



STUDIJŲ KOKYBĖS VERTINIMO CENTRAS

**KAZIMIERO SIMONAVIČIAUS UNIVERSITETO
VEIKLOS VERTINIMO IŠVADOS**

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW REPORT

KAZIMIERAS SIMONAVIČIUS UNIVERSITY

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I. INTRODUCTION

Purpose

1. The review of the **Kazimieras Simonavičius University (KSU)** was undertaken in October, 2012, by a team of international experts, which was commissioned by the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education (SKVC), Lithuania, in its role as the Authorized Agency prescribed by Lithuanian law. The review was conducted in accordance with the prescribed methodology pursuant to the Procedure for External Reviews in Higher Education, approved by Government Resolution No. 1317 of 22 September, 2010 and the Methodology for Conducting an Institutional Review in Higher Education, approved by the order of the Director of SKVC No 1-01-135 on 25 October 2010.

2 The review was informed by the following prescribed principles:

- autonomy and accountability – account shall be taken of the balance between the autonomy and social responsibility of the institution of higher education;
- contextuality – account shall be taken of the qualities of the institution’s mission, strategy and operating conditions;
- holistic approach – account shall be taken of the interaction and compatibility of the areas being reviewed;
- stakeholder involvement – representatives of the study system stakeholders (students, graduates, academics, employers and other social partners) shall be involved in the procedures of self-evaluation and evaluation;
- unity of internal and external quality assurance – the internal quality assurance system and the external review must be based on mutually harmonized principles and public criteria, which also lie at the basis of the quantitative and qualitative indicators set by the institution for itself;
- continuity – while conducting an institutional review of a higher education institution, account shall be taken of the previous evaluation and the follow-up performance.

3 In accordance with the requirements, the Review focused on examination of the following principal areas:

- strategic planning;
- academic studies and life-long learning;
- research and/or art*;
- impact on regional and national development.

(The formal rubric 'Research and Art' has been used throughout this report, in accordance with SKVC's prescribed review methodology. It should be noted that the term (creative) Art is not relevant in the context of KSU)*

Membership

4 The members of the Review Team were:

- Dr. Michael Emery, International Higher Education Adviser and Evaluation Expert, (United Kingdom), (Chair)
- Tomas Bagdanskis, Lawyer at Bagdanskis iLAW, President of the Lithuanian Association of Temporary Employment Agencies, and teacher at ISM University of Management and Economics, (Lithuania)
- Prof. Dr. jur. Jürgen Kohler, Faculty of Law and Business Management at Greifswald University, former Rector and former Dean, former Chairman of the German Accreditation Council (Germany)
- Prof. Dr. Bente Kristensen, Quality Expert and former Vice-President of Copenhagen Business School, (Denmark)

- Meda Keleckaitė, student (student of Economics study programme) attending Kaunas University of Technology, (Lithuania)
- Paul Mitchell, (Director of Mega Mitchell Consulting Ltd.), (United Kingdom), (Secretary)

Approach

5 The review was carried out using the process prescribed at national level. The Team sought to conduct the review in a professional, challenging and courteous manner. The review process as a whole proceeded smoothly. During the site visit, the Team was met with courtesy, openness and helpfulness, and was able to engage in full discussion and exploration of the key issues.

Procedure

6 In fulfilling the purposes of the review the Team has:

- considered the broad national, regional and professional contexts within which KSU operates;
- considered a self-evaluation document prepared by the University and a range of supporting documents submitted in advance of the site visit;
- considered additional documentation relevant to the Team's lines of enquiry during the site visit;
- conducted a two-day visit to the University (9 – 10 October 2012);
- toured the facilities and learning resources available to the University;
- met a range of stakeholders representative of the University's activities, including:
 - Members of Academic Council
 - Members of University Senate
 - Rector and other senior managers
 - Representatives of staff in relation to Strategic Management
 - Representatives of staff in relation to Research
 - Representatives of staff in relation to Academic Studies and Lifelong Learning
 - Representatives of staff in relation to Regional and National Development
 - representatives of students and of Students' Representative Council
 - Self-evaluation team members
 - Representatives of staff responsible for quality management
 - Staff responsible for learning resources data
 - Graduates and Alumni
 - Business and social partners
- considered the results of an assessment of KSU's learning resources undertaken by Lithuania's Research and Studies Monitoring and Analysis Centre (MOSTA) dated 22 June, 2012, covering the period 2008-2010 when the assessed institution operated as Vilnius Business Law Academy.

Self-evaluation document

7 Given the major changes of ownership, status, composition and direction already implemented and still working their way across the institution, the Team noted the massive challenge inherent in preparing a meaningful self-evaluation document. **The Team considered that the University was to be commended for its self-evaluation document and for the spirit of self-reflection, analysis, honesty, self-criticism and sense of purpose which it conveyed.**

II. BACKGROUND INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSTITUTION

8 KSU is a private university which has grown out of an *Vilnius Business Law Academy*, founded in 2003, focusing on the training of law specialists through the award of a degree of Master of Law, following completion of a programme of integrated law studies. In January 2012, the stakeholders (shareholders) of *Vilnius Business Law Academy* changed; this signalled the beginning of a period of substantial reform, including a change in legal status, a change of name, and significant structural changes to administration and governance. These changes were enacted in February 2012 when the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania revised the licence originally issued in 2003, so as to establish *Kazimieras Simonavičius University UAB*, and authorised it to conduct university studies and associated activities. Further structural change followed later in 2012, when KSU initiated a merger (in August 2012) with the *Academy of Business and Management (ABM)*, a private higher education institution also based in Vilnius.

9 Reflecting the University's private status, the general **Meeting of Shareholders** is technically the supreme management body of the University and the **Rector** is responsible to it for all aspects of the operation and management of the University. The senior management team comprises the Rector, a Pro-Rector, a Chancellor and the Director of Administration.

10 The University's principal deliberative bodies are the **Senate** and the **Academic Council**. The Senate advises the Rector on issues relating to studies and research/science strategy formation. It consists of 17 members, including 8 professors, 4 assistant professors, one doctor and one research programme director, the University Chancellor and two student representatives. The Academic Council consists of 10 members, including 5 social partners (one of whom is Chair) and 1 student member; it considers, discusses and monitors the institution's overall strategy and performance.

11 Student interests are formally represented by the **Students' Representative Council**. There are 2 student members of the Senate (a minimum of 10% of the membership) and 1 student member of the Council.

12 During 2012, the University has embarked upon a wide-ranging restructuring programme: this includes the integration of academic and structural divisions, a programme of administrative reform, the design of a suite of new study programmes for implementation over the current planning period, the development of new national and international partnerships, and the further development of the University's physical infrastructure for both information technology and scientific research.

