CENTRE FOR QUALITY ASSESSMENT IN HIGHER EDUCATION

EVALUATION REPORT

STUDY FIELD

MANAGEMENT

at ISM University of Management and Economics

Expert panel:

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2. **Lect. Jakob Ravn,** *academic;*
3. **Assist. Prof. Dr. Sofia Gaio,** *academic;*
4. **Ms. Gerimanta Stankutė,** *representative of social partners;*
5. **Ms. Ieva Vengrovskaja,** *students' representative.*

Evaluation coordinator – *Mr. Gustas Straukas*

Report language – English

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Study Field Data

Title of the study	***Business Management and Marketing***	***Sustainable Process and Technology Management***	***Global Leadership and Strategy***	***Business Sustainability Management***
State code	6121LX008	6121LX007	6211LX099	6211LX100
Type of studies	University studies	University studies	University studies	University studies
Cycle of studies	First	First	Second	Second
Mode of study and duration (in years)	Full-time (3,5 years)	Full-time (3,5 years)	Full-time (1,5 years)	Full-time (1,5 years)
Credit volume	210	210	90	90
Qualification degree and (or) professional qualification	Bachelor of Business Management	Bachelor of Business Management	Master of Business Management	Master of Business Management
Language of instruction	English and Lithuanian	English	English	English
Minimum education required	Secondary	Secondary	First cycle or equivalent	First cycle or equivalent
Registration date of the study programme	1997-05-19	2014-04-30	2021-07-05	2022-07-26

Title of the study programme	***Innovation and Technology Management***	***Management***	***Education Leadership***
State code	6211LX007	6211LX009	6211LX008
Type of studies	University studies	University studies	University studies
Cycle of studies	Second	Second	Second
Mode of study and duration (in years)	Full-time (1,5 years)	Full-time (2 years)	Full-time (1,5 years)
Credit volume	90	120	90
Qualification degree and (or) professional qualification	Master of Business Management	Master of Business Management	Master of Business Management
Language of instruction	English	English	Lithuanian
Minimum education required	First cycle or equivalent	First cycle or equivalent	First cycle or equivalent
Registration date of the study programme	2013-08-16	1997-05-19	2011-07-13

CONTENTS

I. INTRODUCTION

1.1. BACKGROUND OF THE EVALUATION PROCESS

The evaluations of study fields in Lithuanian Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) are based on the Procedure for the External Evaluation and Accreditation of Studies, Evaluation Areas and Indicators, approved by the Minister of Education, Science and Sport on 17 July 2019, Order No. V-835, and are carried out according to the procedure outlined in the Methodology of External Evaluation of Study Fields approved by the Director of the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education (hereafter – SKVC) on 31 December 2019, Order No. V-149.

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

The evaluation process consists of the main following stages: *1) self-evaluation and self-evaluation report (SER) prepared by HEI; 2) site visit of the expert panel to the HEI; 3) production of the external evaluation report (EER) by the expert panel and its publication; 4) follow-up activities.*

On the basis of this external evaluation report of the study field SKVC takes a decision to accredit the study field either for 7 years or for 3 years. If the field evaluation is negative then the study field is not accredited.

The study field and cycle are **accredited for 7 years** if all evaluation areas are evaluated as exceptional (5 points), very good (4 points) or good (3 points).

The study field and cycle are **accredited for 3 years** if one of the evaluation areas is evaluated as satisfactory (2 points).

The study field and cycle are **not accredited** if at least one of evaluation areas is evaluated as unsatisfactory (1 point).

1.2. EXPERT PANEL

The expert panel was assigned according to the Experts Selection Procedure as approved by the Director of SKVC on 31 December 2019, Order No. V-149. The site visit to the HEI was conducted by the expert panel on *15th of May, 2023.*

Prof. Dr. Bartscher, Thomas (panel chairperson) *School of Management, Deggendorf Institute of Technology, University of Applied Sciences, Germany;*
Lect. Jakob Ravn, *Copenhagen Business School, Denmark ;*
Assist. Prof. dr. Sofia Gaio *University Fernando Pessoa, Portugal;*
Ms Gerimanta Stankutė, *Head of Customer Data & Strategic Transformations at SEB Bank, Lithuania;*
Ms Ieva Vengrovskaja, *psychology* study programme, 3rd year course student, Vytautas Magnus University;

1.3. GENERAL INFORMATION

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

No.	Name of the document
1.	Quality manual; A link to Quality Manual was provided in the SER (p.108); an additional request to provide Quality Manual before or during/or after the site visit was not received.
2.	Appeal procedures, appeal numbers;
3.	Electives numbers of ECTS;

1.4. BACKGROUND OF MANAGEMENT FIELD STUDIES AT ISM UNIVERSITY OF MANAGEMENT AND ECONOMICS

ISM University of Management and Economics is a private university located in Lithuania. It offers bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees in the fields of business administration, economics, and further in Innovation and Technology Management. Founded in 1999 by BI Norwegian Business School and Innovation Norway, ISM is the first privately-owned, for-profit, state-accredited business university in Lithuania with roots in Northern and Western Europe, and a history of development in a Central and Eastern European (CEE) context.

ISM operates autonomously, following both its own Statute and the University's regulations. It has the discretion to propose and develop new academic programs that align with its mission, vision, and strategy. ISM's mission is to provide high-quality business education to students, leaders, executives, entrepreneurs, and experts while co-creating knowledge that empowers sustainable change. Its vision is to become a top-tier Business University in Northern Europe recognized for its innovative approach, commitment to lifelong learning, and thought leadership. ISM's program portfolio, which includes undergraduate, graduate, doctoral, and executive degree programs, serves the lifelong learning needs of various groups in society.

The Board, elected for a 4-year term, appoints the President and the CEO, approves the University's strategy, and assesses its financial status. It has 7 members representing shareholders and businesses. The President/ Rector is responsible for coordinating teaching and research activities, ensuring quality assurance, and achieving strategic objectives. The Senate advises the President on the University's strategy for studies and research and has 13 members elected for a 3-year term.

External evaluation in 2016 recommended improvements and identified strengths of ISM's Management field programs. Strengths include clear focus, diverse learner needs, relevance to social and economic needs, and alignment with university mission and partner collaboration. The programs also have a strong international focus. Areas for improvement are strengthening marketing for Sustainable Process and Technology Management and increasing international aspects in Educational Leadership through university cooperation and faculty visits.

II. GENERAL ASSESSMENT

Management study field and *first cycle* at ISM University of Management and Economics is given **positive** evaluation.

Study field and cycle assessment in points by evaluation areas.

No.	Evaluation Area	Evaluation of an Area in points*
1.	Intended and achieved learning outcomes and curriculum	4
2.	Links between science (art) and studies	4
3.	Student admission and support	3
4.	Teaching and learning, student performance and graduate employment	4
5.	Teaching staff	4
6.	Learning facilities and resources	5
7.	Study quality management and public information	4
	Total:	**28**

*1 (unsatisfactory) - the area does not meet the minimum requirements, there are fundamental shortcomings that prevent the implementation of the field studies.

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

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

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

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

Management study field and second cycle at ISM University of Management and Economics is given **positive** evaluation.

Study field and cycle assessment in points by evaluation areas.

No.	Evaluation Area	Evaluation of an Area in points*
1.	Intended and achieved learning outcomes and curriculum	4
2.	Links between science (art) and studies	4
3.	Student admission and support	4
4.	Teaching and learning, student performance and graduate employment	4
5.	Teaching staff	4
6.	Learning facilities and resources	5
7.	Study quality management and public information	4
	Total:	**29**

*1 (unsatisfactory) - the area does not meet the minimum requirements, there are fundamental shortcomings that prevent the implementation of the field studies.

