



STUDIJŲ KOKYBĖS VERTINIMO CENTRAS
CENTRE FOR QUALITY ASSESSMENT IN HIGHER EDUCATION

MARKETING FIELD OF STUDY

Vilnius University

EXTERNAL EVALUATION REPORT

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I. INTRODUCTION

1.1. OUTLINE OF THE EVALUATION PROCESS

The field of study evaluations in Lithuanian higher education institutions (HEIs) are based on the following:

- Procedure for the External Evaluation and Accreditation of Studies, Evaluation Areas and Indicators, approved by the Minister of Education, Science, and Sport;
- Methodology of External Evaluation of Study Fields approved by the Director of the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education (SKVC);
- Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG).

The evaluation is intended to support HEIs in continuous enhancement of their study process and to inform the public about the quality of programmes within the field of study.

The object of the evaluation is all programmes within a specific field of study. A separate assessment is given for each study cycle.

The evaluation process consists of the following main steps: 1) Self-evaluation and production of a self-evaluation report (SER) prepared by an HEI; 2) A site visit by the review panel to the HEI; 3) The external evaluation report (EER) production by the review panel; 4) EER review by the HEI; 5) EER review by the Study Evaluation Committee; 6) Accreditation decision taken by SKVC; 7) Appeal procedure (if initiated by the HEI); 8) Follow-up activities, which include the production of a Progress Report on Recommendations Implementation by the HEI.

The main outcome of the evaluation process is the EER prepared by the review panel. The HEI is forwarded the draft EER for feedback on any factual mistakes. The draft report is then subject to approval by the external Study Evaluation Committee, operating under SKVC. Once approved, the EER serves as the basis for an accreditation decision. If an HEI disagrees with the outcome of the evaluation, it can file an appeal. On the basis of the approved EER, SKVC takes one of the following accreditation decisions:

- **Accreditation granted for 7 years** if all evaluation areas are evaluated as exceptional (5 points), very good (4 points), or good (3 points).
- **Accreditation granted for 3 years** if at least one evaluation area is evaluated as satisfactory (2 points).
- **Not accredited** if at least one evaluation area is evaluated as unsatisfactory (1 point).

If the field of study and cycle were **previously accredited for 3 years**, the re-evaluation of the field of study and cycle is initiated no earlier than after 2 years. After the re-evaluation of the field of study and cycle, SKVC takes one of the following decisions regarding the accreditation of the field of study and cycle:

- To be accredited for the remaining term until the next evaluation of the field of study and cycle, but no longer than 4 years, if all evaluation areas are evaluated as exceptional (5 points), very good (4 points) or good (3 points).
- To not be accredited, if at least one evaluation area is evaluated as satisfactory (2 points) or unsatisfactory (1 point).

1.2. REVIEW PANEL

The review panel was appointed in accordance with the Reviewer Selection Procedure as approved by the Director of SKVC.

The composition of the review panel was as follows:

1. Panel chair: Dr. Kristiina Tõnisson
2. Academic member: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Tomaš Kincl
3. Academic member: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Lineta Ramonienė
4. Student representative: Joana Jasilionytė

1.3. SITE VISIT

The site visit was organised on 18 October 2024 onsite.

Meetings with the following members of the staff and stakeholders took place during the site visit:

- Senior management and administrative staff of the faculty;
- Team responsible for preparation of the SER;
- Teaching staff;
- Students;
- Alumni and social stakeholders including employers.

1.4. BACKGROUND OF THE REVIEW

Overview of the HEI

Vilnius University (hereinafter referred to as VU) was established in 1579 and is the oldest and largest institution of higher education in Lithuania. VU is a state public institution and the legal framework of its activities (its mission, structure, activities and governance) is defined in the Statute of Vilnius University. There are 15 core academic units at the University: 11 faculties, 1 institute, 1 centre, 1 academy and 1 business school), 12 core non-academic units. The University offers studies in 12 study field groups – mathematics, informatics, physics, life, engineering, technological, health, social, educational, humanitarian sciences, law, business and public management – and 61 study fields. Marketing studies are carried out in three departments of VU: the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration (hereinafter referred to as FEBA), the Business School and the Kaunas Faculty.

Overview of the study field

The FEBA has 9 research departments (Accounting and Auditing, Economic Informatics, Economic Policy, Finance, Quantitative Methods and Modelling, Marketing, Theoretical Economics, Management, and Business) and the Centre for Economic Expertise, whose academic staff carry out research in their respective fields and teach their subjects. The Faculty of Economics and Business Administration publishes three scientific journals (Organisations and Markets in Emerging Economies, Economics, Accounting Theory and Practice), while the Kaunas Faculty publishes the journal Transformations in Business and Economics. The study field of marketing has one undergraduate programme, Global Marketing, and three postgraduate programmes, Marketing and Integrated Communication, Digital Marketing and Marketing and Sales Management.

Since Global Marketing started its activities in the fall of 2020, there is just one graduating class, and there are no results about their career. SP Global Marketing Programme contributes to the first strategic objective: developing graduates capable of tackling societal challenges. This objective is achieved through a high level of marketing specialists for the Lithuanian market, who can also successfully enter the foreign labour market. Another strategic objective focuses on international education and studies, where the development of the internationalisation of studies pursued at the University by increasing the internationalisation of the study environment and by implementing the internationalisation of each study internationalisation intention of each programme.

Previous external evaluations

There are no previous external evaluations of this study programme, as it was started in 2020.

Documents and information used in the review.

The following documents and/or information have been provided by the HEI before or during the site visit:

- *Self-evaluation report and its annexes*
- *Final theses*

Any additional sources of information were used by the review panel as a Self-evaluation report, and its annexes included all necessary information required for the review.

II. STUDY PROGRAMMES IN THE FIELD

First cycle/LTQF 6

Title of the study programme	Global Marketing
State code	6121LX072
Type of study (college/university)	University studies
Mode of study (full time/part time) and nominal duration (in years)	full-time, 3,5 years
Workload in ECTS	210
Award (degree and/or professional qualification)	Bachelor's degree in Business Management
Language of instruction	Lithuanian, English
Admission requirements	Secondary Education
First registration date	June 26th, 2020
Comments (including remarks on joint or interdisciplinary nature of the programme, mode of provision)	-

III. ASSESSMENT IN POINTS BY CYCLE AND EVALUATION AREAS

The **first cycle** of the Marketing field of study is given a **positive** evaluation.

No.	Evaluation Area	Evaluation points ^{1*}
1.	Study aims, learning outcomes and curriculum	4
2.	Links between scientific (or artistic) research and higher education	4
3.	Student admission and support	4
4.	Teaching and learning, student assessment, and graduate employment	4
5.	Teaching staff	3
6.	Learning facilities and resources	4
7.	Quality assurance and public information	3
Total:		26

^{1*}

1 (unsatisfactory) - the area does not meet the minimum requirements, there are substantial shortcomings that hinder the implementation of the programmes in the field.

2 (satisfactory) - the area meets the minimum requirements, but there are substantial shortcomings that need to be eliminated.

3 (good) - the area is being developed systematically, without any substantial shortcomings.

4 (very good) - the area is evaluated very well in the national context and internationally, without any shortcomings.

5 (exceptional) - the area is evaluated exceptionally well in the national context and internationally.

IV. STUDY FIELD ANALYSIS

AREA 1: STUDY AIMS, LEARNING OUTCOMES AND CURRICULUM

1.1.	Programmes are aligned with the country's economic and societal needs and the strategy of the HEI
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FACTUAL SITUATION

1.1.1. Programme aims and learning outcomes are aligned with the needs of the society and/or the labour market

The Global Marketing study programme is well-justified by current business and societal needs. It builds on the previous "Marketing and Global Business" specialization, responding to industry demand for specialists with in-depth global marketing expertise. The programme addresses an international and local shortage of skilled marketing professionals, as reflected in high-demand metrics from markets in the U.S., Europe, and Lithuania, where marketing roles rank among the most sought-after positions. The aim of the programme (to train highly qualified marketing specialists who can work in the marketing departments of organisations as product, market or communication specialists, who are able to independently analyse global markets, make product planning, pricing, logistics and communication decisions, initiate and execute a wide range of marketing activities, to creatively apply their interdisciplinary university education in a global business environment, and to be able to independently upgrade their own professional qualifications) is well-articulated and justified, aligned with the needs of society and the labour market (in Lithuania as well as internationally). The Experts commended the decomposition of the SP aim into competences (divided into general and subject-specific) and learning outcomes that are formulated in line with international standards (Bloom taxonomy). The curriculum allows to reach the formulated learning outcomes.

In a similar vein, the curriculum is aligned with international standards, such as those set by the Chartered Institute of Marketing (CIM) and the Netherlands Institute of Marketing (NIMA), enhancing its credibility and ensuring that students meet recognized qualifications. The programme also aligns with Lithuania's strategic goals (Lithuania 2030) by developing interdisciplinary skills like creativity, critical thinking, and teamwork, valued in modern marketing roles. Course units/modules have formulated learning outcomes that are carefully paired with study programme aims and outcomes.

VU continuously monitors and updates the programme objectives and outcomes through market feedback and input from social partners, students, and lecturers. This feedback loop ensures that course content and final thesis topics remain relevant, reflecting current industry trends and preparing graduates for roles in global companies, marketing agencies, and consulting firms. The programme's design and updates indicate a strong alignment with market demands and societal needs.

