



STUDIJŲ KOKYBĖS VERTINIMO CENTRAS

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DĖL IŠORINIO VERTINIMO

Atsakydami į Jūsų prašymą „Dėl Kauno kolegijos studijų programų akreditacijos“ vertinti Jūsų aukštojoje mokykloje vykdomas odontologijos krypties studijų programas *Odontologinė priežiūra* (valstybiniai kodai – 65308B104, 653A52004) ir *Burnos higiena* (valstybiniai kodai – 65308B107, 653A51004) (toliau – Programos), informuojame, kad, vadovaujantis Studijų programų išorinio vertinimo ir akreditavimo tvarkos aprašo¹ (toliau – Aprašas) V skyriumi bei Vykdomų studijų programų vertinimo eigos aprašo ir metodinių nurodymų² (toliau – Metodiniai nurodymai) II skyriumi, Studijų kokybės vertinimo centro (toliau – Centras) pasitelkti ekspertai atliko Programų išorinį vertinimą (vertinimo išvados pridedamos).

Pažymėtina, kad šios ekspertų išvados vadovaujantis Metodinių nurodymų 7.3.2, 51, 53 punktais, taip pat Studijų vertinimo komisijos nuostatų³ 6punktu, buvo svarstytos 2010 m. gruodžio 10 d. Studijų vertinimo komisijos (toliau – Komisija) posėdyje, kuriame buvo nuspręsta ekspertų išvadoms pritarti.

Centras, atsižvelgdamas į ekspertų parengtas Programų vertinimo išvadas bei Komisijos pritarimą, vadovaudamasis Aprašo 34 punktu, priėmė sprendimą Programas įvertinti teigiamai, kadangi surinkta po 19 balų, nė viena vertinama sritis nėra įvertinta „nepatenkinamai“.

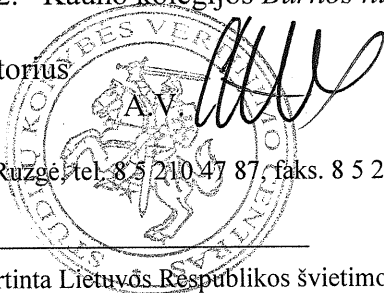
Nesutikdami su šiuo Centro sprendimu, Jūs turite teisę vadovaudamiesi Aprašo VI skyriumi bei Metodinių nurodymų 60 punktu Centrai pateikti apeliaciją per 20 dienų nuo šio sprendimo išsiuntimo dienos.

Įsiteisėjus šiam Centro sprendimui pagal Aprašo 28.1 punktą Programos akredituotinos 6 metams.

PRIDEDAMA:

1. Kauno kolegijos *Odontologinės priežiūros* studijų programos išorinio vertinimo išvados, 14 lapų;
2. Kauno kolegijos *Burnos higienos* studijų programos išorinio vertinimo išvados, 13 lapų.

Direktorius



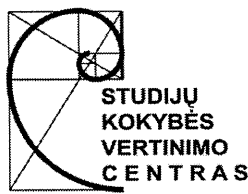
Artūras Grebliauskas

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¹ Patvirtinta Lietuvos Respublikos švietimo ir mokslo ministro 2009 m. liepos 24 d. įsakymu Nr. ISAK-1652 (Žin., 299, Nr. 96-4083).

² Patvirtinta Centro direktoriaus 2009 m. spalio 30 d. įsakymu Nr. 1-94 „Dėl vykdomų studijų programų vertinimo eigos aprašo ir metodinių nurodymų patvirtinimo“.

³ Patvirtinta Centro direktoriaus 2010 m. sausio 18 d. įsakymu Nr. 1-01-9 (Žin., 2010, Nr. 476).



STUDIJŲ KOKYBĖS VERTINIMO CENTRAS

KAUNO KOLEGIJOS
***BURNOS HIGIENOS* PROGRAMOS (65308B107,
653A51004)**
VERTINIMO IŠVADOS

EVALUATION REPORT
of *ORAL HYGIENE* (65308B107, 653A51004)
STUDY PROGRAMME
at Kaunas College

Grupės vadovas:
Team leader:

Dr. Michael Emery

Grupės nariai:
Team members:

Prof. Gökhan Alpaslan

Dr. Jonas Bartlingas

Prof. Heikki Murtomaa

Išvados parengtos anglų kalba
Report language - English

Vilnius
2010

DUOMENYS APIE ĮVERTINTĄ PROGRAMĄ

Studijų programos pavadinimas	<i>Burnos higiena</i>
Valstybiniai kodai	65308B107, 653A51004
Studijų sritis	biomedicinos mokslai
Studijų kryptis	burnos priežiūra
Studijų programos rūšis	koleginės studijos
Studijų pakopa	pirmoji
Studijų forma (trukmė metais)	nuolatinė (3)
Studijų programos apimtis kreditais ¹	120
Suteikiamas laipsnis ir (ar) profesinė kvalifikacija	burnos higienistas, odontologijos profesinis bakalaugas, burnos priežiūros profesinis bakalaugas
Studijų programos įregistravimo data	2002-06-25

¹ – vienas kreditas laikomas lygiu 40 studento darbo valandų

INFORMATION ON EVALUATED STUDY PROGRAMME

Name of the study programme	<i>Oral hygiene</i>
State codes	65308B107, 653A51004
Study area	biomedical sciences
Study field	oral care
Kind of the study programme	college studies
Cycle of studies	first
Study mode (length in years)	full-time (3)
Volume of the study programme in national credits ¹	120
Degree and (or) professional qualifications awarded	oral hygienist, professional bachelor in odontology, professional bachelor in oral care
Date of registration of the study programme	2002-06-25

¹ – one credit is equal to 40 hours of student work

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CONTENTS

I. INTRODUCTION	4
II. PROGRAMME ANALYSIS.....	4
1. Programme aims and learning outcomes.....	4
1.1. Programme demand, purpose and aims.....	4
1.2. Learning outcomes of the programme.....	5
2. Curriculum design	5
2.1. Programme structure	5
2.2. Programme content.....	6
3. Staff	6
3.1. Staff composition and turnover	6
3.2. Staff competence	7
4. Facilities and learning resources	7
4.1. Facilities	7
5. Study process and student assessment.....	8
5.1. Student admission.....	8
5.2. Study process.....	9
5.3. Student support.....	10
5.4. Student achievement assessment.....	10
5.5. Graduates placement	11
6. Programme management.....	11
6.1. Programme administration	11
6.2. Internal quality assurance.....	11
III. RECOMMENDATIONS	12
IV. GENERAL ASSESSMENT.....	13

I. INTRODUCTION

The Oral Hygiene Study Programme at the Kaunas College was evaluated by an international expert team comprising Dr. Michael Emery, UK, as the expert team leader, Professor Gökhan Alpaslan, Turkey, Dr. Jonas Bartingas, Lithuania, and Professor Heikki Murtomaa, Finland as the members. Currently, there are 427 oral hygienists and demand is growing, as it is also internationally. In England, for example, oral hygienists are in considerable demand with patients having regular appointments for oral care and also for cosmetic teeth whitening.

