

Expert group joint opinion

Evaluation Procedure: Assessment of Study Field

Higher Education Institution: Jēkabpils Agribusiness College

Study field: Management, Administration and Management of Real Property

Experts:

1. Mikus Zelmenis (Chair of the Experts Group) (Employers' Confederation of Latvia)
2. Renata Legenzova (Secretary of the Experts Group)
3. Ieva Rebiņa
4. Vitalija Danivska
5. Kristaps Opincāns (Student Union of Latvia)

Summary Assessment of the Study Field

Summary Assessment of the Study Field

Jēkabpils Agribusiness College (JAK) accredited study field "Management, Administration and Management of Real Property" includes one first level professional higher education part time study programme "House Management".

The study programme is focused on the acquisition of economic knowledge and the ability to apply it in a company. House Management is programme with strong future in Republic of Latvia as there are not enough professionals in this area, there are lots of old buildings that has to be renovated soon, so knowledge how to manage these processes are important. And according with the Lavian law, the house managers that manages real estates bigger than 1500 square meters must have proper education in the field. So the programme is prepared to comply with the legal requirements of the Republic of Latvia.

The study environment, which consists of material and technical base and involved academic staff, plays an important role in ensuring a high-quality study process. Analyzing the documents submitted for accreditation and getting acquainted with JAK during the visit, it can be concluded that the college provides students with a study environment that meets the regulations and requirements of Latvia for appropriate level of education. The college has a large library, computer software are used in the study process as close as possible to the real work environment.

Lecturers have appropriate education, industry professionals are also involved in the implementation of programmes.

College has cooperation agreements with other universities (Riga Technical University, Daugavpils University, University of Latvia, Latvian University of Agriculture), with other colleges (Alberta college, Riga Technical college) and other higher education institutions in Latvia. However, it should be noted that students make relatively little use of the opportunities offered by the Erasmus + mobility program and their involvement in research is insufficient.

In general, taking into consideration JAK provided information, the experts evaluate the study field administration, resources, provision and study programme implementation process as developed on a good level.

1. Management of the Study Field

Analysis

Self-evaluation report indicates that the aim of the study field (and the whole College) is to provide lifelong access to vocational training in the first level of higher education, by acquiring professions relevant to the fourth level of professional qualifications required in the labour market. It became evident during the visit that the aim was acknowledged and supported by all stakeholders. Development of the study field and the study programme was also in line with strategic plan of the College for 2016-2020. The stakeholders demonstrated a strong support for the mission of the College to offer students 1st level vocational higher and life long learning education, while studying closer to their place of residence. But they also indicated some possible areas of expansion of the Colleges operations, such as, greater emphasis on attracting students from older age groups, expanding operations to national market, etc.

The need and importance of implementing the study programme was adequately justified in self-evaluation report both from the demand (continues needs of the market) and supply side (limited number of similar programmes in Latvia). They were also supported by all stakeholder groups met with during the visit, who assured that this study programme corresponds to the growing demand for well-educated real estate management professionals not only at the local but also at the national

level. Based on the information collected during the visit, the expert panel believes that local focus of the study programme and the College in shall be expanded to at least the national level with more international aspects in the programmes execution. As the number of students in the study programme has been decreasing refocusing and expanding to national level would ensure sustainability of the programme. The expert panel believes that current management structure and procedures are sufficient for the College's expansion, yet some additional investments into e-learning platforms and other up to date resources (i.e. textbooks, specialized software) will be necessary.

The expert panel is concerned about possible changes in national regulation in regards to reorganisation/winding-up of higher-level vocational education institutions. As management indicated, if unfavorable changes were adopted, the College could loose its right to provide 1st level higher education and were forced to close the study programme under the accreditation. This fact along with decreasing number of students raises concerns about the sustainability of the study programme and the study field (as this is the only study programme in the study field).

According to the self-evaluation report management of the study field is carried out at three levels: the College level (where decision making authority delegated to the College Board/Administrative Board), part of the studies level (delegated to Methodical Board) and departmental level (delegated to the Head of Department). At the study programme level management also involved an additional managing body - Head of the programme. From self-evaluation report and from information collected during the visit, the expert panel learned that the structure and procedures of the management of the study field and the study programme are extensive and regulate all levels of decision-making, implementation and quality assurance. In general structure of the management and procedures are oriented towards the development of the study field and take into consideration feedback from stakeholders. Management structure and procedures had been reviewed over the past couple years along with the changes in the management team of the College. It also became evident during the visit that stakeholders (teachers, social partners, graduates students) know internal regulations and apply them constantly. However, the expert panel found number, scope and the level of detail of the internal regulations and procedures being difficult to comprehend and too extensive taking into consideration the size of the College. Also, it became evident during the visit that different levels of management perceive their responsibilities and employ procedures somewhat differently. The experts were not assured that recently introduced procedures for student feedback collection are according to the best standards across similar higher education institutions and if they are sufficient to capture unbiased students' opinion. In general, management culture of the college could be transited towards collaboration, openness and deregulation.

Information provided in self-evaluation report and in the webpage of the College suggest that the system and procedures for the admission of students are detail, clearly defined and in line with the formal requirements. The College also has efficiently working detailed (maybe even too detail for such a small institution) system and procedures for the recognition of the previously acquired formal education. However, during the visit stakeholders (students, graduates, teachers) indicated that they are not aware about recognition of the previously acquired non-formal education. Yet the teachers of the study field stressed student-centered approach towards teaching, whereas study content and tasks are adapted to the skills and knowledge of students. Taking into consideration that the study programme is oriented towards working students and is positioned as life-long learning programme, the expert panel suggests that the recognition of non-formally acquired knowledge and professional experience could be its competitive advantage and possibly attract more students to the study field and the programme.

Similar to the other areas evaluation of the achievements and learning outcomes are thoroughly defined in rules and procedures, including the basic principles for the evaluation of the results of studies in the study programme. The College uses various methods for the evaluation of learning achievements and majority of the study courses have cumulative evaluation system. Students are informed about evaluation system, conditions and requirements of the examinations, as well as the form of the examination.

The College also have detail regulations about the content and assessment of paper works and practice reports. The assessment of qualification practices is conducted by a Commission for the Protection of Practice Reports. As required by laws, first level higher education study programme is finalized with qualification exam, which involves participation of social partners. Social partners confirmed that participation in evaluation of qualification practices and qualification examination allows them to provide feedback on the overall achievement of learning outcomes of the study programme. The expert panel agreed that, in general, the established a system and developed procedures for the evaluation of the achievements and learning outcomes are logical and efficient yet somewhat over-formalized.

The College has developed and implemented rules for control and prevention of plagiarism to be used in written works of students and teachers. Administration explained that the rules clearly define plagiarism, so that all parties concerned have a common understanding on this issue explain the mechanism for plagiarism control. During the visit students, graduates and teachers confirmed that they knew about the plagiarism prevention rules, understand the concept of plagiarism and that administration of the College provides information about the rules on a regular basis. Students, graduates and teachers confirmed that plagiarism and cheating are not tolerated in the college. The expert panel learned that over the last year the College started using plagiarism detection software. Based on the collected evidence, the expert panel concluded that academic integrity principle and mechanism and their implementation in practice are effective and sufficient.

All available information regarding study programme that is published in JAK website is easily accessible and understandable. Admission requirements for candidates are clear and concise. Provided information regarding study field is in accord with information available on the official registers. Information is available in Latvian as the study programme is implemented only in this language. In overall webpage is decent as far as available information is considered - all relevant and important details regarding admission, requirements, qualifications, study process and legal status of study programme is easily accessible and clear.