This conclusion was confirmed during the visit to FEBA, where the alumni, social partners, and employers' representatives confirmed the need for more highly educated and skilled professionals from the global marketing field.

1.1.2 Programme aims and learning outcomes are aligned with the HEI's mission, goals, and strategy

The Global Marketing study programme aligns well with Vilnius University's (VU) mission which emphasizes fostering responsible citizens and social leaders grounded in academic and social values. This alignment is further supported by VU's five-year strategic plan, to which the programme actively contributes. The programme supports VU's strategic priority of preparing graduates capable of addressing social challenges by training high-level marketing professionals suited for both local and international markets. Another core alignment with VU's mission is the programme's commitment to internationalization. By offering the programme in English, it attracts both international and Lithuanian students who aspire to global careers or further studies abroad. The international exposure is reinforced by lecturers with teaching experience in various countries, creating a multicultural learning environment that enhances students' global perspectives.

The mission and strategic priorities are reflected in the learning outcomes of the study programme (will be able to generate ideas independently and responsibly, and provide creative and innovative solutions to problems; combine knowledge acquired in different disciplines and apply it to global marketing problems; plan and organize personal learning and work; anticipate and adapt to changing professional conditions; understand cross-cultural differences and be able to apply them when interacting with partners...; know the principles of teamwork and will have the ability to work in a multi-cultural team).

The programme also advances VU's ambition for excellence in science. Faculty members actively participate in international research, publish in high-level journals, and participate in international conferences, enriching the programme with state-of-the-art insights and practices. Additionally, VU's support for faculty development through training, international exchanges, and collaboration with partner institutions strengthens the programme's academic rigor and aligns it closely with the university's mission to provide high-quality, globally relevant education.

The visit to the institution revealed that (some of) the students may not fully recognize the promoted outcomes of the study programme, considering the programme too broad and general, with limited practical applicability. On the other hand, the students and alumni confirmed that the choice of their study programme was a result of a thorough (and often international) comparison of similar programmes. Therefore, there might be an opportunity to better communicate the advantages and benefits of the study programme to the students and applicants. Moreover, the students also mentioned that some teachers might be good in research but (despite a lot of training on pedagogical skills - as reported by the faculty members and faculty management) could be better as educators, being more engaged and interested in students' challenges and problems.

ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSION

The Global Marketing study programme is designed to address current business and societal needs by equipping students with specialized global marketing expertise. It aligns with international standards like CIM and NIMA and supports Lithuania's strategic goals. The curriculum, developed in response to market demand and industry feedback, prepares graduates for roles in global companies, marketing agencies, and consulting firms.

1.2.	Programmes comply with legal requirements, while curriculum design, curriculum, teaching/learning and assessment methods enable students to achieve study aims and learning outcomes
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FACTUAL SITUATION

1.2.1. Programmes comply with legal requirements

The structure of the Study Programme complies with the legal requirements of General Requirements for the Conduct of Studies. There are 210 study credits in the programme of which 165 are compulsory course units and 45 optional. The requirements to constitute study field course units (125), final thesis (15) and internship (15) hours are also met. The scope of a course unit (module) is in multiples of 5 credits. One study credit in the programme corresponds to 25–30 hours of a student's work hours, including a balance between contact teaching hours (31,4%) and self-study (68,6%).

To add, the study programme of Global Marketing has been implemented in accordance with all the main requirements as the Lithuanian Qualifications Framework, the General Requirements for the Conduct of Studies, Description of Study Cycles, Description of Marketing study field and the Regulations of Studies of Vilnius University. It fully complies with the legal requirements and contributes to the knowledge and skills necessary for marketing activities in the national and global markets. The programme includes an interdisciplinary approach, encourages creative and critical thinking of students and develops professional competence.

1.2.2. Programme aims, learning outcomes, teaching/learning and assessment methods are aligned

The programme demonstrates a good alignment between programme aims, learning outcomes, teaching/learning methods, and assessment. The curriculum is structured according to the General Requirements for Studies and the Description of Marketing Studies, with clear integration of level 6 competencies as per the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) and the standards set by recognized bodies such as the Chartered Institute of Marketing (CIM) and the Netherlands Institute of Marketing (NIMA). Learning outcomes are distributed consistently across semesters and subjects, ensuring that students develop both foundational knowledge and specialized skills in marketing. By adhering to Bloom's taxonomy, the programme gradually increases the complexity of learning tasks, encouraging critical thinking, application, and creativity.

The programme uses a structured credit system, with each 5-credit course unit corresponding to 26 hours of study time, facilitating a balanced semester workload and enabling flexible, interdisciplinary study options. This credit structure supports individualized learning pathways and provides a coherent study plan aligned with student workload and programme goals.

The Study Programme Committee (SPC) continuously monitors the curriculum and adjusts it annually to reflect market demand and stakeholder feedback, ensuring that the curriculum remains up-to-date and relevant. This structured alignment between programme aims, learning outcomes, and course design, alongside regular adjustments, indicates that the programme meets academic and professional standards.

The students appreciated the student coordinator and administrative support. On the other hand, they mentioned differences between teachers' approaches (in teaching, providing feedback, or willingness to provide consultations).

1.2.3. Curriculum ensures consistent development of student competences

The curriculum structure supports consistently developing student competencies across core areas in marketing and management. The curriculum is carefully organized into groups of subjects that progressively build foundational knowledge and practical skills, ensuring students gain both breadth and depth in their learning. Each group of subjects is designed to address specific competencies,

starting with foundational knowledge in management and marketing in the first semester. As students advance through the programme, they engage in progressively complex topics like consumer behaviour, global marketing, and intercultural communication, reflecting a structured approach to mastering competencies essential for the field. The programme also integrates practical skill-building courses, such as Marketing Research, Marketing Analytics, and coursework assignments, which reinforce students' analytical and research abilities. In their final year, students apply these competencies in real-world settings through a professional internship and their bachelor's thesis, demonstrating their readiness for the global marketing field. The curriculum has been restructured in 2023 to better reflect the state-of-the-art in the field, along with the need of business practice.

However, during the visit, some students mentioned that classes might be repetitive (e.g., including strategic analytical tools in multiple courses) and limited application of the obtained knowledge in a practical context. Some practical tasks are not well thought out and have just a little connection with theoretical foundations.

1.2.4. Opportunities for students to personalise curriculum according to their personal learning goals and intended learning outcomes are ensured

Through individualized study plans, students can tailor their studies by replacing certain programme subjects with others that better align with their specific interests, pending approval from the Study Programme Committee (SPC). The programme also allows students to participate in academic exchanges, internships, and non-credit foreign language courses, enabling them to build additional competencies beyond the core curriculum. From 2023, students can allocate 45 study credits to individualized studies, choosing subjects across the university, interdisciplinary modules, additional internships, or international exchanges. This is where the programme benefits from the strong foundations of a large and multi-discipline university.

Moreover, VU's policy for recognizing competencies acquired through non-formal and informal learning supports a personalized educational experience and encourages lifelong learning. This framework allows students to shape their studies to fit personal and professional objectives while maintaining alignment with the programme's intended outcomes.

During the visit, some of the students mentioned that the organization of studies might be challenging for blended students or those who already have a job. The institution representatives objected that The SP GM is a full-time study program, and the main task of every student is to study in the program, and students are encouraged to take only those jobs that allow participation in a study process as it is required. FEBA does not encourage the use of a blended form to hide students' nonengagement in studies and emphasizes the value of live studies. Still, the experts panel considers this aspect of studies as an opportunity for further consideration and improvement.

1.2.5. Final theses (applied projects) comply with the requirements for the field and cycle

The procedures and regulations underlying the final thesis preparation, writing, and defence are formulated at VU are well-structured and designed to align with field and cycle requirements. Fifteen study credits are allocated to the final thesis. This complies with the formal requirements for first cycle studies. The aim of the final thesis (*to develop the student's ability to apply the knowledge acquired during the studies, to select, analyse and interpret scientific literature, to apply research methods, to independently solve the set tasks, to present his/her own conclusions and proposals, as well as to demonstrate the ability to describe the research in correct terminology, accurately and clearly*) is aligned with the Descriptor of Marketing study field (*demonstrate the student's ability to*

understand and analyse marketing phenomena and processes, and to creatively apply theoretical marketing knowledge and practical skills to solve marketing problems; must be based on independent applied research, the ability to analyse and interpret the results of the research, and to formulate sound research conclusions and recommendations)... VU's Senate and Vice-Rector regulate the procedures for thesis preparation, submission, defence, and evaluation and are transparently accessible to students via departmental websites and course materials.

The thesis aims to develop critical skills, including applying theoretical knowledge, conducting research, and presenting findings clearly and accurately. This was confirmed during the visit to FEBA, as one of the presented ideas to further develop theses and their impact was to invite students to participate in established research groups. Furthermore, the theses recently defended at FEBA confirm the focus on the application of scientific knowledge in the marketing field in the theses.

Students can select thesis topics from faculty-provided lists, industry suggestions, or propose relevant topics, subject to the Study Programme Committee (SPC) approval. This approach allows students to address current issues in global marketing, combining theoretical insights with real-world applications.