The following report is based on the structured self-evaluation documents provided to the team well in advance by the Kaunas College for individual review and on the expert team's experiences and observations gathered during the site visit on 26 October, 2010. The guidelines for the review are the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education (SKVC) in Lithuania's documents and the template for the report. All of the expert team's comments and recommendations are jointly offered with the intention of trying to ensure that the programme achieves the quality consistent with its aspirations. The expert team feels that the documentation provided was sufficient and as thorough as could be expected.

After the site visit the expert team held further discussions and produced the draft report.

II. PROGRAMME ANALYSIS

1. Programme aims and learning outcomes

1.1. Programme demand, purpose and aims

1.1.1. Uniqueness and rationale of the need for the programme

Kaunas College (hereafter KC) has undergone major structural changes after its foundation in 2000 and now Faculty of Health Care as a part of it implements 11 study programmes. The Oral Hygiene (hereafter OH) programme was first implemented in the autumn 2002. The need for the programme is based on satisfying the social-economical needs of Kaunas region as well as the whole country. Analogous study programmes are implemented in four other Colleges in Lithuania. The panel acknowledges the fact that the aims of the programme corresponds to the developmental perspective of the Republic of Lithuania as well as the Kaunas region to promote closer cooperation between public health care, and social and educational institutions for the support of healthy living and prevention of diseases.

The expert team emphasises the potential and significance of this programme within the oral health care system of the country to meet the needs of the population and those requiring special support to maintain their oral health. Increasing the number of graduating students in this programme can also give more emphasis on the preventive activities scientifically proved to be effective and efficient in dental care.

1.1.2. Conformity of the programme purpose with institutional, state and international directives

The aims of the OH study programme have been adapted to the KC strategic activity programme for 2008-2013, formulated in respect of the orders of Medical Norm of the Dental Hygienist and Dental Hygienist Training Standard. These also correspond to the national law on Science and Education of the Republic of Lithuania. The aims and organisation of the programme also corresponds to the EU directive resulting in recognition of competences acquired to work as an oral hygienist in all EU countries.

The experts are pleased to note that the OH programme has been adjusted to meet the new Ministry requirements concerning the newest intake of students in 2010.

1.1.3. Relevance of the programme aims

Despite great improvements in oral health globally, many countries still encounter oral diseases, particularly in disadvantaged areas of the populations. Major oral diseases, dental caries and periodontal disease can be viewed as behavioural diseases preventable by simple oral hygiene practices and early minor interventions. Better understanding of aetiology and determinants of oral health together with increasing health care expenditures has facilitated discussions and actions related to delegation of duties among dental professionals internationally. The expert team is satisfied to see that the KC OH programme aims meets its purpose well in order to enhance the oral health of Lithuanians.

1.2. Learning outcomes of the programme

1.2.1. Comprehensibility and attainability of the learning outcomes

The learning outcomes of the OH programme include all skills traditionally related to the activities of a dental hygienist to provide certain dental care services. The learning outcomes are clearly defined on the programme and at subject levels in the self-evaluation report and are confirmed by the expert team. However, these were not tied with the teaching and learning methods as recommended in the Bologna Declaration of 1999 and further endorsed at the Leuven Meeting in 2009. This should be remedied.

1.2.2. Consistency of the learning outcomes

The experts confirm that the learning outcomes are in line of those traditionally found in the countries with similar training programmes and can be achieved within the planned three-year study period. Additionally, the learning outcomes at programme level correlate with those at subject level.

1.2.3. Transformation of the learning outcomes

Based on the self-evaluation report it remained somewhat unclear how the practical training consisting some 50% of the total study volume is executed and to what extent the students are exposed to different kinds of patients and working environments. This was, however, further explained and cleared during the discussions with the teachers and the practical focus of the programme was highly appreciated by the students and graduates met by the experts. To expose the students to the real life working conditions and treatment needs of Lithuanian populations the practical training should have elements which allow them to meet patients with different personal characteristics and from different socio-economic backgrounds.

The team acknowledges the concept of constant monitoring the validity of the learning outcomes by the staff, as emphasised in the self-evaluation report.

2. Curriculum design

2.1. Programme structure

2.1.1. Sufficiency of the study volume

The duration of the OH programme is three years (120 National credits). The volume of the programme complies with legal requirements and is sufficient. During the first year of the programme general college subjects (10 credits) are covered. Out of total credits required 90 credits (75%) are allocated to study field subjects and six (5%) to elective subjects. There is quite a heavy emphasis of self-study works by the students, which consist of 42% of the total number of hours. As noted, the old curriculum complies with the legal acts and actions have been taken to meet the new requirements for latest intake of the students in 2010.

2.1.2. Consistency of the study subjects

There seems to be a sufficient level of consistency of the study subjects based on recent actions to improve the study plan. As the result of these changes new subjects were allocated in the general education of the study plan. Furthermore, some integration of professional courses has been implemented. There are still some elements in the curriculum with small credits, which could benefit by merging. The further integration process not only within the programme but also with other programmes at KC, e.g. by joint lectures, is encouraged by the expert team.

The elective studies are not related to the main core study programme and are chosen out of 149 subjects offered by KC. There are, however, no electives within the OH study programme itself which could allow the students to deepen their knowledge in professional activities according to their interest. Electives in the odontological subjects would allow the students to focus and to better prepare themselves to serve different kinds of patients such as elderly people. Therefore it is the view of the experts that the present situation does not follow these contemporary pedagogical concepts and curriculum design now used in many other EU countries. The experts suggest serious consideration of this by the staff.

2.2. Programme content

2.2.1. Compliance of the contents of the studies with legal acts

The OH study content is stated in the self-evaluation report to relate to the Dental Hygienist Standard and Medical Norm. During the relatively short time of its existence, it has been revised to meet the new changes in the labour market. Performing the analysis of interdisciplinary links with the study programme in 2005/2006 has done this. This has been a relevant activity and the expert team encourages ongoing monitoring of the programme and possible further mergers as advised above in this report.

The experts confirm that the programme complies with the regulations of the study field.

2.2.2. Comprehensiveness and rationality of programme content

A variety of educational methods including lectures, practical classes, demonstrations and self-study are applied in the programme to meet the aims of the OH study programme, which are in harmony with the accepted standards of dental hygienist education derived from internationally accepted sources. The expert team encourages the teaching staff to further implement different educational teaching approaches to ensure the learning outcomes of the programme are always attained by the students.

3. Staff

3.1. Staff composition and turnover

3.1.1. Rationality of the staff composition

The qualification of the teachers working in the OH study programme is sufficient for its successful implementation. It also corresponds to the requirements identified in the legal acts. There are 23 full-time teachers of the total number of 27 teachers implementing the programme. The actual individual workload of the teaching staff in terms of clinical supervision and didactic teaching remained, however, unclear.

The importance of visiting teachers is emphasised in the self-evaluation report. In the discussions with the staff members present, the role of visiting teachers was deemed a very important asset and highly appreciated. The number of students accepted in the programme has been doubled this year. There are now two groups. This will have an effect on the student-teacher ratio and may cause extra challenges to the teaching staff that should be monitored.

However, with the increasing demand for oral hygienists in Lithuania and internationally, even during this difficult economic situation, two groups are important.