Conclusions. Strengths and weaknesses

Aim of the study field is highly supported by the stakeholders and is in line with strategic plan of the College. The need and importance of implementing the study programme was adequately justified is self-assessment report and supported by all stakeholder groups. Management structure and procedures of the College had been reviewed over the past couple years along with the changes in the management team, in general they are oriented towards the development of the study field and take into consideration feedback from stakeholders. The system and procedures for the admission of students are detail, clearly defined and in line with the formal requirements. The established a system and developed procedures for the evaluation of the achievements and learning outcomes are logical and efficient yet somewhat over-formalised. Academic integrity principle and mechanism and their implementation in practice are effective and sufficient. Information regarding study programmes that is published in JAK website is easily accessible, understandable and in accordance with information available on the official registers.

Strengths

1. Regional orientation of the study field and study programme is evident and is in line with College's strategy and is highly supported by the stakeholders.
2. Relevant and impressive achievements of management team in the improvements of management structure and procedures as well as efficient their implementation in practice.

Weaknesses

1. Due to the decreasing number of students and possibly unfavorable changes in regulation of higher education, sustainability of the study field and the study programme is questionable.
2. Regional orientation in future can lower possibility to attract more students from big cities and those with demand of different knowledge after finishing studies, for example, managing smart houses, Internet of things etc..
3. The College is not yet prepared to respond to the needs of the market in terms of development and implementation of procedures for the recognition of non-formally acquired skills and competencies.
4. Current management structure as well as regulations and procedures in multiple areas are too complex, exhaustive and bureaucratic for the relatively small College.

2. Efficiency of the Internal Quality Assurance System

Analysis

JAK has a functioning quality assurance system in accordance with widely accepted practice and binding regulations. In the website there is available the mission, vision, strategic goal, policy and other generally accepted elements of the quality assurance system. Internal regulations "General description of the internal quality management system of the Study Department of Jēkabpils Agribusiness College" have been prepared, which are also available to all interested parties. The processes of development and review of study programmes corresponding to the study field, as well as the mechanisms for obtaining feedback (including for students, employers, graduates) are defined, logical, efficient and available to all involved parties. They are documented in Procedure for development, approval and updating of the study programmes (Studiju programmas izstrādāšanas, apstiprināšanas un aktualizēšanas kārtība) and with help of the surveys all necessary feedback are obtained. The quality assurance system allows to manage the processes of JAK in accordance with the principles set for them. The system ensures continuous improvement, development and operational efficiency of the study field and the corresponding study programmes.

JAK regularly (on yearly basis) collects and analyzes information on the study programmes corresponding to the field of study, and it is effectively used for the improvement of the study field. There are possibility even to receive information without official reports and procedures, for example through "Suggestions for improving the functioning of the college" ("Priekšlikumi koledžas darbības uzlabošanai") box of suggestions. At the same time, it is possible to set more specific criteria in order to make the analysis more targeted. It would be advisable to use the system's capabilities to identify and analyze process criteria (KPIs), which are currently not being used actively enough.

The College has identified ESG Part 1 standards that require increased attention (Statement from general description of the internal quality management system of the Study Department of Jēkabpils Agribusiness College and described also in Development and Investment Strategy of Jēkabpils Agrobusiness College 2016-2020.). In order to improve the performance of the study programmes corresponding to the study field, goals and activities have been defined, which are integrated into the common quality assurance system.

Difficulties in the assessment were caused by the large volume of documents, in which was complicated for the assessor to find the answers and explanations sought. It would be advisable to think more carefully about the scope of the dossier in order to really implement the KISS principle

mentioned in the JAK application paper — “keep it short and simple”. It is recommended to think about better structure and content of the documents, because the evaluation took place for one field of study, but a large part of the documentation was related to JAK in general. Similarly to the collected statistics, analysis, forecasts — they often showed the college as a whole, rather than this single product. By rethinking this hierarchy, it is possible to significantly reduce the amount of documentation that needs to be covered, thus making it easier for employees to navigate through it.

Conclusions. Strengths and weaknesses

JAK has a functioning quality assurance system in accordance with widely accepted practice and binding regulations. All necessary documents and documented information is available, working process goes on according procedures. However all documentation was complicated and mixed together for all JAK but our aim was to focus on one study field. Because of that it was hard to find specific information in complex documentation. It is possible to make JAK management simpler with better structured documentation, simpler roles and responsibilities.

Strengths:

1. JAK has implemented and maintained a functioning quality assurance system, there is an obvious management interest in constantly improving and improving this system, the management sees how to use it to improve the organization's operations and employees are actively involved in improving it.

Weaknesses:

1. The documentation structure of JAK, similarly to the organizational structure, is large and massive, most often applicable to the organization as a whole, it becomes difficult to separate and evaluate a separate part of it or product, because the related documentation also includes a large amount of unrelated information.
2. Not all the possibilities provided by the system for obtaining and analyzing more accurate KPIs are used.

3. Resources and Provision of the Study Field

Analysis

The financial provision for the study field “Management, Administration and Management of Real Property” includes financing from the state budget and college funds. No specific funding is received for research from the State budget. However, the participation of lecturers in scientific research conferences and publications is supported and covered by the state budget. No additional funding is received from any other companies.

The study programme “House management” is implemented only in the paid part-time studies. Tuition fee - 90.00 euro per month. An agreement on obtaining an education is concluded with each student, in which the tuition fee for the entire study period is presented, the total tuition fee is 2250 euro, an appendix with a payment schedule is attached to the study agreement, which stipulates the payment amounts and terms. Programme is implemented in 5 semesters (2 years 6 months). Study process is conducted on Saturdays from September to June, based on the schedule of study process approved by the College Director.

According to the fact that the College implements professional secondary education programmes, lecturers also give lectures in several study programmes and there are common premises for organizing the study process and purchasing material and technical equipment.

The representatives of the College point out that the cost analysis of separate study programme is

not performed and a separate budget has not been developed for the study field "Management, Administration and Management of Real Property".

There is no information available on the cost per student and what is the minimum number of students, so it is not possible to determine how profitable is this study field. During the meeting, contradictions were found between the statements of the management and the accountant, the management claims that the study field "Management, Administration and Management of Real Property" are funded from the total funding of the College, but the accountant claims that the study field is profitable, however, no calculation was provided to substantiate this claim.

To ensure the study process, the material and technical support of College is used - 8 computer classes, printers, IT laboratory, interactive whiteboards, projectors. Computers are provided with licensed latest versions of software. Professional accounting and warehouse accounting programmes are also used in the study field "Management, Administration, and Management of Real Property". Material and technical resources are in working order and safe to use, according to the study field.

To ensure the study process of the College, a library is used, which is intended for both students of professional secondary education programs and first-level higher education students. The main task of the library is to provide the study process with the latest study literature, current business, and industry-specific databases. The library is available every working day from 9.00 to 17.00 and on Saturdays from 10.00 - 13.00. The library has no breaks at noon to make the repository available to students and staff.

Experts also found that some of the books in the library are outdated and can only be used as historical material (for "Windows XP" and "Windows VISTA").

In order to provide material and technical resources, a survey of lecturers is conducted twice a year, in each study course. Twice during the academic year, the library fund is renewed with professional study literature. While randomly checking available literature mentioned in study course descriptions, there were mentioned book "Vadīšanas pamati" (Ivans U. Ruskule S. LLE EF Uzņēmējdarbības vadības katedra 2006. 502 lpp.) that was not mentioned in libraries database. That means that at the moment there may be books in Study course descriptions that are not available in local library.

During the reporting period, project 8.1.4 of the Operational Programme "Growth and Employment" has been attracted and implemented of the specific support objective "To improve the study environment of first level professional higher education STEM, including medical and creative industries, in colleges".