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

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

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

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

III. STUDY FIELD ANALYSIS

3.1. INTENDED AND ACHIEVED LEARNING OUTCOMES AND CURRICULUM

Study aims, outcomes and content shall be assessed in accordance with the following indicators:

3.1.1. Evaluation of the conformity of the aims and outcomes of the field and cycle study programmes to the needs of the society and/or the labour market (not applicable to HEIs operating in exile conditions)

CEDEFOP reports that management professionals are among the top three occupations for future employment growth, with over 2 million job openings needed to replace retirees. The Future of Jobs Survey and McKinsey Global Institute's study both highlight the need for managers with diverse skills such as creative problem-solving, digital proficiency, and cultural sensitivity. The OECD Learning Compass 2030 advocates for critical thinking, emotional intelligence, and lifelong learning competencies in students. Lithuania's State Progress Strategy emphasises the importance of educated professionals with skills in complex analysis, research, technology, project management, and leadership. The "Transformation of the Lithuanian Economy: 4 Strategic Directions" and "2021-2027 EU Funds Investment Program for Lithuania" highlight the importance of promoting innovation and entrepreneurial skills. ISM's focus group discussions with Lithuanian business representatives underline the need for management professionals with conceptual and interpersonal skills, understanding of current industry trends, and sustainability strategies.

The present management study field portfolio caters to the requirements and requests stated in worldwide and national strategic papers, as well as the anticipations of the corporate sector and society.

The objective of the **Business Management and Marketing program** is to cultivate proficient and self-aware management professionals who possess a solid understanding of the fundamental theories, principles, and models that underpin the field of Business Management and Marketing. The program aims to equip graduates with the practical skills necessary to thrive in a rapidly-evolving global, cultural, and technological business landscape, enabling them to be responsible, flexible, and confident leaders in their field.

The **Business Management and Marketing Study program** is distinct due to several key features: it is taught in English and blends management and marketing modules; students are taught by a diverse range of lecturers with international backgrounds, including guest lecturers, practitioners, visiting professors, and scholars with teaching and research experience. The program is centred around real-world examples of local and international management practices, and includes personal branding sessions with the Programme director. Students also have the opportunity to study or do an internship at one of ISM's overseas partner universities during a mobility window, and can acquire a double degree with ISM partners such as BI Norwegian Business School or KEDGE Business School in France.

Graduates of the program can pursue various career paths across different industries globally, including roles as marketing specialists, sales managers, client relations managers, project managers, operations managers, business consultants, social networking specialists, content creators, or entrepreneurs. The interdisciplinary nature of the program also allows for further studies at the master's level in business management, marketing, international business, entrepreneurship, and innovation management.

The goal of the **Sustainable Process and Technology Management program** is to train individuals who are socially responsible, critical, and capable of lifelong learning. They should possess knowledge, skills, and practical abilities to make economically feasible and sustainable decisions in the planning, organisation, implementation, and development of production and service processes. They should have a short and long-term perspective on sustainability challenges in modern industries and be able to forecast the impact of their decisions on the organisational and broader environment.

The **Sustainable Process and Technology Management program** is unique and distinct due to the following factors: The program is designed around three interconnected themes: digital transformation, smart manufacturing, and sustainable process management, equipping students with the skills to make economically feasible and sustainable decisions in modern industries. It is the only program of its kind in Lithuania. It is taught in English to provide students with a global perspective and prepare them for future business opportunities. The program includes visiting lecturers from Lithuania and abroad who have experience in the start-up ecosystem and are eager to share their knowledge. Additionally, guest lecturers from partner universities contribute to a diverse range of perspectives. The program offers students the chance to study abroad for a semester or a year and gain valuable international experience. They can also acquire a double degree from ISM's partner university, the Illinois University of Technology. Career prospects for graduates include joining industrial manufacturing companies as process optimization experts, working as sustainability experts in various industries, managing sustainable supply chains, and developing digital solutions and automation for business processes in different sectors. Students who complete the program can also pursue Master's degree studies in management or business.

The goal of the **Global Leadership and Strategy program** is to cultivate responsible and strategic-minded managers who possess global leadership skills, as well as knowledge of strategic management within organisations and other social systems. Graduates will be able to analyse the global market, anticipate changes, model organisational strategies accordingly, and tackle theoretical and practical problems in the fields of leadership and business on a global scale. The Global Leadership and Strategy program stands out for: Equipping contemporary leaders with competencies for a changing business, social and legal environment, emphasising stakeholder management, ethical and responsible leadership, and using strategy as a tool to achieve desired outcomes. Encouraging critical and broad thinking about leadership for social change. Featuring renowned visiting professors and specialised leadership modules for hands-on learning experiences. Taught entirely in English, with international students contributing to diverse classroom discussions. Offering a double degree option with KEDGE Business School in France and study abroad opportunities through Erasmus exchange or bilateral agreements.

Career prospects: Graduates can pursue various managerial roles in international organisations, projects, and business development, as well as in non-profit organisations in Lithuania and internationally. Further studies: Doctoral studies in management.

The **Business Sustainability Management program** aims to produce globally minded management specialists who are responsible, critical, and strategic in their approach. The program equips students with knowledge of sustainable strategic management of businesses and organisations, enabling them to analyse global markets, forecast changes, and model sustainable strategies to solve theoretical and practical problems related to sustainable organisational and business activity. Additionally, students learn to assess the impact of organisational and business activity on the environment and communicate their findings effectively to the public.

The Business Sustainability Management program stands out for: Providing a comprehensive curriculum on sustainable strategic management, unlike other Lithuanian universities. Conducting classes entirely in English to facilitate intercultural interactions with international students. Offering a collaborative program with the Impact Entrepreneurship program of three universities. Providing an opportunity for a semester abroad through Erasmus exchange or bilateral agreements. Career prospects for graduates include roles as business consultants, sustainability managers, and managers of multinational projects. Doctoral studies in management are also available.

The **Innovation and Technology Management program** aims to equip management specialists with theoretical and practical competencies to develop innovative solutions through technology, best practices, and organisational knowledge. This program prepares graduates to approach strategic, tactical, and operational issues with a creative mindset and leadership skills, enabling them to succeed in global organisations.

ISM's I**nnovation and Technology Management program** stands out from other related programs such as Mykolas Romeris University's Strategic Innovation Management (MBA), Kazimieras Simonavičius University's Organisational Innovations and Management, and Kaunas University of Technology's Innovation Management and Entrepreneurship. Key features of ISM's program include an interdisciplinary curriculum that emphasises creative and entrepreneurial aspects of innovation processes, a focus on sustainability, a high level of internationalisation with visiting professors and double degree options, balance of academic and practical approaches with real-life business problems and guest lectures, and strong career prospects in technology and innovation sectors. Graduates can pursue roles such as product developer, innovation strategist, and project manager, and can also access doctoral studies in management.

The objective of the **Master program of Management** is to provide advanced education to executive professionals, equipping them with the necessary knowledge, understanding, skills, and a forward-thinking mentality to tackle organisational management and leadership challenges from a modern perspective that emphasises sustainability and ethical considerations.

The Program's distinctiveness is defined by the following features: Designed to meet the needs of mid- and top-level management students for further competence development, the Program's pace and format are geared towards lifelong learning. The Program strikes a balance between classical and contemporary study disciplines and integrates both research and applicability. The faculty have strong academic/research and practical backgrounds. Students develop executive and leadership abilities through a combination of classical and modern management science and practice. The selection of electives allows for a focus on specific areas of knowledge to increase effectiveness and support long-term career development. The Program brings together a diverse community of executive management professionals, fostering a rich study experience. Established in 1999 in partnership with the BI Norwegian Business School, the Program continues to host international guest speakers and lecturers from renowned institutions. Graduates typically use the Program as a catalyst to further advance their managerial careers, aiming for higher positions or shifts across industries. The Program provides access to doctoral studies in the field of management.

The **Educational Leadership Program** aims to educate responsible and visionary leaders in the field of education. Participants will develop an understanding and critical appreciation of leadership and management theories, tools, and techniques to effectively implement leadership missions that enhance learning outcomes within educational organisations. Upon graduation, students will be equipped to lead and facilitate educational change as educators, administrators, and facilitators in both public and private education organisations and communities. Effective education leaders must possess a strong understanding of the structures involved in leading and managing school and organisational environments.