Based on KC's international cooperation strategy for 2008-2013, the programme has established contracts according to the EU Erasmus programme with five institutions of higher education concerning students and staff exchange. During the recent years, there have been two to six teachers from KC going abroad and from five to seven foreign teachers visiting. The expert team encourages the teachers to continue and expand these important activities to meet the recommendations of Bologna Declaration even further.

3.1.2. Turnover of teachers

The changes in the academic staff have been minor, thereby supporting the continuity of the programme without any major negative impact on it. The programme employs teachers of different experience and age, and, as noted by the OH students, many quite young. The fairly even age distribution of them overall speaks positively for the natural turnover and good continuity of expertise needed for the high quality execution of the OH programme now and also in the future.

3.2. Staff competence

3.2.1. Compliance of staff experience with the study programme

All teachers have more than three years of experience of practical work as well as Master degree or its equivalent excluding one presently in a Master programme. In addition to their pedagogic experience and training, the teachers of the programme work as practitioners in different clinical settings. Exposure to real-life working conditions facilitates their academic input into the programme. The teachers seem active in applied research related to subjects taught and in producing study materials used. Use of ICT and electronic study materials produced by a majority of the teachers is a good indication of their compliance to the study programme. Without any doubt both the students as well as the graduates interviewed by the experts shared their high appreciation of the teachers' attitude and activities to enhance their learning.

3.2.2. Consistency of teachers' professional development

The Faculty of Healthcare in which this programme lies follows the approved teacher qualification development system including for both formal and informal education of teachers. The opportunity for systematic development through various courses and seminars offered to and participated in by the teachers is deemed very significant by the expert team. This is one of major assets to ensure the high quality of education of the students, also in the future. The expert team also acknowledges the practice of yearly preparation of their action plan and written self-evaluation report of the teachers in this context.

4. Facilities and learning resources

4.1. Facilities

4.1.1. Sufficiency and suitability of premises for studies

There are sufficient premises for the successful implementation of the OH study programme. However, housing the programme in a great number of classrooms and laboratories located in different buildings of KC apart from each other might easily cause a waste of time and resources and it is also challenging to the daily contact of the students as well as the teachers.

The teaching facilities visited by the team were nicely maintained and well equipped.

4.1.2. Suitability and sufficiency of equipment for studies

The KC library and Self-study Centre with long opening hours offer a good opportunity for individual learning and access to present knowledge, in addition to the personal computers possessed by all the students interviewed for on-line access. The experts confirm that the laboratory equipment and materials used for the implementation of the OH study programme support the development of practical skills and achievement of the learning outcomes of the programme.

4.1.3. Suitability and accessibility of the resources for practical training

The dental operatory rooms were furnished with modern dental units appropriately used for learning purposes both with phantom heads and student patients. The odontology equipment is sufficient for the present number of students. There is some money available allocated on a yearly basis for maintenance and renewals. The continuity of this practice now and also in the future is deemed important by the experts. Practical training is a substantial part of the learning process in the programme. Professional activities of the students are carried out in different outreach educational and healthcare settings with which the experts did not have an opportunity to familiarise themselves during the site visit in one day. In other EU countries with a longer site visit time of say four days, outreach centres may be visited by the experts as part of the evaluation process.

4.2. Learning resources

4.2.1. Suitability and accessibility of books, textbooks and periodical publications

There seems to be ample educational material available for the students including sufficient access to IT. As noted, students have their own PCs. Most of the core textbooks and other written material for the study programme are available in Lithuanian. The expert team appreciates the active input of most of the teachers in their production of written educational material. However, to facilitate possibilities for foreign exchange the experts see much potential in increasing the use of foreign textbooks and learning materials. This should be considered.

4.2.2. Suitability and accessibility of learning materials

The students have sufficient access through IT to relevant databases through all KC computers. E-learning environment MOODLE is widely used, and confirmed by the OH students, and there are nearly one thousand courses registered at the moment in KC. Special courses and other learning materials as well as programme administration information is available to the OH students. The expert team acknowledges the use of modern educational technology used by the OH students and teachers.

5. Study process and student assessment

5.1. Student admission

5.1.1. Rationality of requirements for admission to the studies

Kaunas College Academic Board rules the student admission procedures and graduates of secondary education can be admitted to the Kaunas College programmes as well as Oral Hygiene programme. Since 2009 Regulations of Admission to Higher Institutions approved by Association of Lithuanian Higher Education Institutions took place for the admission of the first year students. First, second and the third entry rank students were selected among the applicants since the 2002 academic year. This initiative motivated applicants to become incoming students. In OH study programme the second admission was not organized and all applicants have entered the studies by the first priority since 2005. There are no special requirements or skill tests for student admission; the competition grade of the applicants is calculated from the high school

examination grades: Applicant's proficiency of the Lithuanian language and knowledge of field-related subjects and logical thinking abilities within biology, chemistry, language and mathematics grades of secondary education. This is a reasonable way of selecting suitable students for the programme.

5.1.2. Efficiency of enhancing the motivation of applicants and new students

Since the demand for the profession in the labour market of Lithuania is increasing, the interest and competition grades are increasing as well. Small number of drop-out students indicates that highly motivated and aspirated students are admitted to the programme. Low number of drop-out students also indicates that the programme fulfils the expectations of the students, graduates and other stakeholders. To raise the awareness of the programme and profession, various activities are undertaken by the alumni, students and faculty.

5.2. Study process

5.2.1. Rationality of the programme schedule

The length of the programme is 6 semesters each comprising 20 credits. One credit corresponds to 40 relative hours per week of student's work. The timetable of the full-time students comprises up to 8 academic hours per day, except for the cases, when longer duration is required due to the specificity of the subject, but not more than 11 academic hours. 18 to 32 hours per week are allocated for class work including consultations with faculty. Attendance of the practical/laboratory sessions is obligatory. Though advanced students can be allowed an individual attendance schedule of lectures upon receiving the faculty dean's consent. The definition of advanced student is not always clear. If it is defined clearly then a better understanding will be achieved in this particular situation. Classes and clinical studies are distributed in the premises of Kaunas College. As already indicated, this situation causes some waste of time for the students to relocate between the spread of premises. Four week examination period which is notified 2 weeks beforehand by the deanery finalises each semester. Overall, the schedule seems to be in compliance with the programme's academic subjects.

5.2.2. Student academic performance

Assessment of the student's success and criteria for objective evaluation is made public at the beginning of every subject. The assessment process is accomplished impartially, transparently and objectively by the Faculty. More direct relating of the students' self-evaluation records and grades in assessment of the study results is advised by the expert team. Students' study results and attendance are discussed in the departmental meetings by the Faculty. Although the group tutor or monitor discuss and solve any persisting problems, sound and clearly defined regulations need to be defined and published for any excuses. Students need more participation in research activities and this is advised by the expert team. As already indicated, the student drop-out rate in recent years is of an acceptably low level of 7% which is reflected in the high motivation and satisfaction of the students. The programme administration's initiative to design plans to control the present drop-out levels is a very good move.

