to 1 appears very low and this is associated with the fact that overall student numbers in all years for both modes are at moderate levels. It is important for the future of the programme and the capacity of the college to sustain that specialist lecturers required to maintain provision are recruited as needed.

The average age of teaching staff is 51 years of age (only 2 teachers are younger than 40 years of age) and it is stated in the self-evaluation report that staff turnover is low. There is a system of public competition for posts every 5 years as is the norm in Lithuanian colleges and it was advised at the meeting with college management and the self-evaluation group that the college does all it can to stimulate new applications for posts at attestation periods. There was no evidence that this has any negative consequences for the programme or the quality of the teaching or the staff morale or motivation.

The structure that is in place within the college to support staff development is well developed. The college has a staff development plan which was presented for review and this is followed through the faculty to department and individual staff level. In the self-evaluation annex which provided staff profiles there is references to staff upskilling on an ongoing basis. At the meeting with staff and the college management there was unequivocal evidence that staff are supported for all their training requirements in a financial and organisational context. As mentioned this process is systematic and appears to be well embedded. The college has a strong relationship with a visiting professor from Norway who was present at the evaluation process and who supports the college annually in upskilling staff in areas associated with entrepreneurship which is important for this programme, the graduates and the local economy. There was an obvious and very high level of enthusiasm among the college at all levels in terms of the inter staff relationships, the staff morale, the staff attitude and the dynamism of the college management. There appears to be a good communication system and the college is clearly an attractive and happy working environment. These traits represent an exemplary feature of this college and are highly commendable overall.

The self-evaluation report presents evidence of some staff engagement in research. At the meeting with staff across management, self-evaluation group and teaching levels it was outlined that the college has, participated in college initiatives most of which appear to be mainly associated with pedagogical research. There is some evidence also in some staff CVs of engagement in research. The college has one staff member who is educated to PhD level and who has a business related to activity of this programme. Engagement in research is a difficult task for staff whom are primarily engaged in teaching with a relatively high workload. The efforts by staff are evidenced by publications of their research in peer reviewed journals and at conferences and seminars. This is commendable but the college need a specific strategy targeted at getting teachers on this programme directly involved in research and this needs to be further targeted, encouraged and supported as necessary by the college.

There is some staff engagement in EU Programmes or events and Erasmus but overall low levels of teacher mobility to English speaking countries. The college needs to further review its strategy and some additional resource or incentives should be provided to motivate outward mobility with emphasis on working with sympathetic partners.

2.4. Facilities and learning resources

There appears to be ample classroom space of adequate size to accommodate the programme requirements. The overall student numbers on the programme are 121 in 2014 and there is unlikely to be any more than 25 in any one year of the programme (average 20) in either PT or FT mode. Therefore, as most classrooms can accommodate 30 students there does not appear to be a problem in this regard. From the tour of facilities on the day of evaluation it was clear that classrooms are well equipped with computers, projector systems, interactive white boards and that study spaces provided in the library and the reading room as well as the business incubator unit. Students staying at the college dormitories have internet access and network access to the library facility.

On the tour of facilities at the onsite evaluation a good range of facilities necessary to support the programme were displayed. This includes an excellent range of facilities for physics, electronics and control and automobile diagnostics and maintenance. These facilities and the laboratory equipment were recently upgraded which is commendable. Some of this has been directly supported by EU structural funds which has resulted in the creation of a regional centre at the college to additionally support and to engage students at second level in engineering and to stimulate interest in the programme. Students have access to a good range of training apparatus and software as well as many of the widely used automotive database systems such as Bosch, ESI[tronic] and VAG-COM and Autodata.

The college needs to work harder at ensuring that all staff and students observe safe working practices and it needs to urgently further highlight this through appropriate use of signage and mandatory use of personal protection equipment. This was not always evident on the day of the evaluation when the facilities and the manner of use of the facilities was observed and evaluated. There was no evidence on the day of evaluation of the college having a dedicated

dismantle and discover workshop for components or systems of the automobiles and there was no evidence of a dedicated facility for teaching of truck maintenance which is a component of the programme. There is a need to provide a facility and equipment for the study of hybrid and electric vehicles and emerging state of the art automobile systems.