The ISM Programme in **Educational Leadership** stands out from similar programs in the following ways: Combining management and leadership fields to develop educational institutions. Providing active, student-centred instruction that integrates theory and practice, emphasising problem-based learning, action research, and field-based projects. Incorporating feedback and assessment from professionals in the field and faculty members. Offering problem-based learning opportunities with practitioners in the field and university professors. Building a peer network of professionals for continued social and professional support, strengthening the education sector in Lithuania. Graduates can pursue leadership and management positions in public and private education organisations, as well as consult for education-related agencies. The Program also offers access to doctoral studies in management.

The Expert Panel recognizes that the aims and outcomes of ISM's management field study programs are well-aligned with the needs of society and the labour market. The first circle study programs provide current and future-oriented foundational knowledge in their respective fields of study, covering a wide range of topics. These programs also incorporate research-oriented themes and questions, connecting them with practical issues from the business world. During the first year of study, students are given the opportunity to reflect on their decision to study at ISM. They must consider how to balance their professional work, academic studies, and personal interests. It is evident that both ISM and the first circle students value a practical and scientifically grounded qualification. Additionally, students have the possibility to gain study abroad experiences, further enriching their academic journey.

First cycle graduates have unrestricted job prospects in Lithuania, and some students even begin their professional careers outside of the country. The second cycle study programs are typically pursued by students who already have some professional experience. The goal of these master's programs is to complement their practical management knowledge with theoretical and methodological insights, allowing them to reflect on their practical experiences using scientific concepts. These programs also focus on fostering personal development and expanding students' mindsets. Building networks, collaborative learning in teams, exchanging individual learning experiences, and the option for individually tailored learning experiences such as double degree programs are significant principles in shaping the learning process for students. The orientation of these study programs towards these principles is highly valued by both former graduates and social partners.

Overall, the management study field study programs at ISM effectively address the demands of the labour market and society, providing students with a comprehensive education that combines theoretical knowledge, practical skills, and personal development opportunities. This integrated approach ensures that graduates are well-prepared to succeed in their careers and make meaningful contributions to their chosen fields.

3.1.2. Evaluation of the conformity of the field and cycle study programme aims and outcomes with the mission, objectives of activities and strategy of the HEI

ISM's management field study programs aim to achieve the university's mission and strategic goals for 2020-2025. The university's mission is to offer high-quality business education to students, leaders, executives, and entrepreneurs, to create knowledge for critical thinking, inspire impact, and empower sustainable change. The university aims to develop transferable skills such as critical thinking, cognitive flexibility, collaboration, and adaptability for students to become lifelong learners, ready to work in various settings, and engage with society. The university's strategic priorities are internationally renowned business education, personal coaching for lifelong learning, opinion leadership and partnerships with business and society, and academic excellence and educational innovation.

The Business Management and Marketing (BSc), Sustainable Process and Technology Management (BSc), and Global Leadership and Strategy (MSc) programs at ISM fully align with the university's mission and strategic priorities. They develop critical thinking skills, address ethical and social responsibility issues, and enhance leadership competencies. The programs incorporate innovative teaching methods, international focus, and collaboration with business practitioners. Students are encouraged to become responsible leaders who embrace sustainability objectives.

The management field study programs offered by ISM are intricately designed to align with the university's overarching mission and strategic priorities. The programs are specifically curated to cultivate and enhance a diverse range of skills and competencies in students, encompassing critical thinking, ethical decision-making, social responsibility, and effective leadership. Especially in the second cycle programs one of the key objectives is to foster critical thinking skills among students. By presenting them with real-world challenges and complex business scenarios, the programs encourage students to analyse, evaluate, and develop innovative

solutions. Through interactive classroom discussions, case studies, and practical projects, students are equipped with the ability to think critically and make informed decisions in various business contexts. Furthermore, the programs place a strong emphasis on addressing ethical and social responsibility issues. In today's rapidly evolving business landscape, it is crucial for aspiring professionals to understand the impact of their decisions on stakeholders and society at large. The curriculum of these programs incorporates ethical frameworks, case studies, and discussions on corporate social responsibility, enabling students to grasp the significance of ethical conduct in business practices.

In recognition of the globalised nature of business, the programs at ISM also boast an international focus. Students are exposed to a diverse range of perspectives, cultures, and business practices from around the world. This international exposure enhances their cross-cultural understanding, adaptability, and global mindset, preparing them to navigate the complexities of the global marketplace. Collaboration with business practitioners is another vital aspect of these programs. ISM recognizes the value of bridging the gap between academia and industry, and thus encourages interaction and collaboration between students and professionals. Through guest lectures, industry projects, internships, and networking events, students have the opportunity to learn directly from seasoned business leaders, gaining practical insights and building valuable connections that can positively impact their future careers. A core objective of the programs is to install a sense of responsibility and commitment to sustainability in students. Recognizing the urgent need for sustainable business practices, the curriculum incorporates modules and discussions on environmental conservation, resource management, and corporate sustainability initiatives. By promoting an understanding of the interplay between business and the environment, ISM aims to produce responsible leaders who actively contribute to sustainable development and drive positive change within their organisations.

In summary, the management field study programs offered by ISM encompass a comprehensive range of skills and competencies necessary for success in today's dynamic business landscape. Through their innovative teaching methods, international focus, collaboration with business practitioners, and emphasis on ethical and sustainable practices, these programs not only equip students with the knowledge and skills required for professional excellence but also foster a sense of social responsibility and a commitment to sustainable leadership.

3.1.3. Evaluation of the compliance of the field and cycle study programme with legal requirements

The study plans for Bachelor and Master level programs at ISM University of Management and Economics are designed in accordance with national and international regulations governing higher education. These include the National Qualification Framework levels 6 and 7, the European Higher Education Area framework levels 6 and 7, and the Order of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania on the descriptor of study cycles based on the Dublin descriptors cycle. The programs also adhere to the Order of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania on the general requirements for the

performance of studies, the list of study fields and groups of fields, and the principles of the structure of qualification degrees and titles of the study programs.

Additionally, the study plans take into consideration international documents on higher education and quality assurance, such as the ECTS User's Guide 2015 and AACSB Business Standards. The ISM Credit Framework serves as the foundation for designing and delivering programs, ensuring flexibility while maintaining common boundaries. The Credit Framework provides information on the number of credits required for modules and programs, the criteria for awarding credit, accreditation of prior learning and experiential learning, credit levels, and the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System.

Modules are defined by their learning outcomes, level, and notional study time, and credit is earned upon successful completion of these outcomes. The academic year is divided into two semesters, each consisting of 20 weeks and 30 ECTS credits. One ECTS credit point is equivalent to approximately 27 working hours, including contact and self-study hours. Student workload is composed of contact hours, such as lectures and seminars, and self-study, which includes preparation for classes and projects.

At the end of each semester, students provide feedback on the appropriateness of the workload, and the calculation of student workload and ECTS allocation is regularly reviewed. The learning outcomes of the Bachelor and Master level programs correspond to National Qualification Framework levels 6 and 7, respectively.

The following tables demonstrate how the Management field programs comply with the relevant legal acts.

Table No. 1 Study programs' **Business Management and Marketing** compliance to general requirements for *first cycle study programs (bachelor)*

Criteria	General legal requirements	In the Programmes
Scope of the program in ECTS	180, 210 or 240 ECTS	210 ECTS
ECTS for the study field	No less than 120 ECTS	120 ECTS
ECTS for studies specified by University or optional studies	No more than 120 ECTS	42 ECTS
ECTS for internship	No less than 15 ECTS	15 ECTS
ECTS for final thesis (project)	No less than 15 ECTS	15 ECTS
Contact hours	No less than 20 % of learning	27 %
Individual learning	No less than 30 % of learning	73 %

The study program consists of 5670 hours (810 semester hours x 7), which is equivalent to 210 ECTS credits. The curriculum includes 168 ECTS of compulsory modules and 42 ECTS of elective modules, with the sixth semester designated as a "mobility window" for students to pursue an exchange program or an internship abroad. Within the program, 120 ECTS are dedicated to management field modules, which includes 15 ECTS for internship and 15 ECTS for the final Bachelor thesis. Additionally, 24 ECTS are allocated for compulsory marketing field modules. Elective modules can be chosen from various fields such as general education, management, business, sociology, and marketing. Students who wish to focus on the marketing field can choose from the available marketing field elective modules.