5.2.3. Mobility of teachers and students

National and international bilateral agreements were undersigned for student and faculty exchange. Both students and faculty are conscious of the EU exchange programmes like Erasmus. The programme administration has efforts to widen this type of exchange programmes. The students' and Faculty's interest in internationalism was noted by the visiting experts, but much more needs to be done, as indicated above. Such initiative fosters international understanding and cooperation not only between individuals but also between institutions.

5.3. Student support

5.3.1. Usefulness of academic support

Information concerning the studies and also changes in the programme is clearly published at the website of the Kaunas College. The internet is a very effective means of information gathering about the programme structure, regulations and announcements for the students. Also students are counselled regularly by the Faculty and programme administration on various matters like assessment, schedule, and career opportunities.

5.3.2. Efficiency of social support

Grants are available for the students who financially need to be supported. Grants by the Government of the Republic of Lithuania are administered by the financial services of Kaunas College. Some privileges are provided for students like transportation, healthcare and accommodation. Going to studies at the widespread premises of Kaunas College can be a difficulty for the OH students. However, premises of Kaunas College like swimming pool, sauna, sports facilities and cafeterias are sufficient for OH students needs.

5.4. Student achievement assessment

5.4.1. Suitability of assessment criteria and their publicity

Assessment methods and its relation with the learning outcomes are clearly outlined and published by the Faculty. It was evident to the experts that assessment procedures are understood by the students.

5.4.2. Feedback efficiency

Students are evaluated continuously by the Faculty. There are necessary steps for improving the feedback process planned by the administration in order to improve even better student achievement. Student's positive opinion of this process is acknowledged.

5.4.3. Efficiency of final thesis assessment

Final thesis will be prepared and defended by students who are admitted the OH programme in September 2010. The requirements, assessment and impact of the final paper was described and agreed by the expert team.

5.4.4. Functionality of the system for assessment and recognition of achievements acquired in non-formal and self-education

Individual studies are organised following the life-long learning concept and students are admitted to the part-time studies all year round. This initiative fosters the lifelong learning habits of the future professionals. The student, who fulfilled all the requirements of the study programme, as well as financial terms of the study contract, upon the order of the College Director, can be included into the student lists for the eventual preparation and defence of the final paper as well as the final qualification examination. Students' prior experience in similar institutions or programmes are accredited; this provides a positive impact on completing the required credits for graduation. Students also participate in part-time individual studies at their own expenses. The rising number of students participating in this programme shows that they are enthusiastic.

5.5. Graduates placement

5.5.1. Expediency of graduate placement

Graduate placement is monitored by the OH programme administration. The vast majority of the graduates are employed in their own profession. They are employed in private clinics, hospitals, day care centres. The Kaunas College has a very good reputation and graduates of the OH programme are preferred according to the employers met by the experts. The close relation and cooperation between graduates, present students and Faculty was observed. This is praised by the visiting experts.

6. Programme management

6.1. Programme administration

6.1.1. Efficiency of the programme management activities

The quality management of OH study programme is based on: periodical analysis of study conditions, management culture, quality improvement, providing information for and involvement of society and a variety of forms of relations with graduates.

The OH Programme Committee which is comprised of two faculty members and stakeholders, a student, the programme coordinator and the representative of the administration. The Committee periodically reviews the programme needs by various means and assessment tools. A broad participation by students, Faculty, stakeholders and staff is achieved in this process. The needs of the programme are discussed in departmental meetings. The OH Programme Committee initiate general decisions concerning the changes and improvements in the programme in the departmental meetings. All these activities are well coordinated by the Head of the Department.

6.2. Internal quality assurance

6.2.1. Suitability of the programme quality evaluation

Annual self-evaluation and benchmarking activities are done in the context of total quality management. Internal quality assurance of the programme involves elements like the design of the study programme, implementation and improvement of teaching and learning, faculty qualification, international relations, scientific research and consultancy and learning resources. The reports are made public by means of presentations and publishing on the internet environment. These are satisfactory measures at least.

6.2.2. Efficiency of the programme quality improvement

Following the SWOT analysis at all levels of the Kaunas College action plans are tailored. Reports are prepared in a hierarchical order and the final reports published. Considering the needs of the learning and teaching methodology, market needs, and resources corrective measures are employed. The main objective is publishing the latest, objective and precise information for all elements of the study program. The research work done in 2008 has indispensable value pointing out market needs and suitability of the outcome of the studies; this work needs to be continuous.

6.2.3. Efficiency of stakeholders participation

Students, Faculty and stakeholders take part in every single step of the quality evaluation process. Feedback from Faculty and student self-evaluation reports are discussed and acknowledged for improvement plans. Employer opinions play a major role in defining the knowledge and competences in annual quality studies. The experts confirm that the programme

administration has close ties with graduates, and professional associations in the field and with employers.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. To comply better with the recommendations of Bologna Declaration and endorsed at the Leuven Meeting of Ministers in 2009, the expert team emphasises the significance of exchange programmes and active participation in them by both the students as well as the staff members. It is recommended by the experts that the Faculty of Healthcare places a high priority in encouraging students and teachers to use existing opportunities for their international personal development and international co-operation. The actions taken in the Faculty will also improve the interest of their counterparts abroad to visit KC. It goes, however, without saying that it is also the duty of the Faculty to create the positive conditions through effective language courses etc. to facilitate these activities on the individual level. Mobility is now the hallmark of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA).

2. There are several methods of assessment of students' progress in the programme applied in the Faculty. The teachers do the assessments frequently, transparently and mostly retrospectively. The experts consider that by including the proactive students' self-assessment this brings an additional value to the learning processes and this could also play a role in formal assessments. The students' self-assessments are recommended by the experts to be used both in theoretical and practical activities.

3. The currently effective learning is understood as an individual process guided by learners' personal characteristics, experiences and motivations. To facilitate this process and with the aim of training high quality OH professionals capable of meeting a variety of dental needs of the Lithuanian population the creation of elective courses in dental subjects to allow the students to focus and deepen their knowledge and understanding is strongly recommended by the expert team.

4. The practical character of the OH programme with important support of the visiting staff is highly appreciated by the students and graduates. Recently, the possibilities for the experiences in meeting a variety of patients have been expanded to cover training sessions with children in institutions. The experts would like to encourage the Faculty to create more of this kind of outreach activities to ensure students competences to work and meet different patients with special needs from different socio-economic environments and different phases of life.

5. The dental care is delivered in many countries by dental teams consisting of professionals with different educational backgrounds. This has on the other hand led to the delegation of traditional duties of a dentist and co-operation with individual professionals, and often agreed locally. In many instances dental professionals and teams also work together with other healthcare specialist. This situation calls for exposure of interaction between training programmes. It is the recommendation of the experts that sufficient exposure to other dental professionals is provided and maximum integration opportunities are utilised in the OH programme to facilitate multi-professional healthcare services, as are now being introduced in other EU countries.

6. There are several buildings used for teaching OH students some distance apart. This can cause problems for both OH students and teachers; for example, there could be a lack of contact and educational involvement for both parties. The expert team recommends that further careful consideration needs to be given to this issue including the vital scheduling needs.