The college creates a tripartite agreement with local companies for work placements for its students on this programme. This is agreed between the company, the student who chooses the company and the college. From the meetings with students, alumni and the local social partners there is evidence that the college has a suitable list of partnerships and in cases where there are difficulties for a student obtaining a placement this is resolved by the college. The college has a good student handbook for placement. This overall process could be further enhanced by the college providing regular training support events for companies who are taking students on placement to advise them of academic process, practice learning requirements and required supervision processes. Social partners did advise during the evaluation that they have that they good contact with college placement supervisor.

From the self-evaluation report it would appear that the library obtains a good supply of new books on a regular basis and that there is funding on an ongoing basis for maintenance of a current stock of books, including a number of key textbooks for use on this programme. Overall the library resource facilities provided and viewed at the evaluation appear to be in good order and are used by students. There are both computerised and non-computerised facilities available for use. There are subscriptions to periodicals and databases including EBSCO publishing. The students' assessment of the facility is that 74% believe it is more than sufficient which was borne out on the day of evaluation. All staff prepare a handbook of notes for the subject which they teach and this is made available to all students for support of their learning requirements.

2.5. Study process and students' performance assessment

Access onto the programme is based on the general admission to Lithuanian higher schools and according to general provisions of this admission it is planned based on the employment trends and local needs of social partners. From the meeting with teaching staff it was established that there are difficulties for some admitted students who do not have involvement or have poor achievements in STEM subjects at second level. Overall the entrance marks for both FT and PT students is similar which means that academically at least these students are comparable. There are some issues with drop out and the rate is moderately high caused mostly by financial constraints and failure at examinations. From the meeting with teaching staff, students and alumni it was established that the college is supportive of students in either learning or personal difficulties in both modes. To further enhance this the college could review the success of its supportive measures and further target them to enhance the sustainability and positivity of the programme profile.

The programme structure and planning is done in accordance with the relevant Ministerial requirements and there is evidence that these are met by the programme. There are some modules that are structured as long thin modules over two semesters and others which are

more concise and placed on one semester. The majority of a student's study time is based on independent learning, consultations and practical work. Only 10% of time is allocated to learning the theoretical subject content relevant to the programme. At the end of each semester there is a 2 or 3 weeks of examinations and there are no more than 6 examinations per session. Students advised at the evaluation meeting that they are given adequate time to revise between examinations. The overall study structure is similar for part time students with the exception that they have less direct contact time than FT students. While the dropout rate is higher for PT students these part time students explained at the evaluation that the college is supportive and that consultations are provided in person, online or remotely by phone by tutors and personal advisors.

There is some student engagement in applied research activities which is overall positive and some students have been involved also in competitions. However, there is no clarity that any module directly teaches students the basic principles of research process and this could be addressed to further enhance this activity. To date this effort has relied on students learning the fundamentals through modules which have coursework or projects and thesis and some also attend capacity building seminars or conferences. Some students do projects for local companies which is a way to reduce the company costs and in a way is related to research in the process of problem formulation, and problem resolution.

There is scope for the college to increase the mobility activities in respect of this programme. A small number of students only are involved in mobility activities outside of the region and country. The date in the self-evaluation report is descriptive of the nature of these activities rather than of the number of the unique events.

At the meetings with all groups it was established that the study process organisation is supplemented by a process of induction at the start of each term. Additional information and support is provided on an ongoing basis through email and Moodle where teachers put the details of the study programme for each subject, methods, goals and outcomes, the system of assessment of students' achievements, relevant reference sources, summary of lectures and assignments for individual and practical work, self-help and self-assessment questions and tests. This is very commendable and well structured. There is a career centre that provides structured support around preparing for work and application for jobs after graduation.