Table No. 2 Study programs' **Sustainable Process and Technology Management** compliance to general requirements for *first cycle study programs (bachelor)*

Criteria	General legal requirements	In the Programmes
Scope of the program in ECTS	180, 210 or 240 ECTS	210 ECTS
ECTS for the study field	No less than 120 ECTS	132 ECTS
ECTS for studies specified by University or optional studies	No more than 120 ECTS	12 ECTS
ECTS for internship	No less than 15 ECTS	15 ECTS
ECTS for final thesis (project)	No less than 15 ECTS	15 ECTS
Contact hours	No less than 20 % of learning	20 %
Individual learning	No less than 30 % of learning	80 %

The study program has a volume of 5670 hours (810 semester hours x 7), which is equivalent to 210 ECTS credits. The curriculum mainly consists of 198 ECTS of compulsory modules, with only 12 ECTS being elective modules. Among the compulsory modules, 132 ECTS are allocated for the management field, with the remaining ECTS assigned to modules from other fields.

Table No. 3 Study programs' **Management** compliance to general requirements for *second cycle study programs (master)*

Criteria	General legal requirements	In the Programmes
Scope of the program in ECTS	90 or 120 ECTS	120 ECTS
ECTS for the study field Information Services	No less than 60 ECTS	60 ECTS
ECTS for studies specified by University or optional studies	No more than 30 ECTS	0 ECTS
ECTS for final thesis (project)	No less than 30 ECTS	30 ECTS
Contact hours	No less than 10 % of learning	15 %
Individual learning	No less than 50 % of learning	85 %

The study program encompasses 2430 hours (810 semester hours x 3) which is equivalent to 90 ECTS credits. The curriculum is made up of 3 elective modules totaling 90 ECTS and a compulsory Master Thesis module of 30 ECTS. At least 60 ECTS are designated for modules in the Management field.

Table No. 4 Study programs' **Innovation and Technology Management** compliance to general requirements for *second cycle study programs (master)*

Criteria	General legal requirements	In the Programmes
Scope of the program in ECTS	90 or 120 ECTS	90 ECTS
ECTS for the study field Information Services	No less than 60 ECTS	78 ECTS
ECTS for studies specified by University or optional studies	No more than 30 ECTS	6 ECTS
ECTS for final thesis (project)	No less than 30 ECTS	30 ECTS
Contact hours	No less than 10 % of learning	16 %
Individual learning	No less than 50 % of learning	84 %

The study program comprises 2430 hours (810 semester hours x 3), which is equivalent to 90 ECTS credits. The curriculum consists of 84 ECTS of compulsory modules and 6 ECTS of elective modules. Management field modules account for at least 78 ECTS, while the remaining ECTS

are allocated to modules of other fields. A 30 ECTS credit is designated for the final Master Thesis.

Table No. 5 Study programs' **Global Leadership and Strategy** compliance to general requirements for *second cycle study programs (master)*

Criteria	General legal requirements	In the Programmes
Scope of the program in ECTS	90 or 120 ECTS	90 ECTS
ECTS for the study field Information Services	No less than 60 ECTS	72 ECTS
ECTS for studies specified by University or optional studies	No more than 30 ECTS	6 ECTS
ECTS for final thesis (project)	No less than 30 ECTS	30 ECTS
Contact hours	No less than 10 % of learning	16 %
Individual learning	No less than 50 % of learning	84 %

The study program consists of 2430 hours (810 hours per semester x 3), which correspond to 90 ECTS credits. The curriculum includes 84 ECTS credits of mandatory modules and 6 ECTS credits of electives. Out of the mandatory modules, 72 ECTS credits are dedicated to management field courses, while the remaining credits are assigned to other fields. Additionally, students are required to complete a Master Thesis worth 30 ECTS credits.

Table No. 6 Study programs' **Business Sustainability Management** compliance to general requirements for *second cycle study programs (master)*

Criteria	General legal requirements	In the Programmes
Scope of the program in ECTS	90 or 120 ECTS	90 ECTS
ECTS for the study field Information Services	No less than 60 ECTS	60 ECTS
ECTS for studies specified by University or optional studies	No more than 30 ECTS	6 ECTS
ECTS for final thesis (project)	No less than 30 ECTS	30 ECTS
Contact hours	No less than 10 % of learning	16 %
Individual learning	No less than 50 % of learning	84 %

The study program comprises 2430 hours (810 semester hours x 3), which is equivalent to 90 ECTS credits. The curriculum includes 84 ECTS of mandatory modules and 6 ECTS of electives. Within the program, 60 ECTS are designated for management field modules, and the remaining ECTS are allocated to modules from other fields, which also include 30 ECTS for the final Master Thesis.

Table No. 7 Study programs' **Educational Leadership** compliance to general requirements for *second cycle study programs (master)*

Criteria	General legal requirements	In the Programmes
Scope of the program in ECTS	90 or 120 ECTS	90 ECTS
ECTS for the study field Information Services	No less than 60 ECTS	85 ECTS
ECTS for studies specified by University or optional studies	No more than 30 ECTS	5 ECTS
ECTS for final thesis (project)	No less than 30 ECTS	30 ECTS
Contact hours	No less than 10 % of learning	15 %
Individual learning	No less than 50 % of learning	85 %

The study program comprises 2430 hours (810 semester hours x 3), which is equivalent to 90 ECTS credits. It consists of 85 ECTS of compulsory modules in the management field, including 30 ECTS for the Master Thesis, and 5 ECTS of elective modules.

The management field study programs offered by ISM fully comply with all legal requirements without any limitations. ISM places a strong emphasis on ensuring that its programs adhere to the highest standards and meet all regulatory obligations. ISM's commitment to legal compliance is reflected in the rigorous review and approval processes for its management field study programs. These programs are designed and continuously updated in accordance with applicable laws, regulations, study field descriptors and accreditation standards. This meticulous approach ensures that students receive an education that is not only academically rigorous but also fully compliant with legal requirements. Furthermore, ISM maintains close relationships with relevant regulatory bodies and professional associations to stay abreast of any changes in legal requirements or industry standards. This proactive approach enables ISM to promptly address any necessary updates or modifications to its programs, ensuring ongoing compliance with legal and regulatory frameworks. In addition to meeting legal requirements, ISM prioritises ethical considerations in its management field study programs. Ethics and integrity are integral components of the curriculum, and students are encouraged to develop a strong ethical foundation and a deep understanding of professional responsibility.

Moreover, ISM's faculty members, who are experts in their respective fields, bring a wealth of practical knowledge and industry experience to the classroom. This ensures that students receive education and training that aligns not only with legal requirements but also with real-world business practices and expectations.

By offering management field study programs that fulfil all legal requirements, ISM demonstrates its commitment to providing students with a comprehensive and reputable education. Graduates can confidently enter the workforce knowing that their qualifications are recognized and in line with academic standards. ISM's dedication to legal compliance ensures that its programs remain current, relevant, and responsive to the evolving needs of the business world.