Throughout the thesis process, students receive guidance from their supervisors, ensuring compliance with academic standards. Additional sessions focus on topic selection, research principles, and constructive criticism, promoting individual and collaborative learning. A structured approval process, including SPC oversight and input from external stakeholders, further ensures alignment with field requirements.

The inclusion of a plagiarism detection system (EPAS) reinforces academic integrity. On the other hand, some of the students indicated a growing number of cases of academic misconduct involving the unethical use of AI. At the same time, they noted that some teachers could not deal with this phenomenon or even do not want to deal with it.

The final thesis defence involves a committee with external business and public sector representatives, providing an additional layer of relevance and objectivity. The structure in place demonstrates a good foundation for aligning thesis work with both academic standards and industry needs.

ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSION (regarding 1.2.)

The Global Marketing programme demonstrates strong alignment with societal and labour market needs, as well as the strategic goals of Vilnius University. The curriculum integrates international standards (CIM, NIMA), addresses market demand, and fosters interdisciplinary skills.

The Global Marketing programme meets legal and academic standards, ensuring compliance with study credit requirements, structured learning outcomes, and alignment with industry and academic expectations. The curriculum, structured to develop core and advanced competencies in marketing, incorporates both theoretical and practical components. Individualized learning paths allow students to tailor studies to personal goals, supported by options for interdisciplinary subjects and international exchanges. Efforts to align the programme with market needs and stakeholder input are evident, reflecting its relevance and focus on preparing students for global marketing roles.

AREA 1: CONCLUSIONS

AREA 1	Unsatisfactory - 1 Does not meet the requirements	Satisfactory - 2 Meets the requirements, but there are substantial shortcomings to be eliminated	Good - 3 Meets the requirements, but there are shortcomings to be eliminated	Very good - 4 Very well nationally and internationally without any shortcomings	Exceptional - 5 Exceptionally well nationally and internationally without any shortcomings
First cycle				X	

COMMENDATIONS

1. The Global Marketing programme is well-aligned with societal and labour market needs, addressing local and international demand for marketing professionals by integrating international standards such as CIM and NIMA, and preparing graduates for global roles.
2. The curriculum combines theoretical foundations and practical applications, progressively building competencies and incorporating individualized learning options, such as elective credits, interdisciplinary subjects, and international exchanges.
3. Comprehensive and transparent thesis preparation and evaluation processes, including the use of external stakeholders and a plagiarism detection system, reinforce academic integrity and practical relevance.

RECOMMENDATIONS

For further improvement:

1. Address repetitive course content by conducting a systematic review of the curriculum to identify and eliminate overlapping topics, ensuring a more streamlined, engaging learning experience to provide consistent development of student competences.
2. Increase the practical application of theoretical knowledge by designing assignments and tasks that better reflect real-world scenarios, ensuring stronger connections to business practices.

AREA 2: LINKS BETWEEN SCIENTIFIC (OR ARTISTIC) RESEARCH AND HIGHER EDUCATION

2.1.	Higher education integrates the latest developments in scientific (or artistic) research and technology and enables students to develop skills for scientific (or artistic) research
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FACTUAL SITUATION

2.1.1. Research within the field of study is at a sufficient level

Research output of the programme faculty is sufficient and increasing every year. In 2021 there were 18 research outputs, in 2022 - 27 and in 2023 - 34. Research output, as indicated in SER, includes programme faculty's articles in AJG level 3+, AJG level 1-2, Clarivate Analytics Web of Science /SCOPUS and presenting papers at scientific conferences while publishing research results.

Three professors of the Global Marketing programme are editors or editorial board members of high-level (AJG-listed) journals; many are members of the editorial boards of Clarivate Analytics Web of Science/SCOPUS journals.

Moreover, faculty participates in international and national research projects. As indicated in SER, there were two international research projects and 14 national. It should be noted however that not all of them are related to the marketing field directly. One of the international projects, for example, was focused on labour market topics. This topic and general leadership topics also appear in national research projects. Still there are marketing related projects related to modern topics in the field like consumer personal data disclosure, blockchain-based payment system, gamification elements in retail, executive behavioural types on LinkedIn, etc.

Overall, results of a comparative expert evaluation of universities' research and experimental development activities (2018-2022) are positive for the field study of marketing, scoring 4.23.

2.1.2. Curriculum is linked to the latest developments in science, art, and technology

The Global Marketing programme's courses use the latest required literature, supplemented by information related to the most recent scientific knowledge and the presentation of technological innovations, as well as the most recent scientific works of the University's staff. The coordinating academic staff member is responsible for improving the content of the course each year and for ensuring that the content of the course is in line with market trends. The core and supplementary reading lists are updated every year with the most recent scientific publications. The choice of the most appropriate teaching material is also supported by seminars, organised periodically by representatives of the major textbook publishers, which present the most recent literature on the subject. The latest examples of business situations and case studies are included in the teaching material.

The specialised subjects taught in the Global Marketing programme correspond to the research interests of the lecturers, so the lecturers of the field of study regularly integrate the results of their research into the content of the subjects taught, and actively share them with students, to ensure that the development of students' skills is based on the most up-to-date knowledge and the most appropriate methods. Students are encouraged to consult and use the most recent/relevant research work of the professors in their various assignments and theses.

New technologies are constantly being introduced in marketing studies. Digital tools are increasingly replacing printed textbooks. Digital research lab is available for students and lecturers. All lecturers use the Moodle e-learning system. It contains materials for lectures and seminars, checks on students' knowledge, provides assignments and feedback from the lecturer.

What students mentioned during the study visit, however, is that they would like lecturers to incorporate more video materials into teaching and more guest speakers and real business cases in the classroom.

2.1.3. Opportunities for students to engage in research are consistent with the cycle

Students are formally encouraged to enrol in research activities in the following programme courses "Fundamentals of Marketing Research", "Marketing Analytics" and "Marketing Management". In addition, research and analytical skills are demonstrated in the coursework, professional internship and the bachelor's thesis. The students participate in top-level conferences organised by the Academy of Management, the Academy of Marketing Science, the European Academy of Marketing and other renowned organisations. Students are encouraged to consult and use the most recent/relevant research work of the professors in their various assignments and theses. Also they're encouraged to participate in academic conferences and, at the study visit, faculty indicated that students have successfully joined the academic conference on Vilnius University campus. . However, it should be noted that this was a one-time event that involved the participation of several students. No other formal data on students' engagement in formal research activities was provided to the expert's panel.

ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSION (regarding 2.1.)

Research within the study field is sufficient and faculty actively engages in conferences, publishes in highly accepted journals, etc. Higher participation in international research projects could be encouraged, especially considering that this is a Global Marketing programme.

Curriculum is linked to the latest developments in the field, but interactive teaching methods could be encouraged more in the classroom. Also, more real business projects and cases could be included in the classroom.

The programme offers many research opportunities to students through formal courses, and the programme administration has plans to engage students more in publicly sharing research.

However, at the time of the assessment, there were not many formal activities found that would engage students in sharing their research, nor were there indications that research activities extended beyond the classroom.

AREA 2: CONCLUSIONS

AREA 2	Unsatisfactory - 1 Does not meet the requirements	Satisfactory - 2 Meets the requirements, but there are substantial shortcomings to be eliminated	Good - 3 Meets the requirements, but there are shortcomings to be eliminated	Very good - 4 Very well nationally and internationally without any shortcomings	Exceptional - 5 Exceptionally well nationally and internationally without any shortcomings
First cycle				X	

COMMENDATIONS

1. Programme faculty is engaged in significant national and international research activities and events.
2. Students in the programme are included in sharing research activities with the public.

RECOMMENDATIONS

For further improvement:

1. Encourage participation in international research projects.
2. Invite more guest lecturers from the business environment and include more real business projects in the classroom to strengthen the link between science, art, and technology.
3. Propose formal ways for students to participate in research activities, especially outside the classroom.

AREA 3: STUDENT ADMISSION AND SUPPORT

3.1.	Student selection and admission is in line with the learning outcomes
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FACTUAL SITUATION

3.1.1. Student selection and admission criteria and procedures are adequate and transparent

The admission procedures are transparent, well-grounded and adequate. The website of the University is informative and accessible to both current and prospective students. The admission procedures are transparent and well communicated. There is a clear differentiation in communication for international and Lithuanian applicants.

Although applications to the programme have been slightly decreasing over the 2021-2023 period, the enrolment still exceeds expectations for the Global Marketing programme. According to LAMA BPO data, in 2023, Global Marketing programme received 62% of all marketing students in Lithuania; in 2022 - 72%, and in 2021 - 80%; respectively, in 2023, Global Marketing programme received 71% of the total number of marketing baskets; in 2022 - 74% and in 2021 - 80%. According to the report, in 2022, the Global Marketing programme was the most enrolled programme among all business and public administration programmes in Lithuania.

The competition score of enrolling students is similar each year and mostly above average when compared to other business and public administration programmes in the country.