There are supports for students who have disabilities or medical problems and there is also a process to individualise study plans for students who have commitments with families or work which prevent them completing their programme in the normal timescale. Academic student grants are administered and managed by the college for students in full receipt of grant allowances and meeting the necessary requirements for same. The college recently provided the college hostels and kitchens for students staying onsite. On the tour of facilities, students explained that the social facilities provided by the college are generally adequate and they were happy with the opportunities provided to engage in social aspects of college life and in games and in sports organised by the college.

The examination process on the programme is adequately structured and combines a number of elements and appears very fair to students. Students are provided with the details of

the assessment regime at the start of each semester in each subject. Overall students are in effect assessed against the needs of the local labour market in terms of their relevant theoretical knowledge and their ability to apply this with other relevant skills in practical situations. This assessment is achieved through examinations, practical work assessment, project work, report writing, laboratory work, thesis, work practice and defence of all of these. Individual subject outcomes are rolled up to programme outcomes. The process of assessment is a continuous one throughout the semester and year and students gain marks at various times of the elements of assessment described earlier. Graduation theses are assessed by a board comprising both academic staff and representatives of social partners. This is achieved against a 10-point scale.
From discussions with staff and students there appears to be a robust process for providing students with timely feedback on their work through the academic year and this happens both formally and informally to accommodate the student needs. Students indicated that they generally obtain feedback within one week of submission of work which is commendable.

From the self-evaluation and from the meeting with social partners it was established that the college engages widely with the local social partners. The most recent examples of this was a survey of industry project supervisors for that showed that overall there is a good record of satisfaction with the attributes of the graduate students. At this meeting the representative from the local labour office outlined the difficulty in getting adequate graduates to fill the large number of local employment opportunities and that there is a very high demand for graduates. This evidence was also provided in the self-evaluation report from the process of monitoring student rates of employment that uptake of graduates which is shown to be high and generally very fast. The majority of students are either employed in their specialist area or in further study which is a good indicator of the strength and quality of the programme.

2.6. Programme management

The management of the programme is taken care of by a study programme committee. This is comprised of among others academics, student representatives, social partner representatives and the Faculty Dean. This Committee has the responsibility to analyse information about the programme either from external assessments or social partner requirements. There is a triennial review of the programme managed by this committee. From the evaluation meetings and self-evaluation report there is ample scope for the programme committee to manage the programme and make the various improvements that are necessary based on appropriate analysis. This process involves stakeholders internally and externally. The programme coordinator takes overall responsibility for management of this process so it would appear that there are delineated roles with reasonably clear definitions and with relevant levels of responsibility.

The college has a process for collection of student performance data and data on drop out, student employment trends student mobility, student theses and related performance of students in final project and other factors like the staff qualifications, resources and related programme structure. From the meeting with the college management at which the Quality

Management Office was represented there is evidence that the analysed data is used to instruct improvements or changes in the programme. Data on the quality assurance of the programme is presented annually to Directorate, faculty council and stakeholders. The collection of this type of data and feedback is generally achieved through use of surveys to staff and students.

There is some evidence from the self-evaluation report and annex that the college prepares a plan of remediation for the programme as required. This incorporates decisions about all aspects of the programme from learning outcomes through learning delivery and assessment and technology. It does appear that the college attempts to take on board the process of best practice in the change processes it implements in the programme.

There is direct student involvement in the quality management process and the decisions of the programme committee are influenced by the student opinion on necessary changes in respect of, teaching, and employment, and in terms of feedback on business in local companies which contributes to the assessment and improvement of the study quality. From the evaluation meetings with all groups it was ascertained that the process stakeholders include members of the college, students, alumni, social partners, and representatives of relevant universities. Their input is used to guide the programme learning outcomes structure content and delivery.

From the meeting with students and the college management it was determined that there is a need for the college to focus additional effort on the process by which students can access and transfer to further study opportunities. This could involve a range of actions such as more strategic alignment of this programme with transfer requirements of local universities through subject options. Alternatively, it could be through strategic agreements for recognition of prior learning at those universities. This college has a good RPL policy that was provided for review and this process generally exists in all third level institutes and could be further exploited to the benefit of graduates from this programme.