3.1.4. Evaluation of compatibility of aims, learning outcomes, teaching/learning and assessment methods of the field and cycle study programs

Annex 1 in the SER contains a table illustrating how the management field study programs' learning outcomes (LOs), module LOs, and teaching and assessment methods are interconnected. The bachelor and master study cycles are aligned with the LOs of the study programs and modules, which are divided into five categories based on the Order of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania "On approval of the descriptor of study cycles" (2011 no. V-2212 Vilnius): 'knowledge and its application', 'research skills', 'special (i.e. module specific) abilities', 'social abilities', and 'personal abilities'. The objectives in each category are linked to Bloom's taxonomy, a widely used educational tool for setting learning objectives. Bachelor programs focus on developing students' ability to demonstrate understanding, apply, analyse, identify, and explain at lower levels of Bloom's taxonomy. In the senior semesters, students extend to higher levels. Given the advanced nature of master level programs, their learning outcomes are linked to higher order skills, such as applying, analysing, integrating, and critically assessing levels within Bloom's 'cognitive domain'. The teaching methods are diverse and active, ranging from engaging lectures to individual coaching sessions, to help students achieve module level learning outcomes, which contribute to the overall program learning outcomes. Various components of assessment are used to assess the learning outcomes of each module, including knowledge and understanding, critical analysis, communication, etc. The assessments promote independent learning, student autonomy, and responsibility for personal learning, as well as the development of problem-solving skills. Students are tested not only on their ability to recall information but also on their ability to contextualise and use information to solve problems and discuss complex issues related to the main topical issues studied in the modules. The use of written assessments, case study reports, summaries of research articles, and literature reviews in the final thesis module help students develop academic literacy skills in professional writing, critical evaluation of peer-reviewed articles, finding, evaluating, and applying information, and articulating knowledge. Presentation skills are developed through oral and poster presentations, while summative evaluation takes place during the final thesis event. The study programs' learning outcomes are regularly reviewed and updated based on feedback from students, social partners, developments in the discipline, and changes in the external environment.

The bachelor programs at ISM are designed to foster students' ability to comprehend, apply, analyse, identify, and explain concepts at the lower levels of Bloom's taxonomy. As students progress to the senior semesters, they are challenged to reach higher levels of cognitive skills. In contrast, the master level programs are advanced and aim to develop higher-order skills such as application, analysis, integration, and critical assessment within Bloom's cognitive domain. To facilitate learning, a diverse range of teaching methods is employed, ensuring an engaging and active learning environment. These methods include dynamic lectures, individual coaching sessions, and interactive discussions. These approaches help students achieve the desired learning outcomes at the module level, contributing to the overall program learning outcomes.

Assessment is an integral part of the learning process, and various assessment components are utilised to evaluate students' achievement of the module learning outcomes. These assessments encompass knowledge and understanding, critical analysis, effective communication, and more. Emphasis is placed on promoting independent learning, fostering student autonomy, and cultivating a sense of responsibility for personal learning. Additionally, problem-solving skills are developed through assessments that require students to contextualise information and apply it to solve complex issues related to the topics covered in the modules.

The assessment methods encompass a range of formats, including written assessments, case study reports, summaries of research articles, and literature reviews in the final thesis module. These tasks not only enhance students' academic literacy skills in professional writing, but also strengthen their ability to critically evaluate peer-reviewed articles, locate, evaluate, and apply information, and effectively articulate knowledge. Presentation skills are also honed through oral and poster presentations, providing students with opportunities to showcase their knowledge and communicate their ideas effectively. Summative evaluation takes place during the final thesis event, where students' overall comprehension and application of the program's learning outcomes are assessed.

To ensure the ongoing relevance and effectiveness of the study programs, the learning outcomes are regularly reviewed and updated. Feedback from students, input from social partners, advancements in the discipline, and changes in the external environment all contribute to the continuous improvement of the programs, guaranteeing that students receive a high-quality education aligned with industry needs and best practices.

3.1.5. Evaluation of the totality of the field and cycle study program subjects/modules, which ensures consistent development of competences of students.

Business Management and Marketing (BSc) study plan:

The aim of the program structure is to offer a comprehensive understanding of management, marketing, and business. The syllabi of each module, containing detailed content information, are readily available on the ISM website at https://www.ism.lt/en/bachelor-studies/business-management-and-marketing. In the initial year, students take a series of modules that provide fundamental and general knowledge, followed by program-specific modules in the following two semesters. The sixth semester offers a "mobility window" that features entirely elective modules for students who remain in

Lithuania. The final semester is dedicated to the composition of an individually written bachelor thesis. The study plan for the Program is provided in Table 17 SER.

The first year of studies covers subjects such as Academic Writing and Presentation Skills, Applied Mathematics for Social Sciences, Principles of Economics, Business and Management. The Academic Writing and Presentation Skills module is divided into theoretical requirements of academic writing and practical training in writing, and it also covers effective presentation skills. Applied Mathematics for Social Sciences deepens students' knowledge of mathematics and develops their ability to use advanced mathematical analysis skills for problem-solving in economics, finance, management, and engineering. Principles of Economics, Business and Management introduces major economics and management principles, while Principles of Finance focuses on financial concepts, instruments, and techniques for decision-making. Principles of Marketing provides knowledge and skills for optimal economic, financial, and management decisions on a company level, while Logical Argumentation develops critical skills needed for clear and effective communication. Microeconomics teaches analytical approaches to market mechanisms, economic behaviour, and business strategies, and Quantitative Decision Making teaches the application of information technology strategies aligned with business strategies for competitive advantage. Financial Accounting teaches methods for identifying, registering, and analysing economic events. Consumer Behaviour covers the fundamentals of consumer behaviour and research. In the second year, students learn Macroeconomics, Statistical Data Analysis, Business Ethics and Sustainability, International Business, E-Commerce, and Social Research Methods. The third year covers Strategic Management, Marketplace Simulation, Corporate Governance and Law, Global Supply Chain Management, and Digital Marketing. Students also have the opportunity to work on real company problems or select their own unique ideas in the Entrepreneurship module. The 6th semester is a "mobility window" where students can choose to study abroad or complete an internship.

Sustainable Process and Technology Management (BSc) program study plan:

In 2022, the Industrial Technology Management program stopped admitting new students due to a declining number of applicants. The Study Committee discussed whether to eliminate or maintain the program and ultimately decided to revive it based on several criteria. These included outstanding student performance, positive student and employer satisfaction, and a double degree partnership with Illinois University of Technology, which offers student and staff exchanges and research cooperation.

To improve the program, faculty members held internal discussions, consulted with the marketing department, conducted focus group discussions with stakeholders, reviewed program learning outcomes and the curriculum, and added a greater emphasis on sustainability issues. As a result, the program's title was changed from Industrial Technology Management to Sustainable Process and Technology Management to better reflect the updated content. The Centre for Quality Assessment (SKVC) was consulted, and an official letter was sent to inform them of the title change. The curriculum was updated, and a new study plan for the program was introduced, which is presented in Table 19 SER.

The program has been revised to include three knowledge blocks related to specialisation: Sustainable Process, Digital Transformation, and Smart Manufacturing. The initial semesters, similar to the Business Management and Marketing program, are designed to provide students with a basic understanding of management principles. In the third semester, students are introduced to concepts related to manufacturing and digitalization, which prepares them for more specialised modules in the fourth semester. The Foundations of Manufacturing Technology module covers production process engineering, manufacturing operations, equipment selection, and material and product design. The Introduction to Digital Transformation module focuses on the need for business process re-engineering using digital transformation tools and methods. Students will learn about successful and unsuccessful case studies and explore the areas of digital capability that help or hinder transformation. In the fourth semester, students delve into digitalization issues and industrial processes, studying the Foundations of Digital Business, Introduction to Industry 4.0, and Smart Manufacturing Systems. The fifth and sixth semesters cover topics such as Business Information Systems, Global Supply Chain Management, Strategic Management, Innovation Management, Total Quality Management, Technology Project, Sustainable Business Process Management, Sustainable Procurement Management, and Green Manufacturing. The final semester includes a compulsory internship and writing and defence of the bachelor thesis.

Global Leadership and Strategy program (MSc) study plan:

The Global Leadership and Strategy study program is a three-semester program, comprising 90 ECTS credits, with 30 ECTS credits allocated to each semester. Students are presented with a choice between two optional study modules (see Table 20 SER).