3.1.2. Recognition of foreign qualifications, periods of study, and prior learning (established provisions and procedures)

Recognition Vilnius University recognizes foreign qualifications, which means determining whether a degree or qualification obtained outside Lithuania is equivalent to the qualifications in Lithuania (either secondary or higher education). It follows the Lisbon Recognition Convention, an international treaty that aims to ensure fair recognition of qualifications across Europe. When evaluating a foreign qualification, the university compares it to Lithuanian education standards. It looks for any significant differences in the education system and ensures that the foreign qualification aligns with Lithuanian expectations for similar levels of education. Every foreign qualification is assessed individually, meaning that the recognition process considers the specifics of the education system from which the qualification was obtained, alongside the university's established guidelines for recognition. The evaluation process includes a methodology for assessing the content, level, and relevance of foreign educational programs, ensuring that there are no substantial differences in quality or requirements when compared to Lithuanian standards. Vilnius University applies a comprehensive, individualized process to assess the equivalence of foreign higher education qualifications, ensuring they meet Lithuanian educational standards and international recognition protocols.

Applicants can request to have their prior learning (achieved through formal or informal/self-education) credited towards the Global Marketing programme. This process is subject to VU's established procedures. No more than 75% of the credits for the Global Marketing programme can be transferred if the applicant comes from another formal education institution (e.g., another university or college). No more than 50% of the credits can be transferred if the applicant's prior learning was informal or self-education. All requests for credit recognition, whether from formal or informal learning, must be approved by the SP Global Marketing Committee. This committee assesses whether the prior learning meets the necessary standards and competencies for the

programme. Final theses or other significant academic papers that are part of the programme cannot be credited or transferred. These must be completed as part of the Global Marketing programme.

ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSION (regarding 3.1.)

Student selection and admission processes are transparent and well communicated. Both groups of students, national and international, are treated fairly in the admission process. Processes are in line with the learning outcomes of the programme. What should be mentioned, is that enrolment in the programme has been slightly decreasing, especially for local students and there are no clear reasons outlined. This might not be important in the current moment since the Global Marketing programme was the most enrolled programme among all business and public administration programmes in Lithuania, but the decrease trend should be monitored.

3.2.	There is an effective student support system enabling students to maximise their learning progress
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FACTUAL SITUATION

3.2.1. Opportunities for student academic mobility are ensured

According to SER, the International Relations department oversees the study abroad and international cooperation initiatives at the University. The SP Global Marketing programme provides students opportunities to engage in partial studies or internships abroad for a semester or year. Students can participate in compulsory and additional professional internships under various programmes, including Erasmus+, ISEP, and Nordplus, with a total mobility allowance of up to half their study period. Specifically, students can utilize the Erasmus and Erasmus+ programmes for up to 12 months, supported by 191 agreements with international universities. Moreover, students in the SP Global Marketing programme benefit from the ARQUS27 Alliance, which promotes open mobility among seven European universities. This collaboration also allows access to 38 institutions within the COIMBRA network. To study abroad, students must have completed at least one relevant SP Global Marketing course beforehand. Information on mobility opportunities is widely disseminated via the University's websites, newsletters, and informational meetings. Success stories shared on social media enhance visibility and encourage participation.

However, certain constraints impact international mobility. Students cannot travel during their first semester, and planning trips during the final semester is challenging due to the Bachelor's thesis requirements. Consequently, the second and third years emerge as the most favourable periods for student mobility. Additionally, personal commitments, such as work and family responsibilities, may limit students' ability to engage in long-term international opportunities.

Despite these challenges, there has been active participation in Erasmus exchanges. Between 2021 and 2024, 72 students from the SP Global Marketing programme pursued part-time studies abroad.

The expert panel received concrete evidence that students have numerous opportunities to participate in academic mobility programs and are provided with detailed information about the available options. Furthermore, the number of students who have participated in academic mobility programs is high, despite some potential challenges.

3.2.2. Academic, financial, social, psychological, and personal support provided to students is relevant, adequate, and effective

According to the SER, academic support at VU is provided by both individual academic departments and the central Student Services and Career Department. These units offer counselling on a variety of topics, including admissions, programme selection, internships, and academic progress. Each unit has dedicated academic advisors, and SP Global Marketing students receive additional support from an academic consultant who schedules meetings based on students' availability. Additionally, according to the SER, the programme leader meets with students at least twice each semester to discuss academic progress and address current issues related to the study process. However, during discussions with students, it became evident that not all students were aware of these meetings and had not been involved.

At the university, there is a mentoring programme that connects students with volunteer mentors, including faculty and alumni, to help them develop skills and plan their professional futures. Approximately 50 mentors from diverse fields participate, enhancing students' personal and professional growth.

The Vilnius University Career Centre provides individual career counselling, helping students assess their strengths and interests, explore career prospects, and acquire necessary competencies. Additionally, training on stress management, effective learning, and job application skills is offered, engaging over 1,500 students annually.

Students can access various forms of financial aid, including incentive scholarships based on academic performance, student loans provided by the National Study Fund, and assistance for students with disabilities. Additionally, VU offers nominal scholarships for students who demonstrate exceptional talent, outstanding academic performance, or significant participation in scientific activities. These scholarships are awarded based on the respective fields of study and encourage students to engage in research and academic endeavours. Additionally, VU offers discounts for socially disadvantaged and disabled students.

The VU Health and Sports Centre and the Counselling and Training Centre together provide comprehensive wellness support for students. The Health and Sports Centre promotes physical wellness by offering access to fitness facilities and both individual and group physical education classes. For mental and emotional well-being, the Counselling and Training Centre provides professional psychological counselling to help students address personal, academic, and social challenges.

The VU Culture Centre and the Students' Representative Office offer a range of cultural, leisure, and advocacy opportunities that enrich student life. The Culture Centre organizes various art groups and cultural events, allowing students to express themselves creatively and participate in festivals. Meanwhile, the Students' Representative Office advocates for student interests, organizes events, and supports first-year students in their transition to university life. Additionally, students can engage in the VU Students' Union and the ESN network, providing even more avenues for involvement and connection within the university community.

During discussions with different groups, it became apparent that, at the central university level, there are many support tools available for students, and their well-being is prioritized. However, at the faculty level, there is less focus on student support, and a lack of tools to integrate students as an important part of the academic community and to encourage student engagement in community activities.

3.2.3. Higher education information and student counselling are sufficient

Based on SER, newly admitted students to the SP Global Marketing programme at Vilnius University are introduced to their studies during Integration Week in September, which features a special schedule of lectures and meetings. This week includes presentations by programme committee members, discussions on programme objectives, methods, and support services.

Information about the study process is provided at various levels: general information from the Student Services and Careers Centre, programme-specific details from study units, and individual meetings with academic advisors or lecturers. Consultations are primarily conducted via email and telephone. During discussions with students, it became clear that some students have not always had the opportunity to receive consultations from lecturers when facing challenges in their subjects. Additionally, consultations are held irregularly, and lecturers do not have specific consultation hours.

Key information regarding study calendars, exam schedules, scholarships, and opportunities for studying abroad is regularly published and accessible through VU units and the VUSIS system, where students can manage their personal data and course registrations. First-year students receive informational pamphlets and participate in an initial meeting with their study programme's head and advisors to discuss essential study details. Throughout their programme, students receive ongoing advice about course content and career opportunities from faculty members and alumni.

ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSION (regarding 3.2.)

The SP Global Marketing programme offers an array of resources to enhance students' academic and professional development, including international mobility through initiatives like Erasmus+ and ARQUS27, structured career counselling, financial support, and wellness programmes. The programme's integration of academic and extracurricular activities and targeted support for well-being and career readiness provides a solid foundation for student life. However, gaps in faculty-level engagement and the uneven availability of consultations reveal areas for further improvement. Moreover, the lack of consistent consultation hours and insufficient faculty-level support hinder students' ability to resolve academic challenges effectively. To address these issues, the programme could consider increasing flexibility in mobility timelines, standardizing faculty consultation practices, and fostering a stronger sense of community at the faculty level. Enhancing these aspects would improve the overall student experience and better integrate students into the academic ecosystem.

AREA 3: CONCLUSIONS

AREA 3	Unsatisfactory - 1 Does not meet the requirements	Satisfactory - 2 Meets the requirements, but there are substantial shortcomings to be eliminated	Good - 3 Meets the requirements, but there are shortcomings to be eliminated	Very good - 4 Very well nationally and internationally without any shortcomings	Exceptional - 5 Exceptionally well nationally and internationally without any shortcomings
First cycle				X	

COMMENDATIONS

1. Students are motivated to participate in academic mobility programmes.
2. At the university's central level, various support tools are available for students to use.
3. The programme has demonstrated high enrolment of students.

RECOMMENDATIONS

For further improvement

1. Lecturers could plan regular time slots for student consultations, which should be clearly communicated to students. Additionally, it is recommended that these consultations be face-to-face.
2. The faculty needs to make more effort to create a more supportive and encouraging environment for students.
3. To monitor enrolling students number differences between Lithuanian and English, analyse reasons behind it and take action when necessary.

AREA 4: TEACHING AND LEARNING, STUDENT ASSESSMENT, AND GRADUATE EMPLOYMENT

4.1.	Students are prepared for independent professional activity
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FACTUAL SITUATION

4.1.1. Teaching and learning address the needs of students and enable them to achieve intended learning outcomes

The teaching and learning processes are - based on the SER - thoughtfully designed to address the diverse needs of students while supporting the achievement of intended learning outcomes. The programme incorporates contact-based learning (lectures and seminars) and independent study, allowing students to engage with the material in multiple formats. This includes interactive methods like group discussions, case studies, and simulations, which foster critical thinking and problem-solving skills. On the other hand, during the visit, the students indicated that not all courses had developed the same level of interactive materials.