13 The draft **vision, mission and goals** of the new University are:

The **vision** of the University: *the most advanced private research and higher education institution in Lithuania founded on the principles of academic freedom and harmony, developing the principal research and study areas on the international level with due consideration to global challenges, seeking to create and to provide students with global knowledge and value-based attitudes that would allow the University to become the centre of shaping the future of the state and the society, and that would allow students to be actively involved in creating the future, be able to positively influence their own development and the development of the state and the world.*

The **mission** of the University: *activities of the University are aimed at increasing the learning leadership and competitiveness of the Lithuanian society by creating new knowledge, implementing the sustainable development principles in life, culture, technology, social relationship, policy and other areas.*

The draft strategy of the University states the following **principal goals**:

- (1) to form a modern system of interdisciplinary research and studies based on holistic principles of organisation and governance and targeting challenges caused by global environments and market changes;*
- (2) to implement the model of a learning university as a nucleus of regional development of knowledge and innovations that links research, business and public authorities, and that creates, supports and improves lifelong learning environments;*
- (3) to develop the principles of an entrepreneurial university by increasing the efficiency of the synergy of research, studies and innovations, by improving social partnership relations and by integrating research and development as well as the process of studies into business environments, innovative and spin-off enterprises;*
- (4) to develop every kind of international relations of the University, to join academic networks, to establish joint divisions with European and world universities, to absorb global research priorities and requirements for the quality of studies;*
- (5) to create a creative and innovative research and study environment, full-fledged social relations and responsible communal governance.*

14 KSU operates in Vilnius (where the headquarters are located) and also in Klaipėda. The principal academic operational units are Faculties and Departments. Within an overarching Faculty framework, Departments are the principal structural and functional units which design and deliver study programmes and pursue scientific research activities. There are currently two Faculties and one institute (operating as a Faculty) –

- Faculty of Law (Vilnius),
- Institute of Creative Society and Economics (Vilnius)
- Klaipėda Faculty

The merger with ABM is likely to lead to the establishment of the equivalent of a fourth Faculty, with the establishment later in 2012 of the University Business School. A major new initiative is the initiation, during the first quarter of 2013, of a cooperation agreement with Kingston University (London, UK), which will establish a further new operational unit, to be known as the Joint Research and Study Centre of KSU and Kingston University.

15 The university has offered an integrated study programme of law since 2003. Current programmes comprise:

- Master's Degree in Law
- Bachelor's Degree in Law (International Business Law)
- Bachelor's Degree in Communication (Creative and Cultural Industries)
- Bachelor's Degree in Business (Business Management)

As of January, 2012 the university has developed and submitted for accreditation 5 new first level (Bachelor's) study programmes in: Communications, Law, Sociology, Business and Management respectively (3 of 5 first level programmes were accredited in September), and 3 new second level (Master's) study programmes in: Economics, Political Science and Public Administration respectively. In summary, the following new programmes are at various stages in the accreditation process for implementation from 2013 onwards:

- Bachelor's Degree in Communication (Entertainment and Tourism Industries) - *positive evaluation decision was made and the order for accreditation was signed by the director of the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education on 2012-09-26 No. SV6-47*
- Bachelor's Degree in Sociology (Business Sociology) – *not accredited, letter to Kazimieras Simonavicius University dated 2012-10-08 No. SV2-275*

- Bachelor's Degree in Marketing (Marketing and Advertising) - *positive evaluation decision was made and the order for accreditation was signed by the director of the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education on 2012-08-24 No. SV6-44*
- Bachelor's Degree in Business and Management (Entrepreneurship and Management) - *positive evaluation decision was made and the order for accreditation was signed by the director of the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education on 2012-09-26 No. SV6-47*
- Bachelor's Degree in Management (Organisation, Management and Psychology in the Organisation) - *positive evaluation decision was made and the order for accreditation was signed by the director of the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education on 2012-05-31 No. SV6-21*
- Master's Degree in Management (Organisational Innovation and Management) - *positive evaluation decision was made and the order for accreditation was signed by the director of the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education on 2012-10-23 No. SV6-50*
- Master's Degree in Economics (Creative Economy) – *negative evaluation decision, dated 2012-09-07 No. SV2-268*
- Master's Degree in Public Administration (Future Foresight and Strategic Governance) *under the process of evaluation*
- Master's Degree in Political Science (Geostrategy Studies) - *positive evaluation decision was made and the order for accreditation was signed by the director of the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education on 2012-10-04 No. SV2-274.*

The integration of ABM will also expand the overall portfolio of study programmes. There are plans to teach three current programmes in English by 2013. Under the major joint initiative planned with Kingston University, it is planned that 6 jointly delivered programmes will be introduced progressively from 2013, all taught in English.

16 The University plans to grow significantly its income from non-awarding bearing courses and CPD activity organised through the Entrepreneurship and Innovations Centre and the Competence Development Centre.

17 The University is a small institution. As at 1 September 2012, the university has 557 full-time and part-time students, distributed as follows:

Study programme	Study mode	Vilnius Departments	Klaipėda Faculty	In total
Law (Integrated Studies)	Full-time Studies	135	0	353
	Part-time Studies	123	95	
International Business Law (Undergraduate)	Full-time Studies	6	8	22
	Part-time Studies	7	1	
Creative and Cultural Industries (Undergraduate)	Full-time Studies	16	-	27
	Part-time Studies	11	-	
Business Management (Undergraduate) (at ABM)	Full-time Studies	54	-	155
	Part-time Studies	101	-	
Total		453	104	557

A total of 265 students have graduated from the University since its foundation in 2003. Reflecting demographic and youth emigration trends across Lithuania, there has since 2010 been a fall in student numbers. This trend is affecting most Lithuanian Higher education institutions to varying extents; the senior managers of KSU are seeking to tackle this issue through a business plan which includes a wide-ranging overhaul of their programme portfolio and more active marketing activities with potential students and provider institutions, (secondary schools and other).

18 The academic staff of KSU consists of 76 teachers, including 7 professors, 25 assistant professors and 44 lecturers. Of these, 14 staff have KSU as their primary workplace and 36 hold a doctorate. In the autumn of 2012, the teaching staff of the University will be increased by 45 teachers from ABM, of whom 26 hold doctorates.

III. STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT

19 KSU is undergoing a period of extreme transition. The merger of the former Business Law Academy with the Academy of Business and Management represents a major strategic initiative by the new shareholders. The Team was able to see an outline **strategic plan** for the new integrated institution, which is due to be finally approved later in 2012. The strategic vision for the new institution is being implemented by a new and dynamic leadership team. KSU is moving away from the strategic management model of the former Academy to a new strategic management model for the new University. The key features of this new model are described by KSU as a shift:

- from reactive to proactive
- from tactical to strategic
- towards development as a Learning University

20 The principal strategic goal of the new University is to develop and implement a model for the University that would be in line with 21st century demands, map to the context and policies of the European Union, and also reflect the expectations and traditions of Lithuanian society. Future strategy for KSU for the period 2012 – 2018 is thus being developed in a dynamic way, with due consideration given to Lithuanian and EU higher education strategic documents and guidelines, including the guidelines of the National Education Strategy for 2003-2012 (Seimas Resolution No IX-1700 of 4 July 2003) and the Law on Higher Education of the Republic of Lithuania (Seimas Resolution No VIII-1586 of 21 March 2000). Due consideration also continues to be given to the strategic documents of the European Higher Education Area. Attention is devoted to the implementation of the priorities and provisions of the national vision *Learning Lithuania 2030*, the application and development of the provisions of the Bologna Process and the creation of partnership networks with business and NGOs. The University seeks to improve the quality of studies, to strengthen the correlation between studies and research, to promote social and business innovation, and to develop the social responsibility, creativity and openness of the younger generation. The University is actively pursuing a number of international overseas alliances. The three drivers of academic development are:

- global academic development trends and advanced models of university activities;
- the specific character of post-Soviet development of the Lithuanian university system;
- the ongoing reform of the higher education system.

In the visiting Team's view, overall planning is coherent and is in keeping with the adopted business model. Not all protocols for implementation are yet fully in place, but the Team is confident that these will follow over the coming months. The Team noted that KSU's strategic intent was fully endorsed by the University's alumni and social partners it met. In the Team's opinion, the key elements of the new strategic plan represent sound business

planning, reflect a mission which is in line with the expectations of shareholders and which is being executed in accordance with national and European developments and legal frameworks. The visiting Team was impressed with the overall dynamism and ambition of the leadership team and considers the current developing strategic plans of KSU to be appropriate and fit for purpose.

In so far as these plans had emerged at the time of the Team's visit, they seemed to be based on a reasoned analysis of strengths and weaknesses, of opportunities and risks, with appropriate conclusions drawn from analysis undertaken with realistic entrepreneurial judgment. Principal risks to be managed included demographic trends and challenges from competitors, securing institutional objectives to secure its position in the higher education market and providing relevant third-level education in terms of serving both student and national interests.

21 In regard to compliance of **structural changes** with study, research and development and social development needs, the University is making appropriate major changes to its organisational structure from 2012/2013 in support of the implementation of new integrated studies, new research initiatives and new forms of collaboration, in support of its ambition to become a fully-fledged private university. Much has already been implemented or initiated. These initiatives include:

- In 2012, a new University Senate was elected according to the new Statutes and is now in operation
- The Council of the Academy that operated until 2012 has been reorganised into the Academic Council, as a strategic planning body for the University.
- The Business School of the University that will function as a faculty is being developed on the basis of the ABM study programmes. The Business School will implement the ABM Business Management Study Programme and a newly accredited Entrepreneurship and Management Programme.
- The University has enhanced studies and research in the law field, has developed and a new programme (International Business Law), is developing a new programme in the law study field (Law and Economic Security), organised a conference and other events, prepared to launch a periodic scientific publication on law and made preparations for doctoral studies.
- The University is expanding its activities into other fields of social sciences. It has accredited a Creative and Cultural Industries Bachelor Study Programme in the field of communication and prepared and submitted for accreditation a Creative Economy Master's Study Programme in the field of economics. As a result, an Institute of Creative Society and Economy has been established that will implement these programmes and develop research in the areas of communication and economics.
- Taking into account study needs and trends, in 2012 the sub-unit of the University in Klaipėda has been enhanced and a Klaipėda Faculty has been initiated, which from September 2012 will begin to implement integrated studies of both programmes in the law field (only part-time studies were conducted until 2012), as well as other newly accredited study programmes (from the autumn semester of the 2013–2014 academic year).
- In the development of its international relations, in June 2012 the University signed a cooperation agreement with Kingston University (UK) on the establishment of a Joint Research and Study Centre in Lithuania and approved a forward-looking activity plan for the centre. Based on the development of joint study programmes and other activities, the centre is expected to open in the first quarter of 2013.
- With a view to developing entrepreneurship and relations with social partners and ensuring student involvement in informal study processes, the former Innovation Centre of the Academy has been enhanced and renamed as the Entrepreneurship and Innovation Centre.
- To ensure the principle of lifelong learning and to meet the needs identified by social partners, postgraduate study modules have been or are being developed in the areas of

psychology, linguistics and business management which are planned to be implemented from October 2012. Postgraduate studies will be conducted by the Competences Development Centre of the University to be established in September 2012.

- In order to ensure quality of studies, a Study Development Division has been set up. The Competences Development Centre of the University is expected to provide student career guidance.
- It is planned to develop international study and research relations and integrate the ABM International Relations Division and the Research Centre into the University structure.
- As regards the merger with the ABM, at present the ABM library, the Information Systems Division and the Marketing Division are undergoing integration with the existing structure of the University.

22 In regard to **qualitative and quantitative indicators** for implementation of the strategy, KSU has some basic indicators in place, but is aware of the need for further work to be done in this area. Quantitative and qualitative indicators for the draft strategy are not yet fully developed to the same level as those for the former Academy. Specific indicators need to be linked to the specific goals. Particular areas of business risk for close monitoring include:

- progress with the modernisation of taught programmes
- future patterns and levels of student recruitment/enrolment
- success in the diversification of income streams (including from Lifelong Learning provision and from success in attracting EU funding (e.g. Framework 7))
- implementation and development of the recently awarded Erasmus Charter and international staff and student mobility/ exchange
- developing staff capacity
- increasing research output
- assuring and enhancing the quality of studies through introduction of the quality management system
- enhancing institutional business processes and information systems

The senior team and the Council may wish to consider adoption of a more explicit risk management policy for the above areas.

23 In regard to **monitoring of the plan** and control of the effectiveness of the strategic management, three principal mechanisms are used:

- The University Quality Manual, (based on the quality standard ISO 9001), (issued in 2012 and being introduced progressively)
- An Annual Activity Report presented by the Rector to the Council and also to the General Meeting of Shareholders
- A mechanism for internal University performance Audit (took place for the first time in July 2012)

The instruments adopted seem potentially effective tools for the monitoring of the implementation of the new strategic plan.

24 In respect of the adequacy of **dissemination of information on implementation of the strategic plan**, key features comprise:

- structural departments of the University prepare and implement annual activity plans on the basis of the University strategy and submit reports to the Rector.
- the Rector submits a report on implementation of the University activity strategy to the University Academic Council.