The following activities were performed within the project: improvement of infrastructure, purchase of computer equipment and software rental, purchase of equipment.

During the reporting period, the project 4.2.1. Of the Operational Programme "Growth and Employment" has been attracted and implemented of the specific support objective "To promote the increase of energy efficiency in public and residential buildings" 4.2.1.2. measure "Promote energy efficiency in public buildings".

The project carried out the improvement of the study environment and the increase in energy efficiency.

Attracting qualified teaching staff takes place in accordance with the internal regulatory enactment "Regulations for Academic and Administrative Positions" No.1-1 / 8 from 20.03.18. On this basis, a public competition for vacant posts is organized for staff selection. Information about the competition is published in the official publication "Latvijas Vēstnesis" and in the local newspaper. In parallel, the information is posted on the College's website. The list of vacant positions is determined by the Director of the College and approved by the College Council.

Lecturer workloads are approved by the College council. The "Lecturer workload calculation norm" approved by the College Council, where the types of work to be included in the lecturer's workload and their amount are stipulated. Lecturers are introduced to the calculation of individual loads by

directions at the beginning of each academic year.

There have been 26 staff members who have participated in outgoing mobility. The number of outgoing mobility for the College is very positive, but most of them were “Computer Systems and Computer Networks Administration”.

The management of the College should ensure the improvement of English language skills for academic staff and lecturers, which would enable more participants to go on mobilities and scientific conferences abroad.

The College doesn't have the incoming mobility of foreign lecturers. The management of the College should use more opportunities provided by the Erasmus Charter for Higher Education 2014-2020 to attract teachers.

The College financially supports field trips organized by lecturers to bring the study process closer to the industry of the national economy, when students meet with industry representatives in a real work environment and get acquainted with specific processes or procedures.

During the visit students confirmed that they have the opportunity to receive consultations from lecturers also outside the study hours using e-mails or telephone, the lecturers are responsive.

The library is open on weekdays and Saturdays that provides access to material resources for part-time students. A service hotel is also available for students.

Conclusions. Strengths and weaknesses

Most of the study costs are covered by the state budget funding. During the reporting period, the College has been involved in several ERAF and ESF projects that have been successfully implemented, however, Erasmus + funds are not used enough to facilitate the incoming mobility of foreign lecturers.

The College has the appropriate infrastructure and the material and technical provision required for the implementation of the study direction and almost all resources are available for staff and students.

The established support system for college students is efficient and effective.

Strengths.

1. The College is involved in projects that contributed to the renewal and improvement of the material and technical base, although this applies to the educational institution as a whole.

Weaknesses.

1. Some of books in the library are outdated and can only be used for historical references.
2. There is no incoming mobility of lecturers.
3. The study field does not have separate calculations of its costs, the costs are covered from the total funds provided for the vocational education budget, thus the profitability of the study programme cannot be determined.

4. Scientific Research and Artistic Creation

Analysis

The relation between scientific research creation in the study field and the study process has been defined. Academic staff does scientific research, publishes articles, there are 21 publication in 8 years, but academic staff should be more active in the field as all publications comes from only 4 authors (Appendix 26). There was target to have publication at least once in a two years (Study direction development plan 2015.-2019.) Students are not so active to participate in scientific activities, excuse are that they are part time students that have full time job and family, so they are

not willing to do more on research.

At the same time as at the moment JAK has their regional approach and main focus is on regional needs that covers generally 30-40 year old apartment buildings without plans on big investments and modernizations there are limited space for innovations and / or related research.

There have been 13 international agreements with projects in 8 countries in previous years (Appendix 24) and 26 person from academic staff mobility cases to 9 countries, but this international cooperation was not directly connected with study field "Management, Administration and Management of Real Property", just with some study courses that are similar in several JAK study fields. There were no clear connection between this study field and some case of international cooperation and that means that there were no international cooperation in specific areas that are important only for this study field and not for JAK in general.

JAK staff conducts various research projects, which amount to a good level of activities. However, the effect on teaching and the consideration to take students as young researchers into the projects, should be reconsidered especially if there comes decision to cover wider needs in real estate management and add also passive house management, smart houses, internet of things etc. that may bring up lot's of areas for new research projects.

Most of the students were not aware of the research activities and possibilities to participate in them.

There are good innovative initiative to improve level of Qualification works as they were not evaluated by JAK academic staff, but by Riga Technical University staff they have agreement with and that means more objective approach for graduating. There are good possibilities for students to use different IT resources (computers, softwares, 3D printer, networking etc.), but there are place for growth to use IT in the study process and even use JAK possibilities for multidisciplinary work between several study fields JAK provides — cooperation with IT and building studies etc.. As JAK has all these study fields (together in Jēkabpils and Barkava), it is good possibility to do some multidisciplinary approach and work on smart houses, building and improving such premises, on passive houses etc. and there are no need to look for strategical partners just to cover all topics of the subjects. These possibilities should also improve motivation for students and academic staff to do some research using internal JAK resources.

Conclusions. Strengths and weaknesses

JAK should invest more in scientific activities especially as there are potential to collaborate between different study fields.

Strengths:

1. The potential for future real estate development scientific activities exists, especially because of both strong IT direction in JAK and knowledge in Barkava subsidiary about building materials, techniques.

Weaknesses:

1. Weak connection between Jēkabpils and Barkava subsidiary for common work in the field.
2. Academic staff don't work to improve motivation of their students to participate more in scientific research — they assume as students are full time employees in their companies. As a result both sides does nothing justifying it with part time study status in this study field.

5. Cooperation and Internationalisation

Analysis

Cooperation of the College with Latvian partners is at a high level. Latvian partners also participate

in the activities of the College Council, provision of qualification internships, internship defence and examination commissions, arranging applied research conferences, professional development of teachers, and/or development of students' academic/professional career. There is a list of 26 education institutions and 22 of that list are Latvian education institutions, 2 representatives of the economic sectors, and 2 other educational establishments with whom the College has signed an agreement of cooperation in exchange for students, lectures, and scientific research. The college has special cooperation with Riga Technical University on the organisation of the study process - students qualification works are reviewed by docents of Riga Technical University. This system has been implemented by the college on the basis of the recommendations of foreign cooperation partners in order to have more objectivity in assessing students' qualifications works and not to belittle their own lecturers.

The College and its activities are highly appreciated by the local community (local government and its owned companies, public organisations). As it was indicated during the visit, local social partners are tightly involved in activities of the College - a representative from municipality is at the College's Council, alumni, representatives of local companies participate in study process by organising field trips, accepting students to practices, participating in examinations and giving periodic feedback on the quality of study programme. However, based on the information provided in self-evaluation report, only a few formal cooperation agreements with local partners are signed. The College should consider formalising its cooperation with the key local partners to have them more visible beyond the local community and also ensure the sustainability of such relationships.

The College has a number of written agreements with Latvian academic partners. According to the self-evaluation report such cooperation is used to provide the continuity to the graduates of the programmes (in further studies), to take part in qualification exams of the Colleges' study programme and to participate in conferences and others scientific events. However the expert panel noticed that very little of those agreements are related to the study field under the assessment. Also, during the visit the expert panel saw very little examples how cooperation with Latvian academic partners is employed to contribute to the achievement of the aims and learning outcomes of the study field and the study programme under assessment. Cooperation with local academic partners in the areas relevant and related to the study field shall be strengthened and better enforced.