The SER emphasizes a student-centered learning environment, encouraging students to participate in their learning and develop self-directed study habits actively. Students are introduced to the objectives, learning outcomes, and assessment methods for each course at the outset, ensuring transparency and alignment with programme goals. Assessment is continuous, utilizing a cumulative system that includes various methods such as exams, written assignments, group projects, and presentations. The system allows for consistent feedback, helping students track their progress and adjust their study strategies as needed. However, during the visit, students indicated differences between teachers' approaches (in teaching, providing feedback, or willingness to provide consultations). Students also often feel they could have more feedback on their development beyond the grade awarded; it is necessary to request the feedback, otherwise it is insufficient.

Experiential learning is integrated into the curriculum, particularly through the professional internship in the final semester, which provides students with practical experience in real-world settings. This hands-on component enhances their ability to apply theoretical knowledge in professional contexts. Overall, the combination of varied teaching methods, individualized support, and practical experience ensures that students can achieve the programme's learning outcomes despite some areas for further improvement.

4.1.2. Access to higher education for socially vulnerable groups and students with individual needs is ensured.

According to the SER, Vilnius University has a 'Diversity and Equal Opportunities Strategy 2020-2025' aimed at enhancing inclusivity for socially vulnerable groups. This strategy focuses on adapting the study environment for individuals with disabilities, promoting gender equality, embracing cultural diversity, and addressing social exclusion. The university provides access to compensatory technologies, personalized study plans, and guidance for both students and lecturers on accessibility.

The VU Community Welfare Unit has a disability coordinator who evaluates and provides support to students with a range of disabilities, including mental health conditions, autism spectrum disorders, learning disabilities, and temporary impairments. The coordinator helps students with admissions,

internships, financial aid, and adapting their studies. Additionally, student volunteers assist by offering services like note-taking and providing guidance.

Decisions on personalized study plans are based on the "Description of the Procedure for Individualisation of Studies According to Disability." Students submit relevant documents, and a plan is prepared to adapt teaching methods and environments. Examples of personalization include accessible materials, extended revision time, and modified timetables. The essential information for students with disabilities can be found on the VU website. Additionally, to effectively integrate students with various disabilities, VU holds regular seminars for the university community on different types of disabilities.

At Vilnius University, support is also extended to other vulnerable groups, offering financial aid, psychological counselling, and opportunities for persecuted Belarusian and Ukrainian students to continue their studies. Students experiencing temporary challenges, such as illness or pregnancy, can request to pause their studies or take academic leave with faculty approval.

The expert panel received concrete evidence that students from socially vulnerable groups and those with individual needs have free access to study at VU and can also receive help if needed.

ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSION (regarding 4.1.)

The SP Global Marketing programme employs diverse teaching methods, combining interactive learning, independent study, and hands-on experiences. Transparent assessment systems and cumulative evaluations help track progress, but inconsistencies in teaching approaches and limited detailed feedback hinder the student experience. Strengthening uniformity in teaching quality and providing more comprehensive feedback would enhance the programme's effectiveness.

Vilnius University excels in inclusivity through its 'Diversity and Equal Opportunities Strategy 2020–2025,' offering personalized support for students with disabilities and other vulnerable groups. Resources such as disability coordinators, tailored study plans, and financial aid ensure equitable access to education. By addressing feedback gaps and enhancing integration of interactive teaching across all courses, the programme can further align with its goals of fostering academic and professional growth in a supportive environment.

4.2.	There is an effective and transparent system for student assessment, progress monitoring, and assuring academic integrity
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FACTUAL SITUATION

4.2.1. Monitoring of learning progress and feedback to students to promote self-assessment and learning progress planning is systematic

According to the SER, the progress of students in the SP Global Marketing programme at Vilnius University is monitored at three levels: subject (module), course, and study programme. At the subject level, lecturers assess student progress using cumulative and developmental assessments, providing feedback and adjusting teaching methods based on performance. Lecturers use an automated system (VMA) to organize the study process, track learning, and provide feedback to students. At the course level, the Study Administration Department monitors overall student performance, identifying trends and collaborating with the programme committee to address any concerns. Students who face difficulties receive guidance and resources for improvement, including

information on retake options and available support services. At the programme level, the programme committee conducts an annual review of student progress, including internship performance, thesis defence outcomes, and overall academic achievement. They also evaluate the reasons for student suspensions or withdrawals and collect student satisfaction data through surveys (initiated by the university and individual academic or branch units). This feedback is used to enhance the study process in collaboration with the faculty administration.

Based on the SER, the SP Global Marketing programme at Vilnius University aims to ensure continuous and effective feedback for students throughout their studies. At the start of each semester, lecturers inform students about the assessment methods and criteria for each course or module. Feedback regulations are outlined in the VU Study Regulations, which grant students the right to access and receive feedback on their academic performance. Lecturers assess student progress using a cumulative grading system, combining mid-term and final assessments. Feedback is provided through various formats, including written assignments, discussions, and electronic tools (VU VMA, Microsoft Teams). Students can review their marked work, seek clarification, and receive guidance for improvement. Feedback is also given during thesis work and professional practice, with supervisors providing continuous monitoring and recommendations. Students can actively engage through questions, discussions, and self-assessments, both in class and online. During the discussion with students, they confirmed that they have opportunities to receive feedback from lecturers. However, they also expressed a desire for more detailed feedback with recommendations to help them improve in their studies.

The expert panel received evidence that VU monitors student progress and emphasizes continuous feedback through various tools and assessments. However, while students value the feedback received from lecturers, they express a desire for more detailed recommendations to improve their academic progress.

4.2.2. Graduate employability and career are monitored

There were no Global Marketing programme graduates during the evaluation period, so no information was provided in the report on graduates' employability and career monitoring.

In general, Graduate career monitoring is carried out in the Career Management Information System (CMIS), with the help of the tools provided on karjera.lt. Two types of indicators are used to monitor careers: 1) Objective indicators of state information systems, state or departmental registers - the system currently interfaces with the student register, population register and SoDra. Objective indicators on graduate careers are obtained from state information systems, state or government registers for 5 years after graduation and updated twice a year; 2) Subjective, sociological survey indicators: these show the subjective views of graduates on various career issues. Subjective indicators are collected three times, one, three and five years after graduation. The first survey (for graduates who graduated 12 months ago) focuses on assessing graduates' employability, the second survey (for graduates who graduated 3 years ago) assesses graduates' ability to succeed in the workplace, and the third survey (for graduates who graduated 5 years ago) focuses on graduates' satisfaction with their careers and their jobs.

There is currently no objective career monitoring system for international students, as their employment outcomes are not reflected in state information systems, which typically track only domestic graduates. This limitation could stem from challenges in collecting data from international students who may leave the country after graduation, making it difficult to ensure accurate and comprehensive tracking. As a result, the effectiveness of Vilnius University programs in supporting international student employability is less measurable. To address this, Vilnius University could implement dedicated alumni tracking mechanisms, such as online surveys or collaborations with

international career services, to gather data on employment outcomes. This would not only provide valuable insights into the success of international graduates but also help improve the programme's alignment with global labour market demands.

4.2.3. Policies to ensure academic integrity, tolerance, and non-discrimination are implemented

According to SER, Vilnius University is committed to fostering a diverse, respectful, and ethical academic environment based on the principles outlined in its Statute, Code of Academic Ethics, and Diversity and Equality Strategy. Students can access these documents on the VU website at www.vu.lt. To ensure academic integrity and fairness, the university has established guidelines for handling violations of ethics, tolerance, and non-discrimination, overseen by its Ethics and Dispute Resolution Committees.

Both students and lecturers are expected to adhere to strict academic standards, with specific rules against fraud, plagiarism, forgery, and bribery. Students who violate these principles may face penalties, including expulsion. To promote fair evaluation, Vilnius University uses various assessment methods—such as cumulative grading, open-book and e-exams, and multiple graders—to reinforce academic integrity. The VUSA 'Honestly' programme also contributes by impartially observing examinations to uphold honesty. Furthermore, the EPAS system checks essays and theses for originality, enhancing trust in academic work.

During the visit, discussions with different groups made it clear that the academic community is facing challenges posed by AI tools in maintaining academic integrity. There is a lack of clear guidelines and common agreements on the appropriate use of AI tools without compromising academic integrity.

4.2.4. Procedures for submitting and processing appeals and complaints are effective

According to SER, students at Vilnius University have the right to appeal module grades, mid-term assessments, final course evaluations, or final examination processes within specific timeframes by submitting a written appeal to the faculty's Disputes Committee. Appeals on final thesis grades are not permitted. Decisions on examination grading by the Disputes Committee are final, though other decisions may be appealed to the VU Central Disputes Committee. The Disputes Committee also addresses other academic and research disputes and consists of faculty members and student representatives. VU also provides a confidential "Trust Line" for reporting academic ethics, tolerance, and non-discrimination concerns, offering support from psychologists and lawyers.