The main provisions of the University strategy and activity guidelines are also published on the University website. The University regularly updates the public, social partners and wider community about strategic achievements on the website, special press-releases, and through

news in social networks. The Team noted the consultative style and short lines of communication across the University which ensured good information flows. Dissemination of information on the implementation of the strategic plan of KSU seems adequate. Members of the University staff participate in all management processes at all levels: they are elected to the Senate and the Academic Council, carry out internal audits of the University, act as members and leaders of groups that prepare study programmes and of committees for study programmes, are included in projects under implementation and attend department and other meetings and events.

However in the external environment, it was now critically important to establish the new University's brand in the wider community. With the transformation from Academy to University, KSU no doubt would benefit from a very proactive information strategy both internally and externally.

The leadership of KSU should consider the development of a structured communications strategy.

25 In regard to the **effectiveness of the internal study quality assurance system**, the institution is relatively small and has in the past been able to operate much of its QA activity on an informal basis. A new quality assurance plan has been initiated with an initial emphasis on quality assurance in teaching and learning. A member of the senior team now has lead responsibility for quality assurance (Vice-Rector) and KSU has decided to implement ISO 9001:2008, based on the following principles:

- attention to customers, employees and other stakeholders
- process-based approach to activities
- continuous activity improvement by following a four-step model (quality cycle: plan-do-check-act)
- socially responsible attitude towards university's mission, activity and business

In accordance with this Standard, it has produced a supporting Quality Manual which contains a description of the procedures designed to monitor quality management processes for all KSU activities and which embraces the standards of the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (2006). The new Manual provides for a system of quality performance indicators and annual University performance audits.

In support of this work, KSU has been supported by EU Structural Fund project financing for a programme entitled 'Improving Study Efficiency at Vilnius Business Law Academy/KSU' The objective of this project is to improve internal quality assurance mechanisms and systems through:

- Up-skilling of the administrative staff,
- improvement of the quality management system (including information system),
- external evaluation of the revised quality management system

Work completed so far includes:

- preparation of the University Quality Manual, including specification of key quality assurance processes,
- completion of the first internal audit of the quality assurance system and
- completion of preparatory work to implement ISO 9001:2008 standard.

In 2012 the University also became a partner in an EU Social Fund financed project "Ensuring Study Accessibility for Students with Special Needs" and "Preparation and Implementation of a System of Formalization of Informally Acquired Competences at the West Lithuanian Business College and Partner Institutions".

The University's QA system is potentially very strong, with clear assignment of responsibility for key processes and a strong system of checks and balances, but there remains more to be done both to implement it fully and to develop the culture of quality within the institution as a whole which KSU strives for. The senior team of KSU is aware that a quality culture is one in which everybody in the organization is responsible for quality, not just the 'quality managers'.

The Team recommends that the developing quality policy be fully rolled out as intended by KSU to a full QA structure (with comprehensive policies and procedures), paying due regard to European Standards and Guidelines. There is also a need to strengthen the articulation of substantive quality criteria in the schedule.

(This can be best achieved by fully and explicitly addressing the scope of overarching educational objectives and correlated competencies as formulated in the Bologna Process (i.e. developing research and innovative capabilities; providing for personal development; ensuring social relevance, in particular employability; educating for democratic citizenship), and by addressing a learning outcome perspective, with assessment practices aligned to it).

26 The Team found evidence of the use of Study Programme Work Groups for the preparation of proposed new study programmes and of the use of Study Programme Committees for the monitoring, evaluation and improvement of an existing study programme, each process involving external social partners. Methodological support for the implementation of these processes is provided by the University Department of Development of Studies. Student views, ascertained through interviews were regularly taken into account. As the institution grows in size there will be scope for automating and making anonymous the student feedback system.

The Team recommends that KSU should consider how best to give more formal structure to its student feedback procedures and on actions taken by the University in response.

27 From 2012 **qualification of the teaching staff** at the University has become a key priority and more projects for staff development have been initiated. With the introduction and the full implementation of the new structure, KSU faces new challenges in connection with the development of new high quality integrated study programmes and joint study programmes with Kingston University in UK. The 2012 Specification of Personnel Management Process describes and establishes annual training activity for the teaching staff. Prior to the beginning of each semester meetings are arranged with teachers, during which professional development needs will be identified. **It is clear to the Team that Staff professional development is currently somewhat ad hoc and will continue to be a major challenge for the University. The Team recommends that structured staff development should continue to have priority in the University's expenditure planning. Verifiable target setting should be a key aspect of this planning.**

28 In regard to **support for students**, those students who met the Team reported that they have access to comprehensive support. The organizational support is provided by Coordinators of Full-time and Part-time Studies, who work individually with students and help resolve any problems. Subject lecturers support students on academic issues via scheduled surgery hours. The University is characterised by openness and students can always approach the Rector or Vice-Rector direct on any matters. From September 2012 the University Competence Development Centre is to be established which will support students with career planning from their very first year at the University. There is an Entrepreneurship and Innovations Centre at the University, which is intended to involve students in active supplementary activity, enriching studies with informal learning. In order to enrich student life at the new and enlarged university, the Team suggests that there may be scope in due course for developing the range of extra-curricular activities available to students.

29 In relation to **published information**, information about studies is provided on the University website, in social networks (www.facebook.com, www.twitter.com, www.youtube.com) in University groups, during meetings with academic community and social partners. The University actively cooperates with the University Students' Representative Council, involves

student representatives in all university management processes and in the dissemination of information.

The Team considered that the University was to be commended for its publication entitled “Invent your future!” This strap-line summed up KSU’s ambitions for its students very succinctly, suggesting that their future depends on knowledge and values. KSU seeks to form a creative and innovative academic community, where students fully can reveal their talents and realize their potential. The Team finds this publication commendable; it helps to strengthen the reputation and the brand of KSU.

30 **Process management** at the University is regulated by the Quality Manual and the descriptions of processes that come in the form of attachments to the Manual and are prepared on the basis of University strategy. Responsibility for process management is distributed among members of the Rector’s Office and the administrative divisions:

- The Rector has direct responsibility for strategic planning processes.
- The Vice-Rector is responsible for the process of study management, research development and international relations.
- The University Chancellor takes responsibility for the process of public relations, finance, infrastructure, human resource management and student affairs and career management.

The Academic Council of the University defines parameters of the activities, while the Senate makes proposals for their implementation. Acting pursuant to the Statutes, the Rector presents the activity report of the University to the General Meeting of Stakeholders and the Academic Council. The activities of the University are conducted on the basis of the approved annual budget that provides for funds for process implementation. The Senate and the Academic Council of the University include representatives of social partners and students. All the processes involve consultations with the social partners and feedback from the social partners and students. The social partners take an especially active part in the processes of preparation of study programmes and student career management. The Student Representative Council of the University is actively involved in the management of studies, student surveys and preparation of publications for students.

The Team was impressed by the deep sense of commitment to KSU shown by the lay members of Council and social partners it met during the site visit.