The Global Leadership and Strategy program spans three semesters, with 90 ECTS credits in total (30 ECTS per semester). Students can choose from two optional study modules: the Global Leadership module, which focuses on leadership models and capabilities for leading in a global environment, and the People, Organization, and Innovation module, which covers people management and building innovative organisations in a digital world. The Digital Transformation and Global Strategy module develops skills in global market analysis and business strategy formulation, while the International Project Management module focuses on managing international project complexities. The semester concludes with an elective Global Business Immersions, which offers immersive learning in a specific location abroad.

The second semester begins with the Strategic Finance Management module, covering financial analysis, valuation, and decision-making. Leadership Skills Development enhances students' practical skills and capabilities to perform individually and as a team. Business in Society: Creating Shared Value module discusses the opportunities and challenges of business and the framework of creating shared value. The Entrepreneurship Project allows students to practise leadership skills while creating value for business, community or society.

Research Methodology covers research design and enables students to become knowledgeable consumers of academic research results. In the final semester, students consolidate their knowledge and skills and write a Master's thesis.

Business Sustainability program (MSc) study plan:

The study program (see Table 21 SER) has three blocks of knowledge: assessing problems and defining objectives, crafting new generation sustainable strategies, and implementing sustainable strategy and impact assessment. The first semester includes modules that build students' capacity to analyse and assess organisational challenges and develop competencies to shape sustainable organisational strategies. The second semester modules equip students with skills to undertake independent research, critically evaluate research conducted by others, and analyse the evolving dynamics of markets and economies. Additionally, students learn about sustainability and sustainable development of contemporary supply chains, develop social and sustainable business solutions, and re-assess traditional strategies while learning about impactful sustainability strategies at three levels: product, business, and system and network.

Innovation and Technology Management program (MSc) study plan:

The Innovation and Technology program is structured around three interconnected pillars: Global Innovative Management Foundation, Innovation and Technology Management, and Research into Technology and Innovation Management (see Table 22 SER). The Global Innovative Management Foundation includes modules on Business Strategy, Business Finance, Innovation Project Management, Process Innovation Management, and People, Organization and Innovation. The Innovation and Technology Management pillar consists of modules on Technology and Innovation Management, New Product Development, Artificial Intelligence Principles and Applications, and Sustainable Development of Emerging Technologies. The Research into Technology and Innovation Management pillar includes modules on Research projects into Innovation and Technology Management, Innovation and Technology Seminar in Japan, and Final Thesis.

In the first semester, students start with the New Product Development module, which focuses on the new product development process from a marketing perspective, covering topics such as opportunity selection, concept generation, and project evaluation. Other modules in the first semester include Business Finance, which covers financial analysis, investment, valuation, and financing decisions; Innovation Project Management, which teaches students how to critically analyse, assess, and improve innovation-related project work in organisations; Artificial Intelligence Principles and Applications, which provides a multidisciplinary presentation of AI concepts and their applications in business and management; and People Organization and Innovation, which deals with the processes related to individuals, teams, and organisational systems in the innovation process.

The second semester provides advanced knowledge in innovation and technology management areas. Modules include Process Innovation Management, which teaches students modern theories of process innovation management and methods for improvement in all major areas of operations; Technology and Innovation Management, which approaches the management of technological innovation from a resource/knowledge-based view and introduces theories, models, tools, and practical cases from industries; Business Strategy, which develops skills for environmental and market analysis, understanding major business strategy issues, and

formulating business strategies and tactics; and Sustainable Development of Emerging Technologies, which teaches students how to assess the potentials and pitfalls of emerging technologies for optimal development.

The final semester is dedicated to the Master's thesis related to innovation and technology management topics. Additionally, the Research Project into Technology and Innovation Management aims to teach students how to evaluate research in the innovation and technology management field and conduct their own research projects. The Innovation and Technology Management Seminar in Japan (elective) provides an opportunity for students to experience a different business environment and learn from visiting companies such as "Toy Finalota," "Mitsubishi Aircraft Corporation," "Alpen," or "Brother." Students also participate in design thinking seminars and workshops at Nagoya University of Commerce and Management.

Master of Management program (MSc) study plan:

The Program is designed to meet the needs of learners who have experience in middle or top-level management positions, and provides a high degree of flexibility in module selection to meet the specific needs of each student. In the first three semesters, students can choose from a list of modules provided in the table above, with the number of electives having increased from 10 to 13 since the last external evaluation in 2013. New modules, such as Executive Rhetoric and Communication, Business Development and Sustainability, and Organisational Resilience have been added to meet the evolving needs of businesses (see Table 23 SER).

The individual study plan of each student is constructed with the assistance of faculty members, including the Program Director and Heads of Modules, and learning consultants if necessary. This study plan can be revised every semester based on the needs of the student. In the first module, an obligatory seminar on Social Research Methods is incorporated to prepare master students for research.

This program is unique among master-level programs offered at ISM in that it builds on work experience and focuses on practical applicability. However, it maintains a balance between practical experience and academic rigour. Each module includes a research project that is performed independently, either individually or in groups of up to three students. The established volume of this research work is 10 ECTS credits consisting of a total of 268 hours, with 2 hours allocated for obligatory consultations with a research project consultant, and 266 hours of self-study. In addition to obligatory consultations, students can schedule individual voluntary consultations with a research project advisor.

Many students analyse the industrial branch or company in which they are employed, seeking to resolve actual problems that they can effectively handle through their own practice. One day per semester in every module is dedicated to a "writing retreat," during which students work on their research projects, consult with advisors, and discuss research findings with their peers. Finally, the fourth semester of studies is dedicated to writing a Master’s thesis/project.

Educational Leadership program (MSc) study plan:

The program (Table No. 24, SER) focuses on leadership and equips students with skills for success in a volatile environment. The Strategic Management of Educational Institutions module provides a broad understanding of educational organisations and strategic decision-making. The Value Creation and Marketing Strategy module teaches students to analyse an organisation's potential for value creation. The Financial Management of Educational Institutions module helps students solve management problems using financial management knowledge. The Project Management and Innovation module focuses on managing innovative projects and implementing Design Thinking methodology. The Leadership in Human Resources module teaches about strategic HRM and employee development. The Continuous Improvement and Quality Management module equips students with knowledge in quality management. The Leadership Laboratory module helps students develop advanced leadership competencies. The Leadership for Learning module explores interconnected learning. The Social Research Methods for Educational Leadership module develops research skills. The program includes one elective, and students write a final Master's thesis related to education management.

Overall, the study programs at ISM offer a diverse range of strengths that collectively contribute to a comprehensive and holistic education experience for students. One notable strength across the programs is the emphasis on providing a solid foundation of knowledge in their respective fields. Whether it's the Business Management and Marketing program, the Sustainable Process and Technology Management program, or the other programs, all of them ensure that students receive a comprehensive understanding of key concepts and principles. Additionally, the programs at ISM offer specialisation options that allow students to tailor their learning experience to their interests and career goals. This flexibility is evident in programs like the Global Leadership and Strategy program, which offers a choice between two optional study modules. By providing these options, ISM enables students to focus on specific areas of study that align with their individual aspirations.

Practical experience is another common feature among the programs. ISM recognizes the importance of bridging theory and practice, and thus provides opportunities for students to apply their knowledge in real-world settings. For example, the Business Management and Marketing program includes a mobility window and a final thesis, enabling students to gain practical experience and develop valuable skills that are directly applicable to their future careers.

Moreover, research and critical thinking skills are fostered across all the programs. ISM places importance on equipping students with the ability to analyse and evaluate information, conduct independent research, and think critically. This is evident in programs such as the Business Sustainability program and the Innovation and Technology Management program, which emphasise research projects and offer opportunities for students to engage in academic inquiry. It's worth noting that ISM's study programs are continuously reviewed and updated to ensure their relevance and alignment with industry needs. This commitment to staying current

and responsive to the evolving demands of the professional landscape enhances the quality and value of the education provided.