The Student Association (SA) also plays a role in the complaints process, serving as an intermediary between students and the administration. SA collects and aggregates student concerns and communicates these issues to relevant university authorities. However, feedback from the students suggests that the process lacks a systematic approach for resolving and responding to complaints. For instance, students have noted inconsistencies in receiving updates about how their feedback is acted upon, indicating a need to better close the feedback loop. Additionally, while the SA is involved, the overall system could benefit from clearer guidelines and more structured mechanisms to ensure transparency and accountability. Incorporating a more proactive consultation system—such as regular meetings between SA representatives and academic staff—could help address recurring issues like inconsistent teaching quality, insufficient feedback on assignments, and limited support for applied business projects. Addressing these gaps would not only strengthen the SA's role but also enhance the university's responsiveness to student needs.

ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSION (regarding 4.2.)

The programme effectively integrates assessment, feedback, and monitoring systems to support student success and ensure academic standards. The commitment to inclusivity and integrity is commendable, but addressing the challenges posed by evolving technologies like AI is crucial to maintaining academic trust and adaptability in the modern educational landscape.

The programme did not have graduates at the moment of the assessment however it is not clear from the report how employability of international students will be observed in the future since they make up a major part of the programme students' body. Also only the employed/unemployed status of graduates is currently measured but not the level of suitability for the labour market.

AREA 4: CONCLUSIONS

AREA 4	Unsatisfactory - 1 Does not meet the requirements	Satisfactory - 2 Meets the requirements, but there are substantial shortcomings to be eliminated	Good - 3 Meets the requirements, but there are shortcomings to be eliminated	Very good - 4 Very well nationally and internationally without any shortcomings	Exceptional - 5 Exceptionally well nationally and internationally without any shortcomings
First cycle				X	

COMMENDATIONS

1. Clear and effective procedures for submitting appeals and complaints should exist.

RECOMMENDATIONS

For further improvement

1. Initiate the development of common guidelines to regulate the fair use of artificial intelligence tools in the study process.
2. Lecturers should create more opportunities for students to get more detailed feedback.
3. Establish an objective monitoring system for international students' employment.

AREA 5: TEACHING STAFF

5.1.	Teaching staff is adequate to achieve learning outcomes
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FACTUAL SITUATION

5.1.1. The number, qualification, and competence (scientific, didactic, professional) of teaching staff is sufficient to achieve learning outcomes

The structure of teaching staff in the programme complies with the formal legal requirements. In accordance with the General Requirements for the Conduct of Studies, at least 50% of the first cycle subjects must be taught by academics. The report indicates that 69% of academics teach in the Global Marketing programme, exceeding the minimal requirement indicated in the General Requirements for the Conduct of Studies

First of all, it should be mentioned that after the enrolment of students in the Global Marketing programme, which started in 2020, 29 lecturers have been invited to teach the subjects for the academic years 2021-2022 to first and second-year students: 5 professors, 9 associate professors, 5 assistant professors, 6 junior assistants and 4 lecturers. For the academic year 2022-2023, 13 teachers were invited to teach first, second- and third year courses: 2 professors, 3 associate professors, 3 assistant professors, 1 junior assistant professor and 4 lecturers. For the academic year 2023-2024, 13 teachers were invited to teach first, second, third- and fourth-year courses: 1 professor, 2 associate professors, 2 assistant professors, 3 junior assistants and 5 lecturers.

Over the last three academic years, the ratio of the number of lecturers to the number of students enrolled in the subjects (modules) of the Global Marketing programme has varied from 6.6 to 10.5. The variation in the ratio of the number of lecturers to the number of students enrolled in Global Marketing SP subjects/modules is due to the enrolment of new students in the new SP Global Marketing programme in the academic years 2021-2022, 2022-2023, 2023-2024, which started in 2020.

The turnover of faculty from 2021 to 2024 is the following - 55 faculty members joined the programme and 29 have left faculty members expressed improving working conditions, more individual attention during the study visit but some mentioned that the balance between teaching and research could be improved.

Despite the fact that during the meeting with the students, it was several times mentioned the limited language skills of some of the teachers, in general the English language of the teaching faculty is sufficient – 98% of the staff teaching in the programme indicate B2 or above English language proficiency.

University lecturers develop their scientific, pedagogical and professional competences through exchange and participation in various conferences, seminars and training courses, membership of national and international networks, organisations and associations, and participation in various projects. The qualifications of research and teaching staff are assessed every five years to determine whether they are adequate for their posts. It assesses the development of competences and plans for the development of competences through annual interviews.

Over the last three academic years, the lecturer-to-student ratio for the SP Global Marketing programme has ranged from 6.6 to 10.5 students per lecturer. This ratio fluctuates due to the increasing number of students enrolled in the newly launched SP Global Marketing programme (starting from the 2021-2022 academic year). The variation is likely a result of new student intakes in each academic year, but the ratio remains within a reasonable range, ensuring that lecturers can provide adequate attention to each student.

Lecturers develop their pedagogical qualifications in training courses organised by VU and in international contexts, e.g. in the ARQUS Alliance's 2022 online course (MOOC) "Challenge-based learning", in the McMaster University's (USA) 2021 training course "Learning how to learn: Powerful mental tools to help you master tough subjects", and in the University of Michigan's (USA) 2020 online course "Leading People and Teams". From 2021 onwards, lecturers can receive specific funding for updating and developing courses to increase student engagement (funding for the development of active learning materials and for the use of active learning methods and the exploration of their use in their teaching practice).

The programme is taught by highly qualified faculty, with a strong presence of PhD holders and faculty with international postgraduate education. A significant portion of the teaching staff has extensive professional experience in the marketing and business sectors, which is integral to providing students with practical, real-world knowledge. The teaching staff is well-balanced in terms of gender and age, which fosters a diverse teaching environment that can appeal to a wide range of students. The programme maintains a relatively low lecturer-to-student ratio, which enhances the quality of teaching and ensures that students receive personalized attention. The programme's diverse and experienced teaching staff is a key factor in providing a high-quality education that prepares students for the dynamic and competitive global marketing field.

ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSION (regarding 5.1.)

The faculty in the Global Marketing programme is adequate in number, qualification, and competence (scientific, didactic, professional) to achieve learning outcomes. The university seems to have formal processes in place to increase continuous growth of faculty members.

Some of the shortcomings are that the turnover rate of faculty seems to be high in the programme - 55 joined, 29 left. It is mentioned in the report this is mostly due to the structural changes in the programme however it does not seem that the changes were that severe to reflect the faculty change.

The engagement in mobility programmes is low, especially in the last year of 2023-2024 since only two faculty members from the programme participated.

5.2.	Teaching staff is ensured opportunities to develop competences, and they are periodically evaluated
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FACTUAL SITUATION

5.2.1. Opportunities for academic mobility of teaching staff are ensured

Vilnius University fosters academic mobility through initiatives like Erasmus+ and partnerships with international institutions, enabling teaching staff to gain global exposure. The availability of a certain budget for professional development, coupled with a clear bonus system for faculty engaged in research projects, demonstrates a commitment to encouraging staff mobility as well as scientific

activities. Additionally, the university promotes research collaboration by providing opportunities for international conference participation and funding for course updates since 2021, helping align teaching practices with international standards.

However, challenges persist in fully realizing the potential of academic mobility. Furthermore, while mobility programs enrich faculty experiences, their impact on students appears underutilized. Student feedback gathered during the discussion with the expert panel pointed out that some teachers' teaching methods rely on one-way communication and a few of them rely on outdated materials, reducing engagement and practical skill development. For instance, students mentioned that one course utilised slides retrieved online over 15 years ago. These observations underscore the need for targeted professional development, improved teaching resources, and curriculum updates to maximize the benefits of academic mobility for both faculty and students.

Feedback from social partners reveals limited communication between the university and employers regarding the effectiveness of mobility initiatives. Social partners have not observed their suggestions being incorporated into the programme, highlighting a need for better integration of external insights into teaching improvements. Establishing mechanisms to track the influence of academic mobility on teaching practices and fostering closer collaboration with industry could address this gap.

Lastly, academic mobility's benefits could be expanded by focusing on practical skills development. Faculty could receive targeted training in digital tools, data visualization, and modern teaching methods, ensuring their experiences abroad translate into tangible enhancements in course delivery.

5.2.2. Opportunities for the development of the teaching staff are ensured

Vilnius University provides an established framework for the professional development of its teaching staff. Resources like the Competence Teaching Centre and specialized training e.g. in SPSS and in systematic literature reviews help faculty enhance their academic and research capabilities. Moreover, there is also a dedicated budget for research competency development and a structured bonus system incentivizing active participation in projects and research.

Despite these initiatives, gaps remain in fully addressing staff development needs. Feedback from students highlights issues such as inadequate supervision of practical assignments, limited access to extra consultations, and overlapping course content. According to the students the overlap in project topics across courses persists and based on their feedback the faculty often do not view this as a concern. Additionally, while practical courses are crucial for student readiness, essential areas like media planning, digital marketing, and data visualization remain absent from the curriculum.

Teacher training is another area requiring improvement. According to the students two-thirds of lecturers rely on traditional lecture formats, while only a third employ interactive techniques. Practical skill-building is often underemphasized, and students have expressed dissatisfaction with the lack of clear guidelines for using AI in both teaching and learning contexts.

To address these challenges, more comprehensive support for staff development is needed. This includes clearer guidelines for course development and enhanced resources for integrating modern teaching tools. Faculty should also receive structured support to improve their pedagogical approaches and align them with industry requirements. Establishing a feedback loop with students and social partners, coupled with systematic follow-ups on faculty development outcomes, would ensure that teaching staff can fully leverage the opportunities provided to them.

ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSION (regarding 5.2.)

Vilnius University has made significant steps in fostering academic mobility and professional development for its teaching staff. Programmes like Erasmus+, along with dedicated budgets and a structured bonus system, encourage programme's faculty engagement in international opportunities. Resources such as the Competence Teaching Centre and special trainings for faculty teachers, further support the professional growth. However, challenges like reliance on outdated teaching materials, and the predominance of traditional teaching methods hinder the full realization of these initiatives. Additionally, while academic mobility benefits lecturers, its impact on students remains underleveraged due to a lack of integration of gained experiences into the curriculum.

To address these gaps, VU could enhance faculty training in digital tools, modern teaching methods, and global marketing trends. Streamlining overlapping course content and increasing the use of practical, hands-on teaching techniques would align programmes more closely with industry needs. Improved communication with social partners and clearer supervision of practical assignments would also strengthen programme effectiveness. Moreover, updated teaching resources are essential for fostering a more global and relevant academic environment. These initiatives, combined with stronger mechanisms for incorporating feedback from students and external stakeholders, would ensure sustained growth in the teaching process.

AREA 5: CONCLUSIONS

AREA 5	Unsatisfactory - 1	Satisfactory - 2	Good - 3	Very good - 4	Exceptional - 5
	Does not meet the requirements	Meets the requirements, but there are substantial shortcomings to be eliminated	Meets the requirements, but there are shortcomings to be eliminated	Very well nationally and internationally without any shortcomings	Exceptionally well nationally and internationally without any shortcomings
First cycle			X		

COMMENDATIONS

1. Vilnius University offers a dedicated budget for research competency development and course updates. Competence Teaching Centre reflects a commitment to faculty development. Faculty provides clear guidelines and a bonus system for faculty involved in competitive research projects.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To address shortcomings

1. To encourage faculty engagement in mobility programs.

For further improvement

1. Provide clearer supervision and additional consultations for practical assignments, particularly in subjects like accounting, where students have reported insufficient guidance.
2. Incorporate Social Partner Feedback. Establish structured mechanisms for gathering and integrating feedback from social partners, ensuring their suggestions inform programme improvements and better reflect labour market needs.

3. Strengthen Training in AI application. Develop comprehensive guidelines for both students and faculty on the use of AI in academic work, including ethical considerations and practical applications.
4. Encourage faculty collaboration across courses to address overlapping project topics, enhancing the overall coherence of the curriculum.
5. Offer workshops on interactive teaching techniques and incorporate more modern pedagogies to replace the traditional one-way lecture format.
6. Reduce overlap in project topics across courses.
7. Introduce training for teachers on digital marketing, media planning, and data visualization to better prepare students for real-world applications.

AREA 6: LEARNING FACILITIES AND RESOURCES

6.1.	Facilities, informational and financial resources are sufficient and enable achieving learning outcomes
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FACTUAL SITUATION

1. Facilities, informational and financial resources are adequate and sufficient for an effective learning process

The SP Global Marketing uses the shared resources of the VU and the Faculty, which are not directly linked to a specific study programme. This includes access to the electronic resources of the VU library, software, other shared facilities and related services. The 24-hour Science Communication and Information Centre (SCIC) is a key part of the shared VU infrastructure. The SCIC has over 670 modern and ergonomic workstations for visitors (students or lecturers). The workstation has computers, printers, scanners and other equipment necessary for the work of students and lecturers. The Centre's classrooms can be used for organising working group meetings, group projects, etc. The SCIC has 5 group work rooms, 8 IT laboratories, 34 individual work rooms and a room for parents with children. All students of the University have access not only to the SCIC, but also to the VU Central Library and to the libraries of other faculties with specific collections of resources. The VU Information Technology (IT) infrastructure is of particular importance; it is equipped with the VU High Performance Computing Centre's Open Access Supercomputer (APC), which allows for the solution of very resource-intensive tasks (including management research) and is designed to encourage students and researchers to use high-performance computing in their scientific work and to participate in collaborative European research projects. During the visit, it was evident that some areas of the university are being modernized and students enjoy improvements. There is some unevenness in funding over the years but efforts are made to improve.

The Consumer Decision Lab has separate, specially equipped booths for experimental research, with a real "lab shop" with shelves and shelves of goods, a payment system and CCTV equipment. The lab features the latest research technology, which will be introduced in late 2022 and is only available in one Canadian university, making Vilnius University one of the first universities in the world to have access to it. It is the only technology today that enables interdisciplinary research combining psychology, biophysics, food, sustainability and consumer behavior, and fully integrates the data from these studies by capturing and analyzing all these reactions at the same time, in a seamless way. Overall facilities, informational and financial resources seem to be adequate to ensure an effective learning process for students.

Additionally, students have access to the Passport database (Euromonitor International) – an international business and trade database that provides demographic, economic, and social indicators for 205 countries (access is only available from home via VPN). This resource was acquired in 2023. Access to the Pearson eBooks database has been secured, which includes 4 collections: Accounting, Economics, Marketing, and Finance. This database is particularly relevant to the Global Marketing study programme.

It should be noted that students can also access the country's electronic library services from any computer in the classroom, in the library reading room, and from a remote location (e.g., at home) via a VPN service.

In marketing-oriented studies, the primary software used is IBM SPSS Statistics and its add-ons. In scientific research, alongside IBM SPSS Statistics Standard, specific software is also used, primarily: AMOS 23, Smart PLS4, and Qualtrics. Less frequently used software includes Statistica 12.6, MagicDraw UML Enterprise Edition Version 18, PowerSIM Studio Base, CLIPS, CORVID, ES Builder, Viscosity SOMine6, TBL-2014L-BE, ADOBE Creative Suite 5 Master Collection,

MathCad12, Microsoft Expression Web, NetBeans, QGIS, and online software such as the OANDA trading platform, Comindwork, MS Virtual Academy, and the simulation game EcoSim Adam.

2. There is continuous planning for and upgrading of resources.

The resources required for the SP Global Marketing are continuously updated and improved to meet the changing needs of students and academicians. This is done with the use of both internal and external funding sources. The literature is collected according to the needs of the teaching staff. It is the responsibility of each lecturer to keep track of the new developments in professional literature relevant to his/her subject and to order textbooks, monographs and educational books on that basis. This general principle of the University also applies to the SP Global Marketing. Literature is acquired on the basis of the following criteria: required and recommended literature specified in the course descriptions, relevant and necessary literature suggested by lecturers, researchers, recent publications in Lithuanian and foreign languages (the list of innovations is proposed by the library and selected by lecturers). The funds regularly allocated by FEBA for the acquisition and publication of scientific methodological literature are shown in Table 21. Each year, the FEBA budget provides funds for the acquisition of scientific literature required by the study programmes. There are clear budgets provided in SER for continuous improvement of facilities informational resources.

ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSION (regarding 6.1.)

Facilities, informational and financial resources seem to help to achieve learning outcomes for students. The SP Global Marketing pays a lot of attention to the work in the classrooms and common areas - the classrooms are equipped with modern equipment (computers, multimedia, audio equipment, SMART boards, tablets, etc.), and a virtual learning environment (Moodle) is used in the studies. There are ongoing obvious improvements in all areas and continuous planning to improve even more.

AREA 6: CONCLUSIONS

AREA 6	Unsatisfactory - 1 Does not meet the requirements	Satisfactory - 2 Meets the requirements, but there are substantial shortcomings to be eliminated	Good - 3 Meets the requirements, but there are shortcomings to be eliminated	Very good - 4 Very well nationally and internationally without any shortcomings	Exceptional - 5 Exceptionally well nationally and internationally without any shortcomings
First cycle				X	

COMMENDATIONS

1. Consumer Decision Lab is a unique studies and research space allowing students to perform interdisciplinary research combining psychology, biophysics, food, sustainability and consumer behavior, and fully integrate the data from these studies by capturing and analyzing all these reactions at the same time, in a seamless way
2. The access to digital library resources is greatly satisfactory.

RECOMMENDATIONS

For further improvement

1. To encourage faculty and students to actively use digital and resources available at the university.

AREA 7: QUALITY ASSURANCE AND PUBLIC INFORMATION

7.1.	The development of the field of study is based on an internal quality assurance system involving all stakeholders and continuous monitoring, transparency and public information
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FACTUAL SITUATION

7.1.1. Internal quality assurance system for the programmes is effective

Vilnius University employs a central internal quality assurance system for its programmes, including the SP Global Marketing programme, ensuring agreed on standards in study approval, monitoring, and evaluation. Processes such as monitoring student progress and plagiarism checks contribute to a student-oriented teaching environment. Additionally, new initiatives like academic staff induction and student dropout prevention programmes reflect the university's commitment to ongoing improvement.

The SP Global Marketing Committee plays a central role in quality management, comprising nine members, including academics, social partners, and student representatives. The Committee conducts curriculum reviews at least once per academic year. These reviews are informed by feedback from students and faculty, leading to decisions for program enhancements. For example, based on student input, the committee has adjusted course content to reduce subject overlap and has enhanced the focus on digital marketing. Additionally, the committee draws insights from international study programs and labour market trends, regularly engaging with faculty heads and teaching staff to implement best practices and ensure the program remains relevant and competitive. Actions to enhance programme quality often originate at the SPC level. The assigned administrative staff member for SP Global Marketing further supports this system by managing student concerns and tracking performance. In general, SP Global Marketing programme continually adapts changes to meet emerging new demands.