31 In regard to the **management of human resources** the Team noted that the area ‘Composition, structure and qualification of the teaching and administrative staff’ was assessed positively in the external evaluation by MOSTA; however it is clear that this subject continues to be actively addressed by the senior team. In the KSU’s SWOT analysis, an insufficient number of academic staff working on a permanent basis is categorized as a weakness. Further the funding of research has always been and still is an acute problem, although the University expansion into other areas of social science creates a platform for more diverse and interdisciplinary research.

Revised HR policies are being implemented from 2012 based on revised policies for staff recruitment, employment, qualification improvement and development of a motivation system.

32 **Change management** has been a constant feature for the leadership, the staff and the students. However, with the transformation from Academy to University in 2012 the KSU’s capacity for change has been challenged even more and greater focus will be placed on the effectiveness and the efficiency of the University. One of the most important values of the University is stated to be flexibility and openness to change and KSU has reacted positively to the need for change.

33 Investment decisions about **material resources** are taken by the General Meeting of Shareholders and managed by the Rector. In regard to **efficiency of use** of university funds, the management of the University's funds is regulated by University Statutes:

- The General Meeting of Shareholders of the University approves annual financial accounts and adopts decisions on strategic finance management issues;
- The Academic Council of the University analyses and evaluates the material presented by the Rector on the financial status of the University and its revenue and expenditure estimates;
- The Rector is responsible for the financial activities of the University.

With the introduction of the Quality Management System at the University in 2012, the management of funds is regulated by the Description of the Finance Management Procedure under which day to day responsibility for this area is delegated to the University Chancellor.

34 Annual tuition fees (for 2012–13) vary according to mode, level and area of study and range as follows:

Bachelor (full-time): 3,850 – 4,800 litas

Bachelor (part-time): 2,595 – 3,400 litas

Master (full-time): 5,100 – 8,700 litas

Master (part-time): 4,300 – 6,500 litas

The greater part of total University income has traditionally derived mainly from tuition fees, but the new University's strategy is to seek to diversify its sources of income. Prior to 2010, tuition fees accounted for some 98% of income. In 2011, increased success in securing external project funding saw a decrease to 94%. By increasing other sources of income, it is planned to further decrease this proportion to 78% by 2012 and to continue to develop thereafter new revenue streams such as through the new Competence Development Centre. Providing student numbers stay at least reasonably constant at over some 550, then KSU is financially viable for the immediate future. The fact that KSU is extending its portfolio of programmes, including in Klaipėda, is likely to provide even more financial stability. The Review Team noted that MOSTA reported positively in August 2012 on the 'efficiency on the use of funds from the state budget'; this also helps to confirm sound finances.

The Team would commend the University's income diversification strategy.

35 The University rents its **principal premises** in Vilnius; these comprise an area of 940 sq.m., of which 585 sq.m. is space devoted to learning. The premises house modern lecture theatres, seminar rooms, language classroom facilities, social working space with computer clusters, office space and a small library. Following the integration of the ABM, the area of the University will increase to 1,755 sq.m., of which 1088 sq.m. will be assigned to teaching and learning. Team members were able to visit both sites and found them to be fit for purpose in terms of space and quality and – with some reservation as to library facilities at the time of the Team's visit (for intended improvement see below) – equipped to an acceptable standard. All the rooms at the University also have Internet and intranet connections for laptop computers. In 2010 the University introduced the Moodle e-learning platform, which provides supporting materials for studies.

The University library offers 20 computerised workplaces with access to different international research databases, such as the EBSCO host database, Emeralds, Grove Art Online and JSTOR. For legal information, the students can use the INFOLEX programme. From September 2012 the University library is expected to start using the integrated library system ALEPH 500. Following the integration with the ABM in autumn 2012, the University library stock will increase more than six-fold or from 2,040 to 13,283 books. The University has a cooperation agreement with the Lithuanian Technical Library which provides access to its stock for the students and the teachers.

The Klaipėda Faculty of the University rents premises from Klaipėda University; this comprises 13 classrooms with 25 workstations each (including 4 computer rooms) and 2 classrooms with 80 seats each. The Team was able to view the space on the Klaipėda site via video.

The Klaipėda Faculty of the University has a similar access agreement with the library of Klaipėda University.

The Team was aware of the fact that the evaluation of resources carried out by MOSTA in accordance with its criteria, had delivered a negative conclusion on the 'adequacy and availability of the learning resources and associated infrastructure'. The Team noted that the two-year-old MOSTA data had however now been overtaken by changed circumstances. The Team also heard of the longer term strategy to unite both parts of the new University in due course on a new single site. The Team reviewed the overall MOSTA data available for KSU, in the context of current circumstances. From direct observation, **the Team believes that the premises of KSU are currently fit for purpose in the context of the composition of the student population.**

36 The principles of **academic ethics** are laid down in the Statute and in a Code of Ethics which is supervised by the Community and Development Committee of the University Senate.

The Code of Ethics defines the ethical standards of the academic community, the ethical standards of communication between the teaching staff and the students, the ethical standards for the students and the procedures for the supervision of the Code of Ethics.

The ethical standards for students lay emphasis on the seriousness of falsification, plagiarism, bribery and forgery, and also highlight the virtues of collegiality, friendliness, integrity, tolerance and solidarity. Students met by the team appeared to be aware of what was expected of them and were equally aware of procedures for appeals or complaints.

37 The Team believes that the University's senior leadership group has a clear vision and strategy for the institution. They work well together and are well supported by an active and fully engaged Council and group of social partners.

38 Strategic management area is given a positive evaluation.

IV. ACADEMIC STUDIES AND LIFE-LONG LEARNING

39 The **qualifications offered by KSU are compliant with mission, national needs and social development.** The global and innovative mission of the new institution is well-attuned to these drivers. The University has been expanding and has been creating new, topical first-level and second-level study programmes in the area of social sciences, which reflect Lithuanian and European market demands. The University has also expanded its commitment to lifelong learning by developing non-degree qualification updating courses, establishing a Qualifications Development Centre and preparing qualification updating programmes in three areas to which students were admitted from October 2012. In addition to full time modes of study, KSU offers a number of flexible delivery pathways including a variety of **forms of lifelong learning** via:

- Part-time study mode;
- Studies according to a personalised study schedule;
- Flexible entry through recognition of prior achievements (including students with the professional Bachelor degree) in accordance with the national law;
- Non-awarding bearing updating studies at postgraduate level.

The Team was informed by students that for one part-time study route, classes are conducted at weekends: on Saturdays and on Sundays (every other weekend) or on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays (once or twice a month); this was considered to be a particularly helpful mode of study for those with professional and/or family commitments.