7. Teachers and students are aware of learning outcomes. However, it is essential that these learning outcomes are directly linked to teaching and learning methodologies, as recommended in the Bologna Declaration of 1999 and endorsed at the Leuven Meeting of Ministers in 2009, and also strongly recommended by the expert team.

IV. GENERAL ASSESSMENT

The study programme *Oral hygiene* (state codes – 65308B107, 653A51004) is given **positive** evaluation.

Table. *Study programme assessment in points by evaluation areas.*

No.	Evaluation area	Assessment in points*
1	Programme aims and learning outcomes	3
2	Curriculum design	3
3	Staff	4
4	Facilities and learning resources	3
5	Study process and student assessment (student admission, student support, student achievement assessment)	3
6	Programme management (programme administration, internal quality assurance)	3
	Total:	19

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

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

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

4 (very good) - the area is exceptionally good

Grupės vadovas:
Team leader:

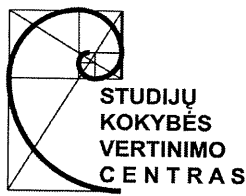
Dr. Michael Emery

Grupės nariai:
Team members:

Prof. Gökhan Alpaslan

Dr. Jonas Bartlingas

Prof. Heikki Murtomaa



STUDIJŲ KOKYBĖS VERTINIMO CENTRAS

KAUNO KOLEGIJOS
ODONTOLOGINĖS PRIEŽIŪROS PROGRAMOS
(65308B104, 653A52004)
VERTINIMO IŠVADOS

EVALUATION REPORT
of *ODONTOLOGICAL CARE* (65308B104, 653A52004)
STUDY PROGRAMME
at Kaunas College

Grupės vadovas:
Team leader:

Dr. Michael Emery

Grupės nariai:
Team members:

Prof. Gökhan Alpaslan

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Išvados parengtos anglų kalba
Report language - English

Vilnius
2010

DUOMENYS APIE ĮVERTINTĄ PROGRAMĄ

Studijų programos pavadinimas	<i>Odontologinė priežiūra</i>
Valstybiniai kodai	65308B104, 653A52004
Studijų sritis	biomedicinos mokslai
Studijų kryptis	burnos priežiūra
Studijų programos rūšis	koleginės studijos
Studijų pakopa	pirmoji
Studijų forma (trukmė metais)	nuolatinė (3)
Studijų programos apimtis kreditais ¹	120
Suteikiamas laipsnis ir (ar) profesinė kvalifikacija	gydytojo odontologo padėjėjas, odontologijos profesinis bakalauras, burnos priežiūros profesinis bakalauras
Studijų programos įregistravimo data	2002-06-25

¹ – vienas kreditas laikomas lygiu 40 studento darbo valandų

INFORMATION ON EVALUATED STUDY PROGRAMME

Name of the study programme	<i>Odontological care</i>
State codes	65308B104, 653A52004
Study area	biomedical sciences
Study field	oral care
Kind of the study programme	college studies
Cycle of studies	first
Study mode (length in years)	full-time (3)
Volume of the study programme in national credits ¹	120
Degree and (or) professional qualifications awarded	assistant of the doctor odontologist, professional bachelor in odontology, professional bachelor in oral care
Date of registration of the study programme	2002-06-25

¹ – one credit is equal to 40 hours of student work

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CONTENTS

I. INTRODUCTION	4
II. PROGRAMME ANALYSIS.....	4
1. Programme aims and learning outcomes.....	4
1.1. Programme demand, purpose and aims.....	4
1.2. Learning outcomes of the programme.....	5
2. Curriculum design	5
2.1. Programme structure	5
2.2. Programme content.....	6
3. Staff	6
3.1. Staff composition and turnover	6
3.2. Staff competence	7
4. Facilities and learning resources	7
4.1. Facilities	7
4.2. Learning resources	8
5. Study process and student assessment.....	8
5.1. Student admission.....	8
5.2. Study process.....	9
5.3. Student support.....	10
5.4. Student achievement assessment.....	10
5.5. Graduates placement	11
6. Programme management.....	11
6.1. Programme administration	11
6.2. Internal quality assurance	11
III. RECOMMENDATIONS	12
IV. GENERAL ASSESSMENT.....	14

I. INTRODUCTION

Kaunas College (KC) was founded in 2000. In 2005 Kaunas College was accredited as a non-university school for higher education. Since August 2007 the new status of Kaunas College was approved and structure of the college was reorganised. Training in Kaunas College follows two study fields (medical and social studies) and six academic directions: social sciences, health care, social work, technologies, humanities and art. The Faculty of Healthcare (FHC) implements 11 study programmes.

The Odontological Care programme at the Kaunas College was evaluated by an external expert team – Dr. Michael Emery, as the team leader, and Professor Gökhan Alpaslan, Professor Heikki Murtomaa, and Dr. Jonas Bartingas, as the members. The evaluation report is prepared on the basis of the Odontological Care self-evaluation documents, the team members' site visit to the KC on the October 26, 2010, on the team members' experiences and observations, and afterwards at a further meeting of the experts to discuss the programme and write the draft report.

II. PROGRAMME ANALYSIS

1. Programme aims and learning outcomes

1.1. Programme demand, purpose and aims

1.1.1. Uniqueness and rationale of the need for the programme

The Odontological Care (OC) programme was launched in 2002 and no external assessment of the programme has been made. There are five competitive colleges in Lithuania offering training in OC: Kaunas College, Utena College, Klaipeda College, Panevezys College and Siauliai College. The need for the programme is based on satisfying the social-economical needs of the Kaunas region as well as the whole country, regarding the changes in the labour market, and the need for providing conditions and environment for the development of free and responsible personalities, seeking to achieve professional and general competences. The OC programme is a higher education programme; this is rare in the Europe Union. In most countries it is a vocational training programme at diploma level, e.g. UK. The higher education gives to graduates on this programme more possibilities to obtain a good position in the labour market or the chance to start their own services or business, as confirmed by the graduates seen by the experts during the site visit.

1.1.2. Conformity of the programme purpose with institutional, state and international directives

The aims of the study programme correspond to the regulations of higher education in Lithuania, the KC education strategy for 2003-2012, the KC mission, the main aims of the College Statute, and the developmental perspective of the Lithuanian Republic, as well as that of the region, the labour market needs, and also employers' and students' interests.

1.1.3. Relevance of the programme aims

The aim of the OC programme is to educate professional, active, creative, critical thinking dental assistants of odontology with higher professional education, who are able to work in the dentistry field. After 3 years full-time studies (120 credits) graduates are awarded the professional bachelor degree as well as the qualification of a dental assistant. After qualification,

the professional can be registered/licensed in the Lithuanian dental chamber and can be employed.

1.2. Learning outcomes of the programme

1.2.1. Comprehensibility and attainability of the learning outcomes

Learning outcomes of the OC programme include all skills related to the activities of a dental assistant and comply with the content of the studies' aims and programme level. Teachers and students have a good understanding of the learning outcomes, and together they seek them. The teachers' good support to students gives more motivation to the students. The administration of the Faculty and the teachers pursue the adoption of the documents of the Bologna Process, but they missed linking the learning outcomes to the teaching and learning methodology. Some subjects' titles (for example, "Terminal Conditions and Resuscitation") do not correspond either to the learning outcomes or aims of the subjects; also, the title in one example is very narrow, in another example it is very wide. The experts suggest that revision is needed here.