The college implemented an Internal Study Quality Management System corresponding to the requirements of the international ISO 9001 standard in 2013 and the college achieve the ISO 9001:2008 standard. The process is documented and the quality manual which was presented provides a systematic and a robust methodology for ensuring the quality of the key college activities of of study process, management processes, recruitment and academic programme monitoring and enhancement and business process management.

2.7. Examples of excellence

The following features of this programme are examples of excellence:

1. There is a very high level of staff morale and enthusiasm in this college. It is clear that this comes from the good relationship between the college director, the management staff and the academic staff and how every person and their opinions and function are treated with equal respect and dignity. This has transferred directly to the teaching process and the students and alumni who demonstrated a strong affinity to the college and their programme.
2. There is a very high and mutual respect and support between the college and the local social partners and economy. This is typified by the municipal support to the college in the provision of the town centre premises and the funding obtained by the college from the municipality. At the meeting with social partners the local mayor's office explained clearly the value of the college and the programme to the region and this support and value is understood and reciprocated by the college and the programme team.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

The college should consider the following recommendations for the enhancement of the programme:

1. The college consider how to revise the English translation of the programme aim and learning outcomes to improve clarity of explanation in terms of content and to improve the accessibility to the public domain;
2. The college and programme team should consider if there is sufficient demand for the learning options related to truck maintenance and address related issues with resources and facilities;
3. The college should consider how to revise the programme and module learning outcomes and some content to place additional emphasis on design, diagnostics and electronics, research methods and current state of the art of relevant technology and knowledge in this programme;
4. The college management and programme team should work together to develop a clear strategy to support the easier transfer of students from this programme to further study in other local universities or institutes;
5. The college should review how it can further enhance and support staff and student mobility in this programme and develop an appropriate plan for this requirement;
6. The college needs to review its potential to provide a laboratory facility for dismantle and discover activities on components and also for truck maintenance to enhance learning;
7. The college needs to put stricter measures in place in workshops in relation to use of appropriate health and safety personal protection equipment at all times and to erect signage to remind staff and students of their responsibilities in this regard.

IV. SUMMARY

The college is well managed and the staff morale is high with a very positive work and study environment provided for students and all staff. This study programme is generally well organised and contains appropriate elements of knowledge and learning to support a programme at this level. There is a good relationship between the college and its social partners and this provides a good platform for this programme and its relevance to the local economy. This is reciprocated by the social partners in their support for the programme and the college organisationally and financially. The students enjoy the college environment and are very happy to study and work within the environment and structure provided. Overall the level of the facilities provided are high and this is evidenced by the regional centre created by the college for support of student in this programme and college and at second level locally. The college has begun graduating international students which is a high achievement and indicates its outward looking policies and strategies which will benefit students, staff and the region.

There are some opportunities which could be reviewed by the college and the programme to enhance the programme. Firstly, these relate to minor adaptation of the programme and module learning outcomes and the programme content. Secondly, while the college has a good strategic process in place there is a need overall to review how further staff and student involvement in international mobility and research can be stimulated. Thirdly there is evidence that opportunities exist make minor enhancements to the well maintained facilities and apparatus and to enhance the health and safety provisions in place for this students and staff working in these laboratories and workshops. Finally, the college can leverage better support for the progression of its students to further study in local universities and institutes and should engage directly with the management of these organisations to work towards this objective.

V. GENERAL ASSESSMENT

The study programme *Automobile Maintenance* (state code – 653E21011) at Alytus College is given **positive** evaluation.

Study programme assessment in points by evaluation areas.

No.	Evaluation Area	Evaluation of an area in points*
1.	Programme aims and learning outcomes	3
2.	Curriculum design	3
3.	Teaching staff	3
4.	Facilities and learning resources	3
5.	Study process and students' performance assessment	3
6.	Programme management	4
	Total:	**19**

*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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