40 KSU has a varied programme of **local engagement** with both social partners and the local

community; local partners found the University very responsive to their development needs, for example through the recent setting up of a tailored programme for company liquidators. It has a good record in meeting the needs of niche markets; for example this year the University established the Entrepreneurship and Innovation Centre with the brief to encourage students and social partners to cooperate in the development and implementation of business ideas, to broker collaborative work in the interdisciplinary teams, uniting students, lecturers and social partners from various fields. The Centre's activity is oriented towards entrepreneurship projects, designed not only for University students, but for young people in general.

The Team commends KSU's flexible approach to programme delivery and also its responsiveness to market needs at all levels.

Whilst the Team found much to commend in the University's approach to programme design, it felt that KSU could with advantage

- **strengthen the written references in its programme learning outcomes to the development in its students of personal competences, research skills, team working and citizenship**
- **strengthen the written articulation of the linkages between its statements of institutional vision, mission and strategy and its programme design in terms of defining learning objectives, content, teaching methodology, and highlight this linkage more explicitly**

41 KSU is actively improving its linkages with **graduates and alumni** through their inputs to programme design and review. It is building up a database with personal and employment details through the Alumni Club, established in 2012. The University has recently started to conduct surveys of graduates, which help not only to evaluate the quality of University courses, but also to monitor graduates' career expectations. Current final year students are also surveyed in June. Survey data shows the graduates' career expectations and facilitates comparative analysis. Results of the analysis contribute to the yearly renewal of the study programme, quality improvement and the development of new study programmes.

As part of its QA processes, the University is developing a Process Description for University Career Planning/Monitoring and Liaising with the Graduates. The process encompasses the following main parts:

- Labour market analysis – analysis of supply and demand in the labour market
- Planning of professional counselling and career monitoring – comparative analysis of University programmes, qualifications awarded and labour market demands;
- Counselling and information for the future students – meetings with the senior classes pupils and school graduates, information about the specialists prepared at KSU and future prospects;
- Professional counselling and information for students who have entered the University – consultations on professional career issues, organisation of professional skills improvement courses, information about available jobs, traineeship opportunities;
- Monitoring of University graduates and current students career – organisation of events for the University graduates and students, conduction of surveys about the employment opportunities and professional experience.

The Team welcomes this comprehensive approach to student employability and also KSU's intention to anchor feedback from graduates and employers more firmly in its QA processes

42 KSU fosters **cooperation with a range of academic, social and business** partners. These include:

- Lithuanian higher education institutions, for example, Mykolas Romeris University, Klaipeda University, Vilnius Co-operative College (qualifications recognition, common

projects, shared study resources, premises lease and other fields).

- Foreign higher education institutions (for example, Pultusk Academy of Humanities (Poland), University of Crete (Greece). Main cooperation areas - quality management system development, lecturer and student exchange programmes, international projects).
- Enterprises/institutions, (for example, "Ermgassen & Co", UAB. Main cooperation areas – traineeships, study programme quality improvement).
- Various enterprise and institution associations (Association of Lithuanian Credit Unions, The Association of Chiefs of Local Authorities of Lithuania, Lithuanian Confederation of Business Employers, The Lithuanian Business Confederation. Main cooperation areas – development of specialists' updating programmes and joint project implementation).

The University social partners' base has been expanding since 2012:

- The Lithuanian higher-education institutions partners group includes Colleges. The basis of cooperation is the recognition of College studies results.
- The International partners group involves new higher-education institutions from abroad, for example, Kingston University (London, Great Britain), Gdansk School of Banking (Poland), National Kaohsiung University (Taiwan), National Kaohsiung University of Applied Sciences (Taiwan) and others. International partners group is growing constantly, in preparation for the implementation and roll-out of the Erasmus exchange programme.
- The Enterprises/institutions partners group has new partners, such as Public Entity "Saulėtekio slėnis", European Consumer Centre, State Consumer Rights Protection Authority and others, which contribute significantly to the development of the new KSU study programmes, traineeship possibilities and the quality of separate subjects or at public lectures.
- In addition, the Enterprise and institution associations partners group has other new partners, such as an Association Knowledge Economy Forum, Lithuanian Human Rights League, National Association of Creative and Cultural Industries, Students Association of Creative Industries and others, which also participate actively in developing new KSU study programmes, offering traineeship vacancies, planning common projects and non-formal studies and giving lectures on separate subjects or at public lectures.

Cooperation with partners is an integrated part of the University's values and mission. The principal interactions with the social partners since 2012 have been:

- New study programmes development and incorporation of practical experience into study process;
- Provision of continuing bespoke learning and qualifications improvement in specific areas;
- Preparation of final thesis topics and supervision of research projects;
- Implementation of common research activity, common national and international projects;
- International exchange of students and teachers (international academic partners);
- Preparation and publication of various articles and other scientific publications and methodical literature;
- Organisation of conferences, seminars and other educational events;
- Development of informational and material basis.

43 The university is responding energetically to the following main **EHEA provisions**:

- Student-centred studies, credit accumulation and transfer system
- Lifelong learning development, flexible mode of study development
- Stimulation of interdisciplinary studies

- Cooperation with students, teachers and social partners
- Interaction of studies, scientific research and innovation, promotion of innovations into teaching and learning process, stimulation of creativity
- Promotion of academic dynamics, internationality, joint study programme development

44 The new management is very actively promoting **internationalisation** of the University. In 2012 the University was granted the Erasmus University Charter. It is planned to implement Erasmus exchange programme for students, teachers and administration staff from the beginning of 2013-2014. The University is also developing opportunities for students and teachers to participate in exchange programmes in two Taiwanese universities. A small number of staff exchanges have been facilitated through research scholarships. Of particular note is the proposed cooperation with Kingston University (London, Great Britain) and the signed agreement for the establishment of Joint Centre in Lithuania and implementation of joint study programmes and scientific research projects.

The Team commends KSU's active approach to internationalisation of its activities.

45 Academic Studies and Life-Long Learning area is given a positive evaluation.

V. RESEARCH AND (OR) ART

46 Research (in the area of Law and Law-related areas of management, economy, and sociology) has been conducted at the former Academy as follows:

- Release of scientific publications (120 over 2006-2011);
- Organisation of conferences;
- Organisation of student research activity (e.g. through project work and through Students' Scientific Society);
- Initiation and implementation of scientific projects, with social and business partners;
- Individual research activity of the teachers and scientists.

47 KSU's self evaluation indicates the inherited challenges which the new institution faces in this area of activity. These include:

- Research activity lacked consistency, planning, and delegation of responsibility.
- The institution faced problems in the area of research implementation, a major problem being shortage of permanent scientific staff. For most of the research-active staff who worked at the Academy it was not their main job, and they performed their scientific research in other higher learning institutions of Lithuania.
- The former Academy was specialising in a narrow area of business law, where there was low demand for commissioned research
- The funding of research was (and is) an acute problem, as most of the national programmes of research funding have been targeted at state institutions of higher education. Private universities face challenges in identifying financial support for the development of a suitable research infrastructure.