In conclusion, the study programs at ISM offer a comprehensive and well-rounded education experience. They provide a strong foundation of knowledge, offer specialisation options, incorporate practical experiences, and promote research and critical thinking skills. By combining these strengths, ISM ensures that students are well-prepared to succeed in their chosen fields and make meaningful contributions to their respective industries.

3.1.6. Evaluation of opportunities for students to personalise the structure of field study programmes according to their personal learning objectives and intended learning outcomes

Students have the opportunity to personalise their studies by choosing elective modules from a list provided in advance (SER Tables No. 24-28), which is regularly updated based on feedback from students and stakeholders. The list of elective modules with the link to module descriptions on internal ISM e-learning system is provided well in advance so that students could plan their studies, and consult their Programme directors (SER, p.50). New modules can be added through collaborations with academic partners, such as the Circular Economy module developed with the NordPlus network partners. Students can also customise their studies by studying abroad at partner institutions, participating in the Erasmus+ program, or pursuing a double degree with BI Norwegian Business School or KEDGE. Business Management and Marketing bachelor students can select 30 ECTS (5 modules) in their 6th semester if they choose to stay at ISM. Students can also choose the topic of their scientific research in Research Papers and Final Thesis, and bachelor students can opt for Directed Study to enhance their research skills. Executive education students in the Master of Management program create their own learning program by selecting from a list of elective modules. Global Leadership and Strategy programme students can select an elective Global Business Immersion or Comparative Management, or Leadership and Teamwork. Also, in consultation with their Programme director they can choose any module from MSc programmes: International Marketing and Management, Business Sustainability Management delivered in the Fall semester (SER, p. 52). Innovation and Technology Management students can choose Innovation and Technology Management Seminar in Japan or in consultation with the Programme director, they can choose any module from the MSc programmes: International Marketing and Management, Global Leadership and Strategy, Business Sustainability Management (SER, p. 52). The Educational Leadership program offers three elective modules. Students should consult with their Program Directors to plan their studies.

At ISM, students are empowered to personalise their academic journey through a variety of options and choices. One way they can tailor their studies is by selecting elective modules from a comprehensive list. This list is regularly updated and refined based on valuable feedback from students and stakeholders, ensuring that the modules remain relevant and aligned with current industry trends. Furthermore, ISM actively seeks collaborations with academic partners to introduce new modules, such as the Circular Economy module developed in collaboration with the NordPlus network partners. This commitment to continuously expanding the module offerings allows students to explore emerging fields and stay at the forefront of knowledge. To further customise their studies, students have the opportunity to participate in international

programs and partnerships. They can choose to study abroad at prestigious partner institutions, participate in the renowned Erasmus+ program, or even pursue a double degree with esteemed institutions like BI Norwegian Business School or KEDGE. These international experiences provide students with a global perspective, cultural immersion, and a deeper understanding of different business environments. In addition to module selection, students have the freedom to shape their own research projects. Whether it's selecting the topic for their Research Papers or Final Thesis, or opting for Directed Study, bachelor students can enhance their research skills and delve into areas of personal interest. This flexibility not only fosters academic curiosity but also allows students to develop expertise in specific subjects that align with their career aspirations.

Executive education students enrolled in the Master of Management program benefit from a highly customizable learning experience. They can curate their own program by selecting elective modules from a diverse range of options. This approach empowers them to tailor their studies to their specific professional goals and acquire knowledge and skills that are directly applicable to their chosen fields. Furthermore, specialised programs like Global Leadership and Strategy, Innovation and Technology Management, and Educational Leadership offer a variety of elective modules to cater to students' individual interests and career paths. For instance, Global Leadership and Strategy students can choose from modules such as Global Business Immersion, Comparative Management, or Leadership and Teamwork, which provide them with a well-rounded understanding of international business practices and effective leadership strategies. Similarly, Innovation and Technology Management students can opt for modules like the Innovation and Technology Management Seminar in Japan or explore modules from related MSc programs like International Marketing and Management, Global Leadership and Strategy, or Business Sustainability Management. This interdisciplinary approach allows students to broaden their knowledge base and develop a versatile skill set that is highly valued in today's dynamic business landscape. To ensure students make informed choices and maximise their study plans, it is recommended that they consult with their respective Program Directors. These experienced professionals provide guidance and support in mapping out the most suitable elective modules based on individual goals and aspirations.

In conclusion, the multitude of options and choices available at ISM enables students to personalise their studies effectively. Whether through elective module selection, international programs, or research project customization, students have the opportunity to shape their educational experience according to their interests and career objectives. This emphasis on personalization and flexibility reflects ISM's commitment to providing a holistic and student-centred approach to education.

3.1.7. Evaluation of compliance of final theses with the field and cycle requirements

After completing the required study program modules, students are permitted to write and defend their Final Theses (FT), which are independent works that summarise their acquired knowledge, abilities, and skills. The FT also serves as a substantiation of the awarded qualification. For the FT, students are required to analyse a relevant problem of a company or institution and provide solutions to the problem. Students must select their thesis topics with the guidance of their thesis advisors and receive approval from the Programme Director after

presenting a research proposal to a panel. The topics should be sufficient for scientific enquiry, neither too narrow nor too broad, and realistic with regards to time and resource constraints. The Programme Director is responsible for the preparation of methodological requirements and selecting advisors and reviewers of the final Bachelor/Master Theses. All final Theses are checked for plagiarism using plagiarism detection software TurnitIn. Before the public defence of the thesis, the thesis is evaluated in a written form by the thesis supervisor and the reviewer. The thesis defence is conducted in front of the Defence Commission consisting of academics and one social partner representative. Students may be denied the opportunity to defend their final thesis if they violate academic ethics, fail to adhere to the approved thesis preparation deadlines, receive negative evaluations from their supervisor or reviewer, or if their work does not meet the formal requirements for a bachelor/master thesis. Students are strongly advised to write their FBT about the same company in which their internship was taken. Exceptions must be approved by the Program Director and are only granted in specific cases. The problem area of the thesis depends on the program and can include strategic planning, competitive advantage improvement, marketing function improvements, HR function improvement, project management audit, process effectiveness improvement, and more.

Upon successful completion of the required study program modules, students are granted the opportunity to embark on their Final Theses (FT), which serve as independent works encapsulating their acquired knowledge, abilities, and skills. The FT not only demonstrates their mastery of the subject matter but also substantiates the qualification they have earned. In this crucial phase, students are tasked with analysing a pertinent problem faced by a company or institution and providing well-founded solutions.
To ensure that the thesis topics are appropriate and conducive to scientific inquiry, students work closely with their thesis advisors, who offer guidance and support throughout the process. After developing a research proposal and presenting it to a panel, students must obtain approval from the Programme Director. The chosen topics should strike a balance between being neither too narrow nor too broad, while also being realistic in terms of time and resource constraints. The Programme Director assumes the responsibility of establishing methodological requirements, as well as appointing thesis advisors and reviewers for the final Bachelor's or Master's Theses. To maintain academic integrity, all submitted theses undergo a thorough plagiarism check using the TurnitIn software.

Prior to the public defence of the thesis, a written evaluation is conducted by both the thesis supervisor and the reviewer. Subsequently, the thesis defence takes place before the Defence Commission, which consists of esteemed academics and a representative from the industry or relevant social partner. It should be noted that students may be denied the opportunity to defend their final thesis if they engage in academic misconduct, fail to meet the designated deadlines for thesis preparation, receive unfavourable evaluations from their supervisor or reviewer, or if their work fails to meet the formal requirements of a bachelor's or master's thesis. In order to optimise their research experience, students are strongly advised to select a thesis topic related to the company in which they completed their internship. Exceptions to this rule require explicit approval from the Program Director and are only granted under specific circumstances. The problem area of the thesis varies depending on the program and may encompass strategic planning, enhancing competitive advantage, improving marketing

functions, optimising HR functions, conducting project management audits, enhancing process effectiveness, and other relevant areas.