1.2.2. Consistency of the learning outcomes

Learning outcomes of the subjects in the OC program create preconditions for the consistent implementation of the study programme learning outcomes at the levels of knowing, understanding and applying. The learning outcomes at the OC programme level correlate with those at subject level. The State regulations, which guided the revision of this programme, allow for correlating the level of this undergraduate, first cycle, study programme with the suitability of the subjects' learning outcomes.

1.2.3. Transformation of the learning outcomes

The expert evaluation team find good relationships between Faculty administration and teachers with employers. Employers, who participated in the process of the renewal of OC programme study objectives, were due to their involvement in the OC programme's practical training and practice. They are also involved in the work of qualification committees, supervision and other events. They regularly give their comments, suggestions, and recommendations for the improvement of the intended learning outcomes. These are valued and relevant to updating the OC programme as the economy changes and so does the demand for dental assistants too.

2. Curriculum design

2.1. Programme structure

2.1.1. Sufficiency of the study volume

According to the Regulations, the subjects of the OC study programme are divided into three parts: general study part, study field part and optional part. The volume of the study programme is 120 national credits. Studies take three years (6 semesters); all semesters are equal in volume – 20 credits. The experts confirm this is sufficient for this first cycle programme.

2.1.2. Consistency of the study subjects

The programme consists of the part of general education – 10 credits (10% of the total volume of the study programme); study field subjects – 90 credits (75%); among them professional activity practice – 20 credits, i.e. (17%), and 6 credits are given for optional subjects (5%). Students are able to choose among various optional subjects common for all students in the Faculty of Healthcare. The expert team agrees that the sequence of subjects is suitable for

this programme; however, as indicated next, some further merging of low credit subjects and re-allotment of some subjects is recommended by the experts.

2.2. Programme content

2.2.1. Compliance of the contents of the studies with legal acts

The sections of general subjects, subjects of the study field and optional subjects are well-balanced in accordance with Regulations. The subjects, whose volume is 2 credits, consist of the majority of this study programme. Members of the expert team make the point that this is not good for learning – the students' attention may be lost amongst the different aims of these different small subjects and suggest that some merging of subjects is appropriate to produce a more effective and rational programme and, consequently, an improved education process for the OC students.

2.2.2. Comprehensiveness and rationality of programme content

The general subjects are dominant in the first study year, while the special part (subjects of the study field) subjects dominate in the second and third study years. In that part of the subjects of the study field, there are 18 subjects (54 credits), yet specific dental care subjects are only 4 (14 credits).

Some subjects of the study field are focused on the main competences of healthcare, but do not always follow the main aims for dental assistant work, for example, Business Economics and Management, Geriatrics, Physiotherapy. These subjects may be better included as optional subjects. Also some subjects, for example, Microbiology and Hygiene, Biochemistry and Genetics, Terminal Conditions and Resuscitation, are more general subjects of the study field, but they do not provide many professional competences in relation to the students' time spent learning these subjects; these could be reduced in volume. Thus, overall, less time unfortunately is given to more relevant areas like pain control, infection control, and dental care (for example, preventive programmes in dental care could be included more such as Preventive Dentistry, Assessing Patients' Oral Health Needs, etc.) and this, with benefit, should be considered.

Consequently, it is important to seek that graduates have even more professional skills and knowledge and the expert team would like to recommend that more professional subjects or subjects more directly related to dental care (Geriatrics) be a key part of the OC study plan. This would further improve the relevance and usefulness of this OC programme overall for the students.

The students stated to the experts that they would like to obtain more skills in foreign languages. This could be appropriate for student exchange and for future dental treatment of foreign patients, as now occurs very often in other EU countries. International patients travel and chase the cheapest treatment centres and Lithuania is currently one of these low cost centres. For example, dental prices are very much lower than in the UK thus some patients will fly over to Lithuania.

3. Staff

3.1. Staff composition and turnover

3.1.1. Rationality of the staff composition

The staff composition in the OC study programme enables the OC students to obtain all intended learning outcomes. In total, 27 teachers are involved in the implementation of the programme, three of them have a PhD. 23 teachers (85%) are full-time teachers. All programme teachers have more than three years experience of practical and teaching work. In discussions with staff members seen, the role of visiting teachers was deemed important. The experts agree with this aspect.

3.1.2. Turnover of teachers

The age of the academic staff of the OC programme is as follow: 37% are 21-40 years of age, 22% are 41-50 years of age and 41% are 51-65 years of age. This ensures the spread and dissemination of good practice within the study process and the teaching i.e. the programme content is improved, more varied and newer teaching methods are used, and the practice place network is more varied and expanded. There are young teachers involved in this programme, which the students commented on favourably.

The 27 teachers work in the study programme with 62 students (2010/2011 study year). Thus, the ratio of students to teachers is good at about 2.2:1.

3.2. Staff competence

3.2.1. Compliance of staff experience with the study programme

Teachers' qualifications correspond to their subjects, especially in practical training. This enables the students to obtain all learning outcomes from each subject and also the necessary skills for their future professional work.

The expert team communicated with the teaching staff well, but not always directly in English particularly. Teacher skills in foreign languages, for example – English, should be improved. This would impact positively on the OC programme and enhance its relevance.

3.2.2. Consistency of teachers' professional development

A few teachers of the OC programme improve their qualification not only in Lithuania, but also in different foreign countries by their participation in conferences, seminars and by involving in international exchange programmes. This should be expanded and more reflect the Bologna Process. The Faculty has established teachers' periodical assessment, which motivates the teachers to improve their skills. Also the administration of Faculty has approved plans for teachers to continue their professional education and, accordingly, has organised general education programmes thereby ensuring continual development.

4. Facilities and learning resources

4.1. Facilities

4.1.1. Sufficiency and suitability of premises for studies

The Faculty has sufficient number of premises to carry out teaching; there are some cooperation agreements with other faculties and social partners and some classes are held outside the Faculty. The infrastructure includes: lecture halls, teaching laboratories and classrooms; equipments, library, teachers' rooms; reading and computer rooms. The study process takes part in three buildings, which are located in different part of the city. Students stated that there is inadequate transportation between lectures or practicals or the library. The experts agree with this criticism and advise due consideration of this issue including the scheduling arrangements, otherwise there might be a lack of contact between students and staff at times.

4.1.2. Suitability and sufficiency of equipment for studies

For the study process, there are computer equipment, multimedia, projectors, printers, video and audio equipment; computers are connected to the intranet, thus students have a possibility to receive visual conference materials as well as educational films directly on the internet to assist their studies. The experts confirm that the equipment and materials used for implementing the OC programme in general support the development of skills and the achievement of the learning outcomes.

4.1.3. Suitability and accessibility of the resources for practical training

During practical training modern equipments are used. The dental equipment is sufficient for the present number of students. Every year new dental equipment and dental care materials are purchased; this enables the OC students to develop practical skills by working with the newest technologies. During the last five years new equipment for 645 422, 49 LT was purchased, and reserves (low value assets) for 118 856, 67 LT. Purchases included dental chairs – 5 items, saddle doctor's and assistant's stools – 15 items, autoclave 'Melag 23+B', sanders – 3 items, trimmer – 1 item etc.