According to the self-assessment report, the college has 13 international cooperation agreements projects the foreign partner institutions are from the following countries: Lithuania 1, Germany 2, Finland 2, Spain 3, Italy 2, Croatia 2, however, those cooperation agreements are based only on teaching staff mobility, besides that, there is no overall policy for choosing strategic partners, they mainly have been chosen based on experience and feedback from other educational institutions. It is also not clear what kind of cooperation agreements have been concluded with Keuda Mantsala College and Klaipeda College. The expert panel concluded that international cooperation is much underdeveloped in the College. During the visit the expert panel had learned that the current administration of the College acknowledges the long-term benefits of international cooperation and therefore had established a Project Manager position. Some first steps in this area had already been implemented. Yet, as further discussed below, internationalisation of the Colleges activities need to be addressed from multiple perspectives.

According to the self-assessment report the College hasn't had targeted activities and had not developed a system how to attract foreign lecturers (and for foreign students also) taking into account the small workload that could be provided to the lecturer, as well as the possibilities of work financing, therefore, there haven't been guest lectures in the College in the study programme under the assessment. During the visit, graduates and students stated interest in the opportunity to listen

to lectures of foreign lecturers in person or remotely.

Taking into account the specifics of the study field and the program, foreign professionals and experts should be more involved in the study course and guest lectures should be provided. Although the College academic and administrative staff have used the possibilities of Erasmus+ mobility, this mobility is not enough in this particular field of study. Therefore, particular attention should be paid to inbound mobility, to attract foreign experts.

Internationalisation of study process is at the very low level in terms of both incoming and outgoing mobility. During the self-evaluation period none of the international students and teachers visited the College. It was also indicated that the College has no plans to attract foreign teachers both for full time teaching and for Erasmus exchange. Moreover, neither teachers nor students of the study field had participated in Erasmus exchange and did not show any interest to do so in the future. It has to be noted that both students and teachers of the study field verified that they had received periodic information on Erasmus possibilities. There has been not enough motivation from academic staff as to why it is important to participate in outgoing mobility and how it relates to their professional development as the result previous, there has been no outgoing mobility in this study programme. The students were not interested in foreign experience as being part time students they had full time jobs and/or families to take care of. Academic staff should more motivate students to participate in mobility to gain international experience in real estate management. The College should find a solution to better motivate students to go for outgoing mobilities, as the minimum mobility time is 2 months. It also felt that low level of English language could also be an obstacle to the teachers and to the students to participate in exchange visits and/or gain international experience from incoming peers. The expert panel believes that international experience would be beneficial to the study field and study programme in terms of bringing the latest global knowledge, abilities and skills into the study process. Actually house manager profession standard demands knowledge of two foreign languages, so there has to be bigger emphasis on languages so graduates during this evaluation could speak with experts in one of the foreign languages to demonstrate their knowledge.

During the self-assessment period the College had made some efforts to increase internationalisation by introducing Project Manager's position and initiating/participating in some international projects' activities. However, based on the information, collected during the visit to the College, teachers and students of the study field had not been involved in those activities. The expert panel strongly recommends that the College shall strengthen international aspect of its educational activities.

According to the self-assessment report the college has identified 17 internship partners. Considering that the study programme is part-time and students choose their workplace as a place of internship and if they have no such, then the internship is provided by Jekabpils City Council. Executive director of Jekabpils City Council confirmed that the Council will provide with internships all students if it is necessary and is interested in the existence of the college as a place where specialists with academic knowledge are trained for local region. During the visit, a conviction was obtained, that system of enabling the internship places to the students is in place and efficient.

A system of traineeships is implemented and is well functioning in the College. As it is indicated in self-evaluation report, in 2019/2020 academic year the College revised, updated and coordinated the traineeships for all study programmes to make them up to date and according to the market needs. The traineeship procedures are clear and well documented. In general, the traineeship is highly supported by the interested parties (social partners, students, teachers, administration). It was made evident during the visit that all students get sufficient information about traineeship

requirements and, if needed, get assistance in finding a place for their traineeship. Social partners (mainly local government and public organisations) are dedicated to accept students of the study field for a traineeship, which allows students to gain relevant and up to the markets knowledge and experience. Teachers of the study field cooperate with social partners in providing students with tasks, supervising their performance and also collecting feedback about students' performance. Feedback from the traineeship places is collected periodically and is constantly used to improve study quality. It was confirmed that a tripartite agreement is concluded between the student, the place of practice and the College. The defence of the traineeships is accepted and assessed by the commission.

Conclusions. Strengths and weaknesses

The College needs to reconsider its policy of choosing foreign strategic partners. None of the College students has used the possibilities to study abroad therefore opportunities of the ERASMUS+ mobility programme are also underexploited. The College should establish the system of counseling and motivation to the students with the view of encouraging them to use the opportunities of outgoing mobility, to help them choose the best-suited institutions, programmes, and courses, etc. Given that the College is bound by Erasmus Charter for Higher Education 2014-2020, it does not make full use of the opportunities offered by that charter to attract foreign lecturers and students, as well as to the mobility of students themselves.

Strengths

1. The system of enabling the internship places to the students is in place and efficient.
2. The College has special cooperation with Riga Technical University on organization of the study process - students qualification works are reviewed by docents of Riga Technical University.
3. Cooperation with local social partners is strong, well developed and highly employed in the study process and study quality assurance.
4. Well-developed and functioning traineeship system complies with the needs of the study field and study programme and provides students with knowledge and skills, relevant to local market.

Weaknesses:

1. Students aren't encouraged to use Erasmus+ possibilities for international mobility.
2. Insufficient foreign language knowledge for students and lecturers which hinders the interest in international mobility.
3. There haven't been developed policy for choosing foreign strategic partners in the respective field of study also the guest lecturers from abroad are not provided.
4. There is no incoming mobility for students for study programme House Management.
5. Internationalization of the College's activities is underdeveloped in terms of outgoing and incoming teachers and students' mobility as well as cooperation with foreign organizations.
6. There is no international cooperation in the study programme "House Management", although several international cooperation agreements have been concluded.

6. Implementation of the Recommendations Received During the Previous Assessment Procedures

Analysis

The previous accreditation conducted in 2013 has been summarized in 3 recommendations made by the accreditation panel towards JAK:

- no. 1: "The college has to reconsider its niche, thereby the mission, vision and strategies."

Institution has developed investment and development strategy for 2016 - 2020. Although strategy for next planning period it is still in development. Therefore recommendation has been implemented and its goal achieved.

- no. 2: "The strategies have to be based on critical evaluation of internal and external influencing factors." In Investment and development 2016. - 2020. strategy all external and internal factors has been comprehensively considered. Recommendation is fully implemented.

- no. 3: "An applied science has to be developed in order to ensure the sustainable development of the college and study direction in it." it is partially implemented. JAK has been putting emphasis on participation in various conferences. Although in itself conferences does not guarantee development of applied science and research aspect of academic work - conferences can only supplement rigorous academic work. Therefore there is room for growth regarding published works. Commendable institution's work on implementation of applied based approach into study process. Students are participating into solicited research; their qualification thesis are based into real world problems and cases. Aspect of providing value, knowledge and research for the benefit of community should be strengthened further. Also inclusion into of knowledge and research capital of teaching staff into these processes should be strengthened as well. Recommendation also highlights importance of sustainability of this study direction. Unfortunately current applied practices are focusing on current practices and principles - the field of new developments in industry are ignored. Applied science implies not only descriptive research but also work on future-proof solutions and emerging challenges. In conclusion implementation of this recommendation is only partial.

Conclusions. Strengths and weaknesses

As College is considered institution of higher education, it should strive towards greater applied science output across all relevant metrics in general. Regarding its strategy - there is no clear indication of current progress and its general direction. As of now there is no strategy in place. Reason for is that JAK claims it will integrate results of assessment procedures into its new document.

Strengths:

1. JAK had developed strategy including requirements of previous assessment procedures for previous policy planning period.
2. Commendable is work on inclusion of students into real-life cases and laying groundwork for potentially solid applied research framework.