48 The newly established KSU has refreshed its overall approach to research, so as to fully integrate **research strategy with the overarching University strategy**. The draft University strategy in turn reflects the national and regional priorities and provisions of the vision "Learning Lithuania 2030". The University's strategic research goals focus on:

- An infrastructure conducive to the delivery of modern inter-disciplinary research in the social sciences
- a more effective interplay between research, study programmes and innovation,

- commercialisation of research,
- development of international relations and sharing of joint research priorities.

The University's planning cycle comprises:

- To define the strategic directions, goals and priorities for research
- preparation and approval of the yearly plan and budget for the research and application activity
- initiation and deliberation of the scientific works/events,
- dissemination of the research results including the publication of scientific works and applied applications

49 Following completion of the planning phase, the University has now embarked on a reform of its research infrastructure based on:

- Underpinning of research through the support of a University Science Development Centre
- Establishment of a research strategy based on a number of key themes:
 - "Sustainable Innovations in the Development of the Creative Society and Integrated Economy"
 - "Law Effectiveness in the Environment of Global Challenges"
 - "Global Development of Creative Economy"
 - "Scientific Society and Advanced, Sustainable, and Integrating Economy"
 - Development of Sustainable Innovations for Global Competitiveness".
- A Research programme in the area of "future insights"
- Internationalisation of research through joint projects
- A commitment to enhance the commercialization of its research
- A review of its HR policy to address the issue of staff capacity for research

The planning of University research priority projects has been undertaken in close cooperation with the partners, and the Team saw evidence of substantial involvement of business partners in research activity and planning. For example, commissioned research conducted by the ABM Science Centre provides practical solutions to problems raised by business partners. A majority of current research projects include foreign academic partners, and national projects have been influenced by relevant topics submitted by the social partners.

50 The university is aware of the need for the institution's strategic documents relating to research and/or art activities **to take account of the priorities of the European Research Area** and is developing those key strategies accordingly. Its participation to date in international research projects has been small; this is attributed largely to KSU's narrow discipline base. **Researchers' international mobility** and the **impact of visiting researchers** on the research activities of KSU have to date also been very limited. Despite these past shortcomings, the University's forward strategy demonstrates a clear commitment to **new collaborative arrangements, including**

- new opportunities under Erasmus scheme from 2012
- new opportunities for participation in national programmes for international research, visits, internships
- implementation of bilateral agreements for joint research, (e.g. with Kingston University and with Taiwanese Universities)

51 **The Team welcomes the challenging, but realistic research agenda which the new University has set itself. The agenda is flexible, shows awareness of both national and European strategies, engages fully with local social and business partners in a cooperative manner, and plays to the strengths of the institution.**

The Team recommends that as KSU moves forward with the implementation of a dynamic research agenda, it should:

- **ensure that the institution's identified priority research areas designed to support KSU in developing its institutional profile, are widely known and understood both internally and externally**
- **embed and ensure fully and clearly the ownership of responsibility, wholly or in part as appropriate, for research activity at all levels across the institution, both vis-à-vis its staff and its institutional partners**
- **ensure a common understanding of the way in which academic staff are performance managed/incentivized to undertake research activity for KSU as the primary sponsor**
- **review its (full) costing mechanisms for contract research**
- **seek to increase the number of doctoral students and explore its own capacity to award the degree.**

52 Research and (or) Art area is given a positive evaluation.

VI. IMPACT ON REGIONAL AND NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

53 The University's impact on regional and national development has to date included:

- Provision of skilled, qualified manpower in Law and Business
- Provision of research and consultancy services
- development of relations with social partners,
- involvement of University experts in public life, and
- fostering intellectual curiosity across teaching, research and business.

Impact measures for the former Academy have been related primarily to the improvement of business conditions in Lithuania, as this is directly related to the area of law (business law and finance law). Provision of expertise in business law analysis and in the legal regulation of business has been a particularly strong output from the former Academy. During the review period, 208 Masters' graduation theses were defended. Most topics were oriented **towards the analysis and improvement of the Lithuanian legal system**. Similarly the requirement for law students to complete two types of placement sessions (in management and economy, and legal practice of the graduation paper) significantly enhanced the interplay between University and local stakeholders.

The Team commends KSU for its commitment to addressing Regional and national development needs.

54 The strategy of the new University for 2012–2017 confirms the University's perception of itself as a key player in the development of the country and the regions. Subject diversification will enable KSU to broaden the field of potential partners. The University's development is oriented towards the goal of becoming the regional nucleus of knowledge and innovations, uniting science, business, and governmental institutions. KSU is committed to the development of all areas of science and their interdisciplinary universality. The University aims to create a model of a university, which is more modern, more effective, and more publicly engaged than the post-Soviet university system that has been prevalent up till now and that is based on the dominance of the traditional state universities.

55 University activity is directly oriented towards the latest Lithuania or EU strategic documents or those in the process of creation including:

- *The State Progress Strategy "Lithuania 2030"* (www.lietuva2030.lt), which formulates the priorities of smart economy and smart society, and underlines creativity, entrepreneurship, and innovation.
- *The EU strategy "Europe 2020"* (http://ec.europa.eu/lietuva/documents/skelbimai/2020m_europa.pdf), which emphasises the development of the economy based on knowledge and innovation, encouragement of social and territorial coherence, development of creativeness and culture.
- *The vision "Learning Lithuania 2030"*, which says that "a universally accessible higher education together with the integral and purposefully formed research system represent the major driving force of society's cultural, social and technological progress, and the basis for the attractiveness of the country and the welfare of its citizens.". This is part of the long-term development strategy in the text above.

56 The University plans to achieve **increased impact on the regional and country** primarily through the following vehicles:

- research, innovation and study support activities delivered through the Entrepreneurship and Innovations Centre and the Competence Development Centre.
- provision of niche programmes (such as the non-degree Accounting Programme), designed for the requalification of the unemployed
- non-degree qualification updating studies, and qualification updating programmes in Psychology, Business and Management, Communication (from October 2012):
- cooperation with social partners, and initiation and implementation of research / commercial projects.
- mixed lifelong learning delivery modes, including: part-time study mode; personalized learning pathways; recognition of prior study courses (including students with the professional Bachelor degree); non-degree qualification updating studies (postgraduate)
- setting up the Institute of Future Insights of Lithuania, which will encourage state, society, and science to progress in the world of global changes, perform fundamental and applied research of future insights, as well as experimental development on the national and international level.