During the studies, students work with the newest professional odontological materials that meet modern requirements. Materials are ordered regarding the number of students. Students get all materials for their studies free; they do not pay for them directly. The expert team confirms that all students have the same level of education and it is not affected at all by the students' socio-economic status. Additionally, if OC services are taken to a patient by an OC student, the materials used are safe to be used on the patient.

4.2. Learning resources

4.2.1. Suitability and accessibility of books, textbooks and periodical publications

Kaunas College library comprises the Central Library of Kaunas College and the Self-study Centre. The Self-study Centre has 179 workplaces, 61 of them with computers. The working hours of the library and reading rooms meet students' needs: the library of KC and reading room opens until 7 pm in weekdays. The library of Kaunas College is a member of Lithuanian Scientific Library Association. In 2009, the library subscribed for the following data bases: *EBSCO Publishing*, *Oxford Reference Online*. Overall, a satisfactory service is provided for the students.

4.2.2. Suitability and accessibility of learning materials

Learning materials for students are of sufficient quantity and suitability for the students to achieve the aims and learning outcomes of study programme. They are periodically renewed. Some learning materials (lecture notes, methodical materials, self-study work tasks, practical work descriptions) are placed in the virtual environment (MOODLE); students are given the access password and material is scanned and put on the intranet in the MOODLE. The students confirmed this. Methodical publications used in the study process are suitable and accessible, constantly renewed and supplemented. The OC study programme teachers have prepared and published 9 different methodical publications that are used during theoretical and practical classes. Students can use these publications in the KC library and reading room.

5. Study process and student assessment

5.1. Student admission

5.1.1. Rationality of requirements for admission to the studies

The KC Academic Board rules the student admission procedures and graduates of secondary education can be admitted to Kaunas College programmes as well as to the OC programme. The public interest and demand from the market raised the profile and popularity of the programme in recent years. In these circumstances the competition grades gradually increased and only motivated individuals were admitted to the programme. There are no special requirements for student admissions; the competition grade of the applicants is calculated from the high school examination grades. The applicant's proficiency of the Lithuanian language and knowledge of field-related subjects and logical thinking abilities as indicated by biology, chemistry, language and mathematics grades of secondary education are a reliable way of registering students to the programme. Since 2005 all applicants entered to the studies by the first priority. This is a good

indicator of the popularity of the programme and profession among the high school graduates and their selection.

5.1.2. Efficiency of enhancing the motivation of applicants and new students

Since the demand for the profession in the labour market is increasing the interest and the student competition grades are increasing as well – as also with the OH programme. The small number of drop-out students indicates that only highly motivated students are admitted to the program. The increasing admission of students paying for their studies indicates that the program fulfils the expectations of the students. To raise the awareness of the program and profession various activities are undertaken by the alumni, students and Faculty including visiting schools and talking to possible future students and enthusing them.

5.2. Study process

5.2.1. Rationality of the programme schedule

The length of the programme is 6 semesters each comprising 20 credits. One credit corresponds to 40 relative hours per week of student's work. The timetable of the full-time students comprises up to 8 academic hours per day, except for the cases, when longer duration is required due to the specificity of the subject, but not more than 11 academic hours. Eighteen to 32 hours per week are allocated for class work including consultations with faculty. Attendance of the practical/laboratory sessions is obligatory. Advanced students can be allowed an individual attendance schedule of lectures upon receiving the faculty dean's consent. But the definition of advanced student is not always clear. If it is defined clearly better understanding will be achieved in this particular situation. Classes and clinical studies are distributed across the premises of the College. This situation causes some waste of time for the students to travel between the spread out premises of KC.

Four week examination period which is notified 2 weeks beforehand by the administration finalises each semester. The schedule seems to be in compliance with the programme's academic subjects. The assessment of the student's success and criteria for objective evaluation is made public at the beginning of every subject. Students have to pass all credits and examinations in the study plan as well as the final qualification examination are awarded with degree. This higher education study programme is undertaken according to the Dental Assistant Training Standard. The final examination consists of two parts which are special practical preparation and special theory examination. During the final practical and theory examination the student demonstrates the competences acquired from the areas compulsory to the dental assistant activity: assisting the doctor; providing services and consultation for the patient; participation in the health improvement activities; and participation in the enterprise activity. These are all assessed and this is confirmed by the experts.

The learning outcomes acquired through the self-education and informally are assessed by the three members of assessment board following the assessment criteria identified in this OC study programme.

5.2.2. Student academic performance

Students' study results and attendance are discussed in the departmental meetings and by the Faculty. However, the group tutor or a monitor discuss and solve any persistent problems, but sound and clearly defined regulations need to be defined and published for acceptable student excuses. Students need more participation in research and this is advised by the expert team. There is a steep decrease in student drop-out rates in recent years. The student drop-out rate is of an acceptable low level of some 5%, is monitored by the administration, and is closely related with the high motivation and satisfaction of the students. The OC programme administration's initiative to design plans to control the present drop-out levels has crucial importance and is a very good move. The administration also need to carefully monitor the occasional switching of students to the OH programme.

5.2.3. Mobility of teachers and students

Bilateral agreements were undersigned for student and faculty exchanges. The programme administration has made efforts to widen exchange programmes and it encourages both students and Faculty in exchange programmes. Participation of two Leonardo da Vinci pilot projects will open up new horizons for the School, Faculty and students. This sort of initiative fosters international understanding and cooperation not only between individuals but also between institutions. Student exchange in the dental care study programme is important and the action plan prepared by the administration to increase student exchange is promising.

5.3. Student support

5.3.1. Usefulness of academic support

Students are counselled regularly by the Faculty and programme administration on various matters like assessment, schedule, career opportunities etc. Ultimate support is provided to the students in professional matters by the Faculty whom are also practitioners. The large number of practitioners amongst the Faculty is considered a most important strength of the programme by the students. Information concerning the studies and also changes in the programme are clearly published on the website of the KC. Internet is a very efficient means of information gathering about the programme structure, regulations and announcements for the students.

5.3.2. Efficiency of social support

Grants are available for the students who financially need to be supported. Grants by the Government of the Republic of Lithuania are administered by the financial services of KC. Some privileges are provided for students like transportation, health care and accommodation. On-going studies at the spread out premises of KC, as noted before, are a difficulty for the students. However, the premises of KC like swimming pool, sauna, sports facilities and cafeterias are sufficient for OC students' needs.

5.4. Student achievement assessment

5.4.1. Suitability of assessment criteria and their publicity

The cumulative index system in which examinations are the part of it is used for the assessment of studies. The objective evaluation of the skills and knowledge is aimed for in the process. Assessment methods and its relation with the learning outcomes were precisely outlined and published by the administration. It was evident that the assessment procedures were clearly understood by the students when speaking to the expert team.

5.4.2. Feedback efficiency

Students are evaluated continuously by the Faculty and necessary steps for gathering feedback are planned by the administration for supporting better achievement. Students' opinion in this process is acknowledged. Students are also happy with the oral or written feedback provided by the Faculty concerning their skills and knowledge.