Weaknesses:

1. Institution is not fully adhering to open science principles - research output is not easily available - although programs of conferences and summaries are available freely online on JAK website, actual published works - journals, articles et cetera is not. Therefore here is potential for growth further development.
2. Research activities of academic staff is still weak and should be encouraged and developed further.
3. Current research activities are in most cases ignoring new developments in field.

7. Assessment of the Requirements for the Study Field

- 1 Pursuant to Section 5, Paragraph 21 of the Law on Institutions of Higher Education, the higher education institution/ college shall ensure continuous improvement, development, and efficient performance of the study direction whilst implementing their internal quality assurance systems:
Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Justification: Jēkabpils Agribusiness College has a functioning quality assurance system. Internal regulations "General description of the internal quality management system of the Study Department of Jēkabpils Agribusiness College" have been prepared, which are also available to all interested parties. The processes of development and review of study programmes corresponding to the study field, as well as the mechanisms for obtaining feedback (including for students, employers, graduates) are defined, logical, efficient and available to all involved parties. The system ensures continuous improvement, development and operational efficiency of the study field and the corresponding study programmes.

- 2 1.1. The higher education institution/ college has established a policy and procedures for assuring the quality of higher education.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Justification: There is available the mission, vision, strategic goal, policy and other generally accepted elements of the quality assurance system. Internal regulations "General description of the internal quality management system of the Study Department of Jēkabpils Agribusiness College" have been prepared, which are also available to all interested parties.

- 3 1.2. A mechanism for the development and internal approval of the study programmes of the higher education institution/ college, as well as the supervision of their performance and periodic inspection thereof has been developed.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Justification: Procedures for regular revision, updating, improvement and approval of study programmes are clear and implemented within JAK.

- 4 1.3. The criteria, conditions, and procedures for the evaluation of students' results, which enable reassurance of the achievement of the intended learning outcomes, have been developed and made public.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Justification: Evaluation of the achievements of learning outcomes and students' results in study courses, written works, qualification practice and qualification examination are thoroughly defined in regulations and procedures of the College. The established system and developed procedures for the evaluation of the achievements and learning outcomes are clear, logical and efficient yet somewhat over-formalised.

- 5 1.4. Internal procedures and mechanisms for assuring the qualifications of the academic staff and the work quality have been developed.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Justification: There are procedure for qualification work: "Kvalifikācijas darbu izstrādes kārtība" and "Procedure for the Qualification practice". There are JAK Strategy with part 3.5. "Plan for HR development" that is prepared quite detailed.

- 6 1.5. The higher education institution/ college ensures the collection and analysis of the information on the study achievements of the students, employment of the graduates, satisfaction of the students with the study programme, efficiency of the work of the academic staff, the study funds available and the disbursements thereof, as well as the key performance indicators of the higher education institution/ college.

Assessment of compliance: Partially compliant

Justification: There are statistical information available about student results (for example, in Mykoob), about graduates (mentioned in JAK Startegy) etc. Weak point in usage of this statistical data is that often it's for all JAK together, not for specific study field. As a result experts couldn't get clear understanding about expenses on one student in "House management" as it seems to be calculated altogether with all other students and there were different answers about minimum number of students in the group to open it. So there should be improvements to improve analysis on specific study directions, specific courses etc.

- 7 1.6. The higher education institution/ college shall ensure continuous improvement, development, and efficient performance of the study direction whilst implementing their quality assurance systems.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Justification: Internal regulations “General description of the internal quality management system of the Study Department of Jēkabpils Agribusiness College” have been prepared, which are also available to all interested parties. The processes of development and review of study programs corresponding to the study direction, as well as the mechanisms for obtaining feedback (including for students, employers, graduates) are defined, logical, efficient and available to all involved parties.

- 8 R2 - The cooperation with different organisations from Latvia and abroad implemented within the study direction ensures the achievement of the aims of the study direction.

Assessment of compliance: Partially compliant

Justification: The College has strong cooperation with local government, public organisations and business entities in providing students with places for traineeships, field trips and other involvements in the study process. Local social partners are being actively employed in study quality assurance activities. Multiple cooperation agreements with Latvian higher education institutions do not seem to be fully utilised in the Study Direction. International cooperation of the Study Direction is merely non-existent in terms of incoming and outgoing mobility of teachers and students and participation in international scientific activities.

- 9 R3 - Compliance of scientific research and artistic creation with the development level thereof (if applicable).

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Justification: Research targets from JAK Strategy are met, but there should be started additional work on future to attract students for research projects, especially for implementing new, modern techniques and technologies.

- 10 R4 - Elimination of the shortcomings and deficiencies identified during the previous assessment of the study direction, if it has been conducted, or the implementation of the provided recommendations.

Assessment of compliance: Partially compliant

Justification: JAK has partially implemented recommendations. Developed strategy expires this year. There is room for growth regarding development of applied science.

8. Recommendations for the Study Field

Short-term recommendations

As there should be new JAK Strategy for future years confirmed soon, it is important to define whether there will be strong regional focus also in the future or JAK will try to attract students from distant places and provide education with different content to meet needs of other region students also. There are risks and advantages in both cases.

More detailed calculations of study expenses on one student in various study fields should be done to understand profitability of study programmes.

There should be revision of books in the library that are outdated.

There should be rechecking of study course description literature as not all of it is available in the libraries database and it was not clear where students can read them.

There should be increased motivation for students from academic staff to participate more in scientific research.

Motivate lecturers and students to take advantage of Erasmus + projects and promote outgoing mobility in the study programme "House Management".

Attract foreign lecturers by using Erasmus + project and organizing guest lectures in person or remotely.

Attract more local industry professionals, as the programme aims to prepare specialists who would be ready to start working in the labor market immediately after graduation.

Long-term recommendations

Rethink and simplify management structure as well as regulations and procedures for the relatively small college. (KISS — Keep It Short & Simple).

It is recommended to use Erasmus+ possibilities for international incoming mobility to attract foreign lecturers.

Students should actively be involved into the research projects, there may be common projects together with academic staff in bigger teams both from other study fields in Jēkabpils and Barkava subsidiary.

There should be improved language knowledge as House Managers profession standard asks for good knowledge of two foreign languages.

To more effectively organize the study process, use a learning platform, such as Moodle, where teachers can post lectures, add video lectures, as well as create various online tasks to test their knowledge, currently, JAK is using the social network Mykoob.

II. "House Management" ASSESSMENT

II. "House Management" ASSESSMENT

1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme

Analysis

The evaluated study programme "House management" is offered as a 1st level vocational higher education programme, providing a fourth level of professional qualifications and leading to a professional qualification of "House manager".

The programme consists of 120 ECTS credits (80 Latvian credit points) and is a part-time programme, lasting 2,5 years. The aim of the programme is to prepare competitive house managers for the labor market by providing theoretical knowledge combined with suitable skills, competence and attitude development according to European Qualifications Framework level 5 and Latvian professional qualification level 4 requirements. There are 17 learning outcomes listed in the programme description. The programme aims are achieving the results in 3 areas in terms of knowledge and understanding, 8 areas in skills and 6 areas of competence. Additionally, the list of professional competences in the provided documentation was even longer, including 29 skills. This leads to a highly-demanding programme, especially considering it is a part-time programme.

Moreover, LQF level 4 descriptors (see <http://www.nki-latvija.lv/content/files/LQF-level-descriptors.pdf>) emphasize the abilities to communicate in multiple languages as well as interest in a broader European and global perspective. This, however, is not included in the programme's intended learning outcomes and not supported at the programme level.