The final thesis represents a culmination of the students' academic journey, showcasing their ability to critically analyse and provide practical solutions to real-world challenges. By adhering to rigorous standards and engaging in an intellectually stimulating process, students develop vital research skills and demonstrate their readiness to contribute to the professional arena in their chosen fields.

Strengths and weaknesses of this evaluation area:

(1) Strengths:

1. Comprehensive and Current Curriculum: The management field study programs at ISM provide students with a well-rounded education by offering a wide range of foundational knowledge and research-oriented themes. The curriculum is regularly updated to align with the needs of society and the labour market, ensuring that students receive relevant and up-to-date education. This comprehensive approach equips students with the necessary knowledge and skills to address real-world business challenges effectively.
2. Focus on Critical Thinking and Ethical Decision-Making: ISM places a strong emphasis on fostering critical thinking skills among students. Through interactive classroom discussions, case studies, and practical projects, students are encouraged to analyse complex business scenarios and develop innovative solutions. The programs also integrate ethical frameworks and discussions on corporate social responsibility, enabling students to understand the ethical implications of their decisions and develop a sense of social responsibility.
3. International Perspective and Collaboration: Recognizing the global nature of business, ISM's programs have an international focus. Students are exposed to diverse perspectives, cultures, and business practices from around the world, enhancing their cross-cultural understanding and global mindset. Collaboration with business practitioners is also emphasised, providing students with opportunities to learn directly from industry experts through guest lectures, industry projects, internships, and networking events. This collaboration bridges the gap between academia and industry, preparing students for the realities of the global marketplace.
4. Emphasis on Sustainability and Responsible Leadership: ISM is committed to instilling a sense of responsibility and commitment to sustainability in its students. The programs incorporate modules and discussions on environmental conservation, resource management, and corporate sustainability initiatives. By promoting an understanding of the interplay between business and the environment, ISM aims to produce responsible leaders who actively contribute to sustainable development and drive positive change within organisations. Emphasis on independent learning and problem-solving skills: ISM's program focuses on promoting independent learning and cultivating a sense of responsibility for personal learning. Students are encouraged to develop problem-solving skills by contextualising information and applying it to solve complex issues related to the topics covered in the modules. This approach helps students become self-directed learners and prepares them to tackle real-world challenges.
5. Diverse assessment methods: ISM utilises a range of assessment formats, including written assessments, case study reports, summaries of research articles, and literature reviews

in the final thesis module. These assessments not only enhance students' academic literacy skills but also strengthen their ability to critically evaluate information and effectively articulate knowledge. Presentation skills are also emphasised through oral and poster presentations. The diverse assessment methods ensure that students' achievement of module learning outcomes is thoroughly evaluated.

6. Regular review and updating of learning outcomes: ISM recognizes the importance of staying relevant and effective in its study programs. To achieve this, the learning outcomes of the programs are regularly reviewed and updated. Feedback from students, input from social partners, advancements in the discipline, and changes in the external environment are all considered in the continuous improvement process. This ensures that the programs align with industry needs and best practices, providing students with a high-quality and up-to-date education.

7. Customization options and flexibility: ISM offers various options for students to customise their academic journey. Students can select elective modules from a comprehensive list, allowing them to tailor their studies to their interests and career goals. The program also offers international programs and partnerships, enabling students to study abroad or pursue double degrees. In addition, students have the freedom to shape their own research projects, selecting topics that align with their personal interests. This customization and flexibility empower students to have a more personalised and meaningful learning experience.

(2) Weaknesses:

1. Dependency on independent learning: While the emphasis on independent learning is a strength, it can also become a weakness if students are not adequately supported. Some students may struggle to self-motivate or develop effective strategies for self-directed learning. In such cases, a lack of structured guidance or appropriate support could pose a challenge for students. Independent learning is an asset, its potential pitfalls underscore the significance of robust student support mechanisms. ISM's multifaceted approach, encompassing administrative guidance, skill-oriented electives, and nuanced lecturer strategies, distinctly fortifies students to excel in their educational journey.

2. Diversity of assessment methods: While leveraging a diverse array of assessment methods presents a strength by catering to students' varying skills and capabilities, it can also usher in a sense of overwhelm. Students might encounter challenges in sufficiently preparing for and effectively responding to the different assessment types. If the requisites for these distinct evaluation methods lack clarity or if students are not adequately equipped for the diverse formats, it could culminate in perplexity and hesitation. To mitigate these potential risks, ISM has instituted Module syllabuses that offer an intricate explication of learning objectives, pedagogical approaches, assessment modalities, grade composition, and stipulated task prerequisites. These specifics are not only introduced and discussed with students during the inaugural class but are also made available on the ISM e-learning platform and official homepage, ensuring accessibility for both current and prospective students (SER, p. 93).

3. Necessary updating of learning outcomes: Regular review and updating of learning outcomes are strengths to ensure program relevance and industry focus. However, they can also present challenges. Constantly updating learning outcomes requires time and resources from program providers. Striking a balance between staying up-to-date and ensuring a stable

curriculum can be difficult. If the updating of learning outcomes is not effectively managed, delays or inconsistencies in the curriculum may occur, impacting the quality of education.

4. Consider the impacts of digital transformation: Like other universities, ISM will face challenges in the digital transformation, including ensuring faculty possess adequate digital skills, addressing the digital divide for students, maintaining quality assurance for online learning materials, safeguarding student data privacy and security, and finding a balanced use of digital and traditional learning methods. To address these challenges, ISM should invest in faculty development programs, provide technological resources for students, establish quality assurance mechanisms, implement data protection measures, and design well-rounded curricula. However, we can already observe that ISM adopts a comprehensive strategy, which includes investing in faculty development, providing essential technological resources to students, strengthening quality assurance systems, ensuring strict data protection measures, and designing comprehensive curricula. Activities related to these aspects are presented in the Self-Evaluation Report (SER), starting from page 102.

5. ISM needs to adapt and update its study programs in response to technological and societal advancements. This includes integrating emerging technologies, such as artificial intelligence and data analytics, into the curriculum to prepare students for the evolving job market. Furthermore, ISM should consider incorporating interdisciplinary subjects that address the intersection of business and technology, sustainability, and ethical considerations. It is also essential to foster an innovative and entrepreneurial mindset among students, equipping them with the skills needed to navigate the digital landscape and drive organisational transformation. By continuously reassessing and refining its study programs, ISM can ensure that graduates are well-prepared and relevant in a rapidly changing world. Crucially, it's worth highlighting that ISM has initiated a curriculum transformation that inherently embodies an interdisciplinary nature, establishing linkages between the realms of business, technology, and sustainability/social responsibility. An illustrative instance of this approach is vividly demonstrated by the Master's program in Sustainable Business Management, where these thematic connections are prominently emphasised.

3.2. LINKS BETWEEN SCIENCE (ART) AND STUDIES

Links between science (art) and study activities shall be assessed in accordance with the following indicators:

3.2.1. Evaluation of the sufficiency of the science (applied science, art) activities implemented by the HEI for the field of research (art) related to the field of study

Results from 2018-2020 of the Annual Formal Assessments of the Research Output of Lithuanian Universities and Research Institutes in the field of Social Sciences show HEI consistent high scores in assessments. Also, HEI Research and Development activities are quite relevant at the international level, earning the highest score among all Lithuanian universities in the field of Social Sciences. HEI has also received international awards for research in the field of studies as supported in information presented in SER (Pg. 62).

The study field research activities encompass relevant and adequate areas, including Entrepreneurship, International Business, Communication, and Leadership, with a strong emphasis on Sustainability and technological innovations like Digitalization, Artificial Intelligence, and Automation. SER (Pg. 62) shows examples that materialise the relevance of the projects HEI is involved in such as "Industry 4.0: Addressing Challenges for Productivity, Employment, and Inclusive Growth," exploring the