5.4.3. Efficiency of final thesis assessment

A final thesis will be included, prepared and defended by students who are admitted the OC programme from September 2010 in response to the Ministry's new regulations. The final examination consists of theoretical and practical parts. The final mark of the final paper is set in the meeting of the Assessment Board upon the agreement of all members. The requirements, assessment and impact of the final paper was described to and agreed by the expert team as following regulations.

5.4.4. Functionality of the system for assessment and recognition of achievements acquired in non-formal and self-education

Some students who entered the OC programme have some work experience. Education and learning achievements acquired by these students through the self-education is assessed twice a year. Learning achievements acquired through the self-education and informally are assessed by the three members of the Assessment Board following the assessment criteria identified in OC programme. No more than 50% of the volume of the study programme is accredited. Accreditation of students work experience has a positive impact for graduation, and also in accordance with Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL) concept that is widely and internationally accepted across colleges and universities today, including the UK.

5.5. Graduates placement

5.5.1. Expediency of graduate placement

Almost all of the graduates are employed in their own profession nationally and some in other EU countries. Graduate placement is monitored by the OC programme administration. Graduates are employed mainly in private clinics, hospitals, schools and kindergartens. A survey in the Kaunas area showed the growing demand for dental assistants. The KC has a very good reputation and graduates of this Odontological Care programme are often preferred by the employers. This was confirmed to the experts when meeting the employers. Demands of the labour market will raise the popularity of both for this particular profession and the Dental School in the future. The close relation and cooperation between graduates, present students and Faculty was observed. This was appreciated by the visiting experts.

6. Programme management

6.1. Programme administration

6.1.1. Efficiency of the programme management activities

According to the action program of KC for 2008 – 2013 being implemented at present, the Study Programme Committee is currently comprised of professional associations, employers and graduates. The quality management of the OC study programme is based on periodical analysis of study conditions and management culture and is directed toward quality improvement, providing information for and involvement of society, maintaining a variety of forms of relations with the OC graduates. The OC Programme Committee is comprised of two Faculty and stakeholders, a student, programme coordinator and the representative of the administration. The Committee periodically reviews the programme needs by various assessment tools. A broad participation of students, Faculty, stakeholders and staff is part of this process. Student ideas and employers' recommendations are taken into account. The needs of the programme are also discussed in departmental meetings. The OC Programme Committee initiates general decisions concerning the changes and improvements in the programme in the departmental meetings. All these activities are coordinated by the Head of the Department.

6.2. Internal quality assurance

6.2.1. Suitability of the programme quality evaluation

As indicated, the Committee periodically reviews the programme needs by various assessment tools. A broad participation of students, Faculty, stakeholders and staff is involved in this process. The needs of the programme are discussed in departmental meetings. Department head coordinates the changes and actions for the improvement of this programme. Annual self-evaluation and benchmarking activities are done in the context of total quality management (TQM). Reports are prepared in a hierarchical order and the final report published. Annual

public self-assessment reports and presentations are made; students, graduates, Faculty and stakeholders are invited to the presentations. These presentations improve not only the quality culture of the institution but also the quality of the services provided by the OC programme.

6.2.2. Efficiency of the programme quality improvement

Following the SWOT analysis at all levels of the KC, action plans are tailored. Reports are prepared in a hierarchical order and the final report published. Considering the needs of the learning and teaching methodology, the market needs, and the resources corrective measures employed. The main objective of publicising the study programme's quality assessment is to publish the newest, precise and impartial quantitative and qualitative information about the aims, stages, criteria, indicators, methods and measures used in the assessment of the OC study programme and its results. The quality improvement is an on-going activity and implementation of which is considered to be a priority factor by the OC programme. The experts recommend that this kind of surveys should be undertaken at regular times in the future and the resultant feedback should be taken into account for programme improvement or corrective purposes.

6.2.3. Efficiency of stakeholders participation

Students, Faculty and stakeholders take part in all stages of the quality evaluation process. Feedback from faculty and student self-evaluation reports are discussed and acknowledged for improvement plans. Employer opinions play a major role in defining the knowledge and competences in annual quality studies. The expert team confirms that the programme administration's close relations with graduates, professional associations and employers have a positive impact on quality matters for the OC programme.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The self-evaluation document notes the importance of intended learning outcomes at subject and programme levels. However, it fails to link the learning outcomes to teaching methodologies. The expert team recommends this action be taken. It is also a recommendation of the Bologna Accord of 1999 and repeatedly endorsed at following international meetings.

2. It is the view of the expert team that the content of the programme should with benefit be revisited in places and some subjects moved to other sections of the programme or even integrated or merged to make this OC programme even more relevant to the students and their careers as OC dental assistants. These actions are listed now:

- subjects, which are related to dental care and have the same learning outcomes but have the same low credits (e.g. 2), can be merged; in this way it will decrease study time for these learning outcomes, which can then be given to more time for the attainment of learning outcomes directly related to dental care and training good OC dental assistants;
- it is important to provide graduates with even more professional skills and knowledge and the expert team would like to recommended that even more professional subjects or subjects more directly related to dental care could be taught in this OC study programme;
- subjects which gives only a general relationship with dental care or with healthcare and are in the study field part might be moved to the general part;
- subjects whose titles are very wide or too narrow might be revised and harmonised with the aims of this programme, and with the learning outcomes of the subjects.

3. The experts recommend the improvement of foreign language skills of the OC programme teachers and OC students. This has importance not only for communication but for having new possibilities to improve their personal professional qualifications and the quality of the OC study process overall.

4. Particularly for this OC programme, the students and teachers need to become more involved in international exchange programmes to improve international personal development, international experience in dental care, and graduate employability. This is recommended by the expert team and also by the Bologna Accord of 1999 and endorsed at the Leuven Meeting of

Ministers in 2009. Mobility is now the hallmark of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA).

5. The students are obliged to travel between buildings that are situated some distance apart in the city. This can cause problems of reaching classes and practicals on time and visiting the Library and Self-study Centre. There is also the danger of loss of contact between students and staff at times. The experts recommend some consideration of this issue and also of the timetable scheduling of all teaching and practicals.

IV. GENERAL ASSESSMENT

The study programme *Odontological care* (state codes – 65308B104, 653A52004) is given **positive** evaluation.

Table. *Study programme assessment in points by evaluation areas.*

No.	Evaluation area	Assessment in points*
1	Programme aims and learning outcomes	3
2	Curriculum design	3
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4	Facilities and learning resources	3
5	Study process and student assessment (student admission, student support, student achievement assessment)	3
6	Programme management (programme administration, internal quality assurance)	3
	Total:	19

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

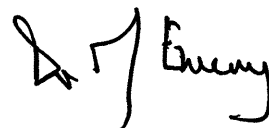
2 (poor) - meets the established minimum requirements, needs improvement

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

4 (very good) - the area is exceptionally good

Grupės vadovas:
Team leader:

Dr. Michael Emery



Grupės nariai:
Team members:

Prof. Gökhan Alpaslan

Dr. Jonas Bartlingas

Prof. Heikki Murtomaa