7.1.2. Involvement of stakeholders (students and others) in internal quality assurance is effective

Stakeholder engagement is part of the quality assurance processes in SP Global Marketing programme. Social partners can contribute to curriculum relevance by providing market insights and recommendations. Their involvement in thesis evaluations, guest lectures, and programme committees can for sure enrich the educational experience. Despite these efforts, feedback from social partners indicates a need for clearer evidence of their input being implemented. While social partners are regularly consulted on relevant matters, such as organizing events or identifying market needs, they often perceive a lack of tangible outcomes from their suggestions. Strengthening the feedback loop by demonstrating how stakeholder recommendations influence programme changes would reinforce their engagement.

Students also play a central role in the feedback loop, offering feedback through centralized surveys conducted twice a year. However, there is room to enhance student involvement in strategic quality processes, such as self-evaluation report preparation and direct discussions with faculty about programme development.

To enhance stakeholder collaboration further, the programme could formalize processes for integrating feedback into actionable improvements. Introducing structured mechanisms for continuous engagement, such as regular joint meetings between students, faculty, and social partners, would create a more coherent quality assurance system.

7.1.3. Information on the programmes, their external evaluation, improvement processes, and outcomes is collected, used and made publicly available

VU demonstrates transparency in its quality assurance processes by systematically collecting and publishing information on programme performance and improvement outcomes. Data collection occurs across institutional, unit, and programme levels. The SP Global Marketing programme utilizes methods such as student surveys, feedback from graduates, and employability metrics to evaluate programme effectiveness.

Students' surveys, conducted twice a year, capture student perspectives on teaching quality. Additional surveys at the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration (FEBA) level provide granular feedback on individual courses. If survey participation rates are insufficient, follow-up reminders will follow to ensure comprehensive feedback collection.

Graduate employability data, analysed using the SAIKU (CMIS) tool, offers additional insights into programme quality. These findings are publicly accessible on the VU website, showcasing career outcomes and services to prospective and current students. Information on programme goals, curriculum details, faculty, and student feedback is available in Lithuanian and English.

To strengthen public accountability, the SP Global Marketing programme could enhance its reporting by providing more detailed insights into how feedback informs specific improvements. For example, sharing concrete examples of programme changes, such as reducing course overlap or incorporating digital marketing topics based on student and faculty feedback, would demonstrate the committee's responsiveness. Regular updates on stakeholder involvement outcomes, including the contributions of social partners in shaping curriculum updates or thesis topics, would further enhance transparency. Experts suggest that implementing a more structured communication strategy—such as publishing an short annual quality improvement report accessible to all stakeholders—could significantly bolster public accountability. This approach would not only reflect the programme's commitment to continuous improvement but also foster trust and engagement within its wider community

7.1.4. Student feedback is collected and analysed

According to the SER, at VU, the quality of studies and student satisfaction are continuously monitored through various methods, both centrally and within individual units and study programs. Data from different feedback methods are integrated to ensure comprehensive quality monitoring. Central surveys for both undergraduate and postgraduate students are conducted twice a year, gathering opinions on specific subjects and overall satisfaction. However, participation is voluntary, and response rates can be low. These surveys, administered centrally via the VU electronic system connected to VUSIS, consist of two main parts: one focusing on specific courses taken during the semester and the other on overall satisfaction with the semester. Students provide feedback on various aspects, such as the content and teaching quality of courses, opportunities for independent research and the development of critical thinking, and whether they feel encouraged to voice their opinions. They are also asked if they would recommend their study program to others.

Student representatives also organize surveys at both the university and departmental levels, addressing relevant issues such as study quality and infrastructure. Faculties conduct more extensive surveys, including immediate feedback after each course. This ensures detailed insights into teaching quality, which are reviewed and analysed by lecturers and academic staff.

Additionally, short surveys are conducted with graduating students to gather feedback on their entire study experience. Surveys are also carried out with students who drop out to understand their reasons and improve retention strategies. These surveys are complemented by informal discussions between students and the Study Program Committee, providing further insights into student concerns.

The expert panel received concrete evidence that students can freely express their opinions about the quality of their studies, and there are many platforms where they can do so. However, during discussions with students, it became evident that they do not receive enough feedback on the changes or actions taken in response to their feedback from surveys. Students are also unsure whether the issues they raise are being taken into consideration by the administration.

ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSION (regarding 7.1.)

Vilnius University demonstrates a structured approach to quality assurance within its SP Global Marketing programme, incorporating centralized processes for monitoring, evaluation, and feedback collection. Tools like biannual student surveys, and graduate employability data analysis enhance the programme's alignment with student and labour market needs. However, while social partners and students are involved in quality assurance, their input is often perceived as underutilized, and there is a lack of tangible outcomes demonstrating the implementation of their suggestions. This limits stakeholder engagement and the full realization of collaborative improvement efforts.

Additionally, while student feedback is systematically collected and analysed, greater emphasis on integrating qualitative insights from discussions and focus groups would provide a better understanding of student experiences. Although information on programme performance and updates is publicly accessible, reporting on how feedback drives specific programme changes remains limited.

AREA 7: CONCLUSIONS

AREA 7	Unsatisfactory - 1 Does not meet the requirements	Satisfactory - 2 Meets the requirements, but there are substantial shortcomings to be eliminated	Good - 3 Meets the requirements, but there are shortcomings to be eliminated	Very good - 4 Very well nationally and internationally without any shortcomings	Exceptional - 5 Exceptionally well nationally and internationally without any shortcomings
First cycle			X		

COMMENDATIONS

1. Vilnius University employs a multi-tiered approach to collecting feedback, including biannual surveys, employability metrics, and programme-specific evaluations. Tools like the SAIKU (CMIS) system provide a structured and efficient means of analysing graduate employability data.
2. Initiatives such as academic staff induction programmes, plagiarism checks, and dropout prevention strategies showcase the university's dedication to adapting and enhancing its quality assurance processes over time.

3. The student administrative support system for Global Marketing Programmes is highly appreciated by both faculty and students, ensuring smooth processes for academic and extracurricular activities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To address shortcomings

1. Develop mechanisms to ensure that feedback from social partners and students is visibly and tangibly implemented, including clear reporting on how suggestions have influenced programme changes.

For further improvement

1. Introduce structured, recurring meetings between students, faculty, and social partners to ensure continuous dialogue and accountability in quality assurance processes.
2. Continue regularly comparing the quality assurance practices of the SP Global Marketing programme with international best practices to identify gaps and opportunities for alignment with global standards.
3. Improve the survey participation rate by offering incentives or making the surveys more engaging.
4. Enhance communication of the programme's unique benefits and advantages to students, fostering greater satisfaction and positive word-of-mouth recommendations.

V. SUMMARY

The evaluation of the SP Global Marketing programme at Vilnius University highlighted both strengths while identifying improvement opportunities. Overall, the programme demonstrates a strong alignment with market and societal needs, addressing the demand for marketing professionals equipped with interdisciplinary skills such as critical thinking, and teamwork. Its curriculum reflects a commitment to preparing graduates for both local and international markets, incorporating, to a certain degree, feedback from industry stakeholders and adapting to evolving trends. This responsiveness to external input has positioned the programme as a relevant and forward-thinking academic programme.

Processes such as biannual student surveys, plagiarism checks, and graduate employability tracking through tools like SAIKU underscore the programme's commitment to maintaining standards. Furthermore, Vilnius University demonstrates a strong commitment to faculty development through targeted training, participation in international mobility programmes, and financial incentives for research and curriculum updates. These initiatives enhance teaching quality and contribute to the overall academic rigor of the programme.

The university's comprehensive student support services are also noteworthy. Programmes such as mentoring, career counselling, and tailored resources for vulnerable groups foster an inclusive and supportive academic environment. These efforts ensure that students feel supported in their personal and professional development.

However, there are areas where the programme can improve. While feedback is collected from students and social partners, there is a need for clearer mechanisms to demonstrate how this input informs programme changes. Stakeholders often feel that their suggestions are not effectively implemented, highlighting the importance of better communication about actions taken in response to feedback. Additionally, teaching methods across courses could benefit from greater consistency and a stronger focus on practical skill-building. Students have reported insufficient opportunities to apply theoretical knowledge in real-world contexts and a lack of interactive teaching techniques, which limits their preparedness for real life.

Another area requiring attention is the integration of modern tools and technologies into the curriculum. Despite the growing relevance of digital marketing and data visualization in the industry, these areas are not covered enough in the programme. Moreover, while graduate employability data is tracked for local students, a similar system is lacking for international graduates. Although students contribute to feedback mechanisms, their involvement in strategic decision-making processes, such as also self-evaluation report preparation, remains limited.

The review panel commends Vilnius University for its preparation of a comprehensive self-evaluation report and its effective organization of the site visit. The open and constructive discussions with staff, students, and social partners provided valuable insights. And lastly, the evaluation committee believes that SP Global Marketing programme has the potential to further strengthen its position as a competitive and internationally recognized academic programme in the field of marketing.