It was unclear how the skills and competences written in the document 9.pielikums_Programmas plans Namu_parv_ENG correspond to the competences and skills provided in document 8.pielikums_Namu_ENG. If all of the achievable results (38 in total), listed in document 8.pielikums <...>, are considered program outcomes, the list is too detailed and long. Usually, programmes have no longer list than 15-20 outcomes that combine knowledge, skills and competences.

In some cases, outcomes were unclear and not easily measurable. Also, some of the programme outcomes (from document 8.pielikums (excel)) are covered only in 1 course which could then be considered a course outcome. Usually, programme outcomes result from learning gained in two or more courses and one course can cover 2-6 learning outcomes. It was clear that some of the competences and skills were covered in many courses (e.g. Ability to responsibly and independently perform the duties of real estate manager in accordance with the laws and regulations of the Republic of Latvia and the regulations of the European Union) while others were not (e.g. Ability to provide maintenance of the real estate and land plots attached to them), thus, showing that programme is not well balanced.

Well planned and articulated programme outcomes can help to develop a coherent curriculum, plan courses and assessment methods, and identify gaps or overlaps in the overall programme. Thus, the recommendation would be to clearly define programme and course outcomes, identify assessment criteria and teaching (& assessment) methods. This could be done through a comprehensive rubric.

In 2019/2020 academic year, the number of admitted students was significantly higher (16) compared to previous years and they are admitted if they have acquired a secondary education. According to the provided documentation, the number of drop-out students is low.

Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses

The 1st level vocational higher education programme "House management" is developed according to the requirements and its aims, professional qualification and other requirements are quite aligned.

Strengths:

1. The programme description follows the qualification level requirements
2. Aims, objectives and learning outcomes are aligned

Weaknesses:

1. There are too many programme learning outcomes which make the programme quite heavy, especially considering it is a part-time programme
2. Some competences, according to LQF level 4 requirements are lacking in programme description (the shorter documentation) such as the developing language skills as well as internationalization.

2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof

Analysis

The study programme and subjects are periodically reviewed and recently it has been reviewed last year, mostly to correspond to changes in the regulatory requirements. The content of the programme was changed with a stronger focus on the management and legislation. Some of the descriptions of the study courses were too general and it seems that most of the literature used in teaching is national, thus, significant advancements in the international publications seem to be missing. The study programme renewal in theory is done by the programme director and in practice by the teaching staff.

The programme now seems to be quite heavily supporting legislative and specific real estate / house management requirements, however, according to Appendix 8 (Study course mapping of "House Management" study programme), the maintenance-related skills and competences are least supported in the programme. The programme suits the current needs of the labor market, however, it is not oriented towards the future needs that will be highly influenced by technological development.

According to the industry representatives, the students have adequate technical skills, required to conduct the work. Student representatives claimed that those are especially well developed during the practical training period. However, the social and communication (soft skills in general), according to the industry, are lacking. The practices that the college implements in terms of the soft skill development (such as various participations in NGO activities and similar) are not applicable to part-time students of this particular programme.

The study programme intends to support student-centered teaching and learning. The student needs are taken into consideration through discussions and constant feedback. The teaching staff provides individual consultations and is accessible also outside of traditional working hours. However, students indicated that, e.g. informal qualifications/skills are not well recognized by the college. The teaching staff implements various teaching and assessment methods such as lectures, seminars, practice sessions, practical, individual and group work, assessment methods including quizzes, presentations and closing jobs (credits or exams). Moreover, methods such as field trips and trade fairs are also implemented. The students are informed about the objectives, tasks, results to be achieved, the criteria for knowledge, skills evaluation and assessment, methods. Students also get the information about the possibilities to use the knowledge and skills acquired in the course in the professional environment. The assessment methods are discussed with students but were not widely discussed in this evaluation procedure. It is thus unclear how soft skills (such as communication, negotiation, social skills) are assessed and evaluated in the study programme. In addition, students are informed about successful academic study process and issues such as plagiarism and study and research ethics.

The college constantly evaluates the quality of the programme through the feedback of stakeholders. The formal feedback procedures include formal feedback after each course and the interview discussions if there are significant differences between teacher and student self-evaluations. Moreover, there are ways to leave anonymous feedback inside the college. Additionally, due to the small size of the group, students are able to provide feedback and suggestions informally too. The feedback from other stakeholders, such as (potential) employers is received through practical training periods and their involvement in, e.g. college council. The feedback both provided in the documents and during the assessment meetings indicate that students, graduates and employers are satisfied with the study programme and they see the social value of the regional education possibilities, thus, are very supportive of the college.

The mobility opportunities in college exist but are quite limited. The students are informed about the opportunities through general information channels of the college, however, they do not use mobility opportunities. According to the discussions during the assessment process, most of the students are already in the labor market and have families, lack sufficient foreign language knowledge, thus, are not interested in mobility opportunities. House manager profession standard demands knowledge of two foreign languages, so there has to be bigger emphasis on languages just to fulfill the standard and that means all students must know foreign languages well enough to study related to the profession courses abroad. However, there would be options to overcome these limitations by offering mobility opportunities in countries speaking the foreign language students know and also providing shorter mobility opportunities (such as week-length visits), thus, more effort should be put towards promoting the mobility opportunities by the college.

Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses

The study programme "House management" follows the regulatory requirements and incorporates programme aims and learning outcomes into course curricula and learning outcomes. The programme embraces some tools and methods, supporting student-centered teaching and learning.

The study programme quality is ensured through continuous feedback from stakeholders and implementation of recommendations. The mobility opportunities for students are limited and not well advertised.

Strengths:

1. Study programme and study subjects are periodically reviewed and updated and opinions of all stakeholders are taken into consideration.
2. There is a constant discussion with stakeholders (students and employers) and feedback is used for study programme and quality development.
3. The stakeholders are very supportive of the regional higher education institution and see the need for this particular study programme.

Weaknesses:

1. Curriculum equips students with adequate technical skills but lacks the development of social and communication skills, required in the labor market.
2. Study programme and subjects lack future orientation and latest developments in the field. The latest achievements, innovations and international best practices of the study field as well as the newest international literature should be included and emphasized.
3. Student-centered teaching and learning is limited. The college should further develop and implement procedures for recognition of acquired competencies, especially of those acquired informally.
4. There should be bigger focus on foreign languages both to fulfill profession standard demands and because English is needed to work with latest technologies used in house management — knowledge of only Latvian language won't help much in the future.

3. Resources and Provision of the Study Programme

Analysis

For organization of study process educational establishment provides well-equipped and modernized 8 computer classes. The number of workstations in computer classrooms varies from 24 to 32, classrooms are equipped with modern IT solutions, computers, licensed programs, audio and video technical environment, interactive blackboards and access to Internet. The College is a member of Microsoft Academy Advanced with the ability to use Microsoft software for teaching purposes. Licensing agreements have been concluded for following professional accounting and storage accounting programmes "Tilde Jumis", "Zalktis", "Krivulis", "SolCraft", "FinaWin". All licenses are reviewed and renewed on regular basis.

The study technical base and room layout improvement plan are updated every year. At the end of each academic year, lecturers fill in a questionnaire on necessary materials and technical equipment. Lecturers receive feedback in summary form, on August department meetings.

Within the study process it is also available to use the College library. The library funds are replenished twice per year, the material base of the study programme "House Management" was supplemented with the latest study literature in the following study courses: Microeconomics, Macroeconomics, Statistics, General Electrical Engineering, Building Construction and Technical Condition Assessment organization and construction business.

According to statistical data, at the beginning of 2019 the library collection contains 18,522 copies of publications, incl. general education study courses - 2114 copies, industry professional study courses - 3215 copies. The College also subscribes to periodicals - 6 magazines.

The library is open every day from 9.00 to 17.00 during workdays and also open on Saturdays from 10.00 - 13.00, so all of students are available to check out their necessary books before or after the

lectures.