57 During the review period (2006–2011), academic personnel actively participated in **social and scientific activities**. Most of the scientists and teachers were active in the areas of law, management, economy, and social sciences, including attendance at 54 national and international conferences. During the review period, the teachers took part in 35 projects. The main topics of the projects were related to the creation of the infrastructure for the information society, the system of education and science in Lithuania and a future insights project "*Learning Lithuania 2030*". University employees are active participants in various social initiatives. The University aims at the 'popularisation' of the achievements of science and studies, and participates in various public events, e. g. "Tebūnie naktis" ("Let it be Night" in 2012), "Tyrejų naktis" ("Researchers' Night" in 2012). The community of the University is an active supporter of environmental campaigns and a proponent of sustainable development principles; members of the academic community have been participating in the clean-up campaign of Lithuania "Lets Do It!". The University have been invited as experts and researchers to take part in various studies performed by state and other institutions (e. g. Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania, the Centre of Monitoring and Analysis of Science and Studies, PC "Saulėtekio slėnis", association "Žinių ekonomikos forumas" – "Knowledge Economic Forum"), in working groups, TV and radio shows (e. g. 1 show on "Lietuvos rytas" TV channel, 2 shows on the News radio).

58 As already discussed, KSU has set itself an ambitious engagement strategy. It has a strong management team, ably supported by its Senate and Council, with very supportive social partners. As it moves forward:

- **it should formulate a crisper tactical action plan on how it will mobilize its plans for increasing its impact on the Region (including motivation of staff – see para. 49)**
- **the University’s degree awards can impact directly on the local economy, but competing provision by competitor institutions should be monitored carefully**
- **the University should ensure that its research activities are identifiably associated with it and are not merely seen as activities of its staff, either as individuals or as employees of other higher education institutions, external companies etc.**

59 Impact on Regional and National Development area is given a positive evaluation.

VII. GOOD PRACTICE AND ENHANCEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

Strategic Management

60 Positive Features

- The Team considered that the University was to be commended for its self-evaluation document and for the spirit of self-reflection, analysis, honesty, self-criticism and sense of purpose which it conveyed (para.7)
- In the visiting Team’s view, overall planning is coherent and is in keeping with the adopted business model. Not all protocols for implementation are yet fully in place, but the Team is confident that these will follow over the coming months. The Team noted that KSU’s strategic intent was fully endorsed by the University’s alumni and social partners it met. In the Team’s opinion, the key elements of the new strategic plan represent sound business planning, reflect a mission which is in line with the expectations of shareholders and which is being executed in accordance with national and European developments and legal frameworks. The visiting Team was impressed with the overall dynamism and ambition of the leadership team and considers the current developing strategic plans of KSU to be appropriate and fit for purpose (para. 20)
- The instruments adopted seem potentially effective tools for the monitoring of the implementation of the new strategic plan (para. 23).
- The Team considered that the University was to be commended for its publication entitled “Invent your future!” (para. 29)
- The Team was impressed by the deep sense of commitment to KSU shown by the lay members of Council and social partners it met during the site visit (para. 30)
- The Team would commend the University’s income diversification strategy (para. 34).
- The Team believes that the premises of KSU are fit for purpose in the context of the composition of the student population (para. 35)
- The University’s senior leadership group has a clear vision and strategy for the institution. They work well together and are well supported by an active and fully engaged Council and group of social partners (para. 37)

61 Recommendations

- The senior team and the Council may wish to consider adoption of a more explicit risk management policy (para. 22)
- The leadership of KSU should consider the development of a structured communications strategy (para.24)

- The Team recommends that the developing quality policy be fully rolled out as intended by KSU to a full QA structure (with comprehensive policies and procedures), paying due regard to European Standards and Guidelines. There is also a need to strengthen the articulation of substantive quality criteria in the schedule (para. 25)
- The Team recommends that KSU should consider how best to give more formal structure to its student feedback procedures and on actions taken by the University in response (para.26)
- The Team recommends that structured staff development should continue to have priority in the University's expenditure planning. Verifiable target setting should be a key aspect of this planning (para. 27)

Academic Studies and Life-Long Learning

62 Positive Features

- The Team commends KSU's flexible approach to programme delivery and also its responsiveness to market needs at all levels, with increased focus on lifelong learning opportunities (para. 39)
- The Team welcomes the comprehensive approach to student employability and also KSU's intention to anchor feedback from graduates and employers more firmly in its QA processes (para. 40)
- The Team commends KSU's active approach to internationalisation of its activities (para. 43)

63 Recommendations

- Whilst the Team found much to commend in KSU's approach to programme design, it felt that the University could with advantage
 - strengthen the written references in its programme learning outcomes to the development in its students of personal competences, research skills, team working and citizenship
 - strengthen the written articulation of the linkages between its statements of institutional vision, mission and strategy and its programme design in terms of defining learning objectives, content, teaching methodology, and highlight this linkage more explicitly (para. 39)

Research and Art

64 Positive Features

- The Team welcomes the challenging, but realistic research agenda which KSU has set itself. The agenda is flexible, shows awareness of both national and European agendas, engages fully with local social and business partners and plays to the strengths of the institution (para. 49)

65 Recommendations

- The Team recommends that as KSU moves forward with the implementation of a dynamic research agenda, it should:
 - ensure that the institution's identified priority research areas designed to support KSU in developing its institutional profile, are widely known and understood both internally and externally
 - embed and ensure fully and clearly the ownership of responsibility, wholly or in part as appropriate, for research activity at all levels across the institution, both vis-à-vis its staff and its institutional partners

- ensure a common understanding of the way in which academic staff are performance managed/incentivized to undertake research activity for KSU as the primary sponsor
- review its (full) costing mechanisms for contract research
- seek to increase the number of doctoral students and explore its own capacity to award the degree.

(para. 49)

Impact on Regional and National Development

66 Positive Features

The Team commends KSU for its commitment (as further discussed in paras. 51, 53 and 54) to addressing regional and national development needs (para.50)

67 Recommendations

As already discussed, KSU has set itself an ambitious engagement strategy. It has a strong management team, ably supported by its Senate and Council, with very supportive social partners. As it moves forward:

- it should formulate a crisper tactical action plan on how it will mobilize its plans for increasing its impact on the Region (including motivation of staff – see para. 49)
- the University's degree awards can impact directly on the local economy, but competing provision by competitor institutions should be monitored carefully.
- the University should ensure that its research activities are identifiably associated with it and are not merely seen as activities of its staff, either as individuals or as employees of other higher education institutions, external companies etc.

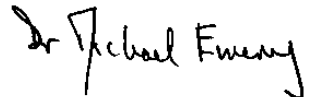
(para. 55)

VIII. JUDGEMENT

Kazimieras Simonavičius University is given **positive** evaluation.

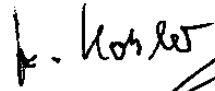
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