However, according to the study programme “House Management”, it would be desirable to subscribe to foreign periodicals and purchase foreign study literature for example Russian or English.

The material support of the College for the performance of lecturers in research is insufficient, the “Procedure for Support of Research Activities” and the “Norm for Calculating the Lecturer's Workload” approved by the College Council, which stipulate the types of work to be included in the lecturer's workload and their scope. The norm is applicable to the performance of lecturers in research in the previous academic year, taking into account the remuneration of the allocated funding.

The financial provision for the study programme includes financing from the state budget and college funds. No additional funding is received from any other companies.

Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses

Material and technical provisions are good for the implementation of the study programme.

Despite the fact that the library fund is renewed twice per year, the College should pay more attention to the purchase of literature and periodicals related to this study programme in a foreign language for example Russian or English.

Most of the funding for the programme is covered by the state budget.

Strengths.

1. The technical provisions are in very good condition as it is reviewed and renewed on regular basis every year.

Weaknesses.

1. Despite the fact that the College is buying new informational resources for the library, some of the books are outdated and can only be used for historical references it is recommended to have a decrease of those books as they cannot be used for study process.

4. Teaching Staff

Analysis

There are 13 teachers that are involved in the implementation of the programme. 8 of those teachers are guest lecturers from the industry. Of all these teachers, 9 hold academic Master's degrees, 2 have Doctor's degrees and 2 are with vocational higher education degrees. This indicates that the teaching staff, implementing the programme of "House management", is qualified and able to achieve set aims of the programme. The staff meets the requirements set in the regulatory enactments. The lecturers teach more general subjects of the programme while guest lecturers (practitioners) implement professional courses, also bringing in the newest knowledge from the industry. The teaching staff receives multiple trainings for professional and personal development as well. There is also a mechanism for supporting young teachers, starting at the college.

The college has developed and approved the “Research Activities Support Procedures” and the “Lecturers Load Calculation Standards” to make sure teachers dedicate time for the research. However, the scientific research has been limited to few staff members in the college and only few programme lecturers participated in any scientific research activities recently. Moreover, the provided publication list does not have any publications since 2015. Provided list of conference attendings indicate that the topics mostly relate to general educational and economic development.

The cooperation between lecturers is organized in multiple ways such as through the discussions about the experience and links between the courses and also constant study content updating. Lecturers discuss the courses and try to connect the tasks and teachings between different courses. Also, the content of the courses is updated yearly to include the newest developments in the area, such as new legal regulations and requirements. However, it is not fully clear how the experience exchange happens and if there are formal mechanisms, such as period meetings for staff to discuss these topics in particular.

Nonetheless, the teaching staff seems to be very enthusiastic about their work and they try to support their students in various ways. The students indicated that teachers are approachable at any time, they listen to students' suggestions and provide flexibility for students. This, however, might lead to teachers' overload and reduced wellbeing.

Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses

The college follows the regulatory requirements in terms of the teaching staff and tries to avoid negative effects on the quality of the implementation of the programme. The qualification of the teaching staff is suitable for implementing the First level professional higher education programme of "House management" and is constantly supported through continuous qualification improvements which enables achieving the aims and learning outcomes of the programme. There is a structured mechanism for mutual collaboration between the teachers, however, it is not fully clear how formal the mechanism is. Moreover, the academic staff's involvement in scientific research is limited.

Strengths:

1. The teaching staff consists of 5 lecturers and 8 guest (practitioner) lecturers who are practitioners. The rotation of staff is low, allowing a better quality control of the teachers. The qualification of lecturers is high.
2. Teachers are motivated and very student-oriented.
3. There is a strong management support for professional development of the teaching staff.
4. Small programme and the number of teachers allows more informal information and knowledge sharing.
5. "Lecturers Load Calculation Standards" have been developed and approved by the College Board.

Weaknesses:

1. The scientific research activities and participation in various conferences are limited to few teachers and to national context mostly. More practical and applied research activities could be recommended as well as further foreign language skill development and more internationalization — to be deleted here and added in recommendations.
2. The understanding of student-centered teaching and learning is somewhat limited and would require further development in the implementation of the programme.

5. Assessment of the Compliance of the Study Programme "House Management"

Requirements

1. The sample of the diploma to be issued for the acquisition of the study programme complies with the procedure by which state-recognised documents of higher education are issued.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Justification: Sample of attached diploma is compliant with MK. Nr. 202 "Kārtība, kādā izsniedz valsts atzītus augstāko izglītību apliecinošus dokumentus". Diploma example is provided in Annex 11.1. (Diplom sample_Real estate manager_ENG.pdf)

- 2 2. Documents confirming that the higher education institution/ college will provide the students with the options to continue the acquisition of education in another study programme or at another higher education institution/ college (a contract with another accredited higher education institution/ college), in case the implementation of the study programme is discontinued.
- Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant
- Justification:** JAK has agreement in place with College of Law and Riga Technical University to provide students with options to continue education.
- 3 3. Document confirming that the higher education institution/ college guarantees to the students a compensation for losses if the study programme is not accredited or the licence of the study programme is revoked due to the actions of the higher education institution/ college (actions or failure to act) and the student does not wish to continue the studies in another study programme.
- Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant
- Justification:** Nr.1.-18/214 confirms that institution guarantees compensation for losses if necessary.
- 4 4. The teaching staff members involved in the implementation of the study programme are proficient in the official language in accordance with the regulations on the level of the official language knowledge and the procedures for testing official language proficiency for performing professional duties and office duties.
- Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant
- Justification:** Nr. 1.-16/258 and attached resumes confirms that state language proficiency is compliant with MK. Nr. 733 "Noteikumi par valsts valodas zināšanu apjomu, valsts valodas prasmes pārbaudes kārtību un valsts nodevu par valsts valodas prasmes pārbaudi". The Annex "Knowledge of the State Language_ENG.docx" (Document 09.12.2019. No.1.-16/258) justifies the knowledge of the official language.
- 5 5. The teaching staff members to be involved in the implementation of the study programme have at least B2-level knowledge of a related foreign language, if the study programme or any part thereof is to be implemented in a foreign language.
- Assessment of compliance:** Not relevant
- Justification:**
- 6 6. At least five teaching staff members with a doctoral degree are among the academic staff of an academic doctoral study programme, at least three of which are experts approved by the Latvian Science Council in the respective field of science. At least five teaching staff members with a doctoral degree are among the academic staff of a professional doctoral study programme in arts.
- Assessment of compliance:** Not relevant
- Justification:**
- 7 7. The academic staff of the academic study programme complies with the requirements set forth in Section 55, Paragraph one, Clause 3 of the Law on Institutions of Higher Education.
- Assessment of compliance:** Not relevant
- Justification:**
- 8 8. The sample of the study agreement complies with the mandatory provisions to be included in the study agreement.
- Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant
- Justification:** Sample of attached study agreement complies with MK. Nr. 70 "Studiju līgumā obligāti ietveramie noteikumi". Study agreement example is provided in Annex 11.8. (Studio contract part time 2019 House management.pdf)
- 9 9. The descriptions of the study courses and the study materials have been prepared in all languages in which the study programme is implemented, and they comply with the requirements set forth in Section 56.1, Paragraph two and Section 56.2, Paragraph two of the Law on Institutions of Higher Education.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Justification: Study courses and materials are prepared in accordance with requirements. Study programme description is provided in Annex 9 (9.pielikums_Programmas plans Namu_parv_ENG.doc).

Descriptions of separate study courses include the goal of the course, description of subject and results to be achieved, relations to other courses, requirements for obtaining credits for the course, schedule and the content of the course, information sources and course review process.

- 10 10. The study programme complies with the valid professional standard or the requirements for the professional qualification (if there is no professional standard required for the relevant occupation) provided that the completion of the study programme leads to a professional qualification.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Justification: Annex No.7 confirms that study programme complies with professional standard.

- 11 11. Academic study programmes provided for less than 250 full-time students may be implemented and less than five professors and associated professors of the higher education institution may be involved in the implementation of the mandatory and limited elective part of these study programmes provided that the relevant opinion of the Council for Higher Education has been received in accordance with Section 55, Paragraph two of the Law on Institutions of Higher Education.

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

Justification:

- 12 12. The study programme complies with the State Academic Education Standard or the Professional Higher Education Standard.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Justification: Annex No. 6 confirms that study programme complies with State Education Standard.

- 13 13. The joint study programmes comply with the requirements prescribed in Section 551, Paragraphs one, two, and seven of the Law on Institutions of Higher Education (if applicable).

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

Justification:

- 14 14. Each member of the academic staff has either publications published in reviewed editions within the last six years, including international editions (if they have worked for a shorter period of time, the number of publications shall be in proportion to the work period), or artistic creation achievements (for instance, exhibitions, films, theatre performances, and concert activity), or a five-year practical work experience (except for the experience in the implementation of the study programme) in accordance with the Law on Institutions of Higher Education.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Justification: Separate CVs of the teaching staff are provided in Annex (CV_ENG_Vadiba.zip). Annex 26. and attached resumes of academic staff confirms that only some of staff members have publications in last six years. All the staff has a significant practical work experience, however, there is a limited number of publications available.

- 15 P5 - Overall rating

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Justification: The programme has all the necessary documentation, meets the requirements stated in the Law on Institutions of Higher Education and the appropriate regulations and legislative requirements for First level professional Higher Education.

Requirements (R6-R8)

- 1 R6 - The compliance of the study provision, scientific support (if applicable), informative provision (including libraries), material and technical provision, and financial provision with the conditions for the implementation of the study programme and ensuring the achievement of the learning outcomes.

Assessment of compliance: Partially compliant

Justification: Material and technical provisions are good for the implementation of the study programme.

Despite the fact that the library fund is renewed twice per year, the college should pay more attention to the purchase of literature and periodicals related to this study program in a foreign language and study course descriptions should be updated according possibilities to access literature that is mentioned as obligatory.

- 2 R7 - The compliance of the qualification of the academic staff members, visiting professors, visiting associate professors, visiting docents, visiting lecturers, and visiting assistants with the conditions for the implementation of the study programme and the provisions set out in the respective regulatory enactments.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Justification: The qualification levels of the teaching staff are provided in Annex (Macibspeki_NAMI_ENG.doc) and separate CVs are provided in Annex (CV_ENG_Vadiba.zip). 9 out of 13 hold academic Master's degrees, 2 have Doctor's degrees and 2 are with vocational higher education degrees.

- 3 R8 - The study programme leading to the master or doctoral degree is based on the advances and findings in the relevant field of science or artistic creation.

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

Justification:

Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses

The programme was updated at the beginning of 2019/2020 year, according to the requirements stated. The programme is taught by 13 lecturers (5 lecturers and 8 guest lecturers), most of them having a scientific Master's degree.

The programme follows the official requirements, emphasizes the legal side of real estate management field and provides professional qualifications through practical training and qualification paper.

The programme's aims, objectives and learning outcomes are aligned and courses are updated yearly. The programme is implemented by using different teaching and learning methods and intends to follow a student-centered learning approach.

The programme (and college) plays an important role locally, preparing for the work in the region.

Strengths:

1. Programme description follows the qualification requirements, aims, objectives and learning outcomes are aligned.
2. Qualification of teaching staff is suitable to deliver the programme (level of education and/or experience).
3. There is a mechanism for knowledge exchange between the teachers.
4. There is a close collaboration with different stakeholders (employers, students).

Weaknesses:

1. The teaching staff is not oriented towards research work and internationalization.
2. The programme has too many learning outcomes, making the part-time programme quite heavy.
3. Student-centered teaching and learning should be emphasized more.
4. Study programme lacks future orientation and latest international knowledge from an

international perspective.

5. Curriculum equips students with adequate technical skills but lacks the development of social and communication skills, required by the labor market.

Evaluation of the study programme "House Management"

Evaluation of the study programme:

Good

6. Recommendations for the Study Programme "House Management"

Short-term recommendations

The learning outcomes of the programme should be condensed, especially in terms of skill development.

Study course descriptions should be updated to include latest knowledge developments and international literature.

Emphasize language and soft-skill development in study programme content.

The current programme courses should be updated by including latest international publications.

Long-term recommendations

The study programme shall provide students with more personal and social competencies and skills to better meet the need of labor market.

Increase foreign language and soft-skill development in the courses and develop further methods to improve soft skills within the programme.

Intensify future perspectives in taught subjects/content in the courses, e.g. more information on digitalisation, BIM models, etc.

Promote research activities, especially applied research activities both from teaching staff and student perspective.

Promote internationalization and mobility within teaching staff and students, for example, increase opportunities for short-term mobility.

Further develop the understanding of student-centered teaching and learning.

Further advance and structure collaboration and knowledge sharing between teachers (also with guest lecturers).

III. Assessment of the Requirements for the Study Field and the Relevant Study Programmes

III. Assessment of the Requirements for the Study Field and the Relevant Study Programmes

Assessment of the Requirements for the Study Field

Requirements	Requirement Evaluation		Comment
<p>Pursuant to Section 5, Paragraph 21 of the Law on Institutions of Higher Education, the higher education institution/ college shall ensure continuous improvement, development, and efficient performance of the study direction whilst implementing their internal quality assurance systems:</p>	Fully compliant		<p>Jēkabpils Agribusiness College has a functioning quality assurance system. Internal regulations “General description of the internal quality management system of the Study Department of Jēkabpils Agribusiness College” have been prepared, which are also available to all interested parties. The processes of development and review of study programmes corresponding to the study field, as well as the mechanisms for obtaining feedback (including for students, employers, graduates) are defined, logical, efficient and available to all involved parties. The system ensures continuous improvement, development and operational efficiency of the study field and the corresponding study programmes.</p>
<p>R2 - The cooperation with different organisations from Latvia and abroad implemented within the study direction ensures the achievement of the aims of the study direction.</p>		Partially compliant	<p>The College has strong cooperation with local government, public organisations and business entities in providing students with places for traineeships, field trips and other involvements in the study process. Local social partners are being actively employed in study quality assurance activities. Multiple cooperation agreements with Latvian higher education institutions do not seem to be fully utilised in the Study Direction. International cooperation of the Study Direction is merely non-existent in terms of incoming and outgoing mobility of teachers and students and participation in international scientific activities.</p>
<p>R3 - Compliance of scientific research and artistic creation with the development level thereof (if applicable).</p>	Fully compliant		<p>Research targets from JAK Strategy are met, but there should be started additional work on future to attract students for research projects, especially for implementing new, modern techniques and technologies.</p>

Requirements	Requirement Evaluation		Comment
R4 - Elimination of the shortcomings and deficiencies identified during the previous assessment of the study direction, if it has been conducted, or the implementation of the provided recommendations.		Partially compliant	JAK has partially implemented recommendations. Developed strategy expires this year. There is room for growth regarding development of applied science.

Assessment of the Requirements for the Relevant Study Programmes of the Study Field

No.	Study programme	R5	R6	R7	R8	Evaluation of the study programme (excellent, good, average, poor)
1	House Management (41345)	Fully compliant	Partially compliant	Fully compliant	Not relevant	Good

The Dissenting Opinions of the Experts

There are no dissenting opinions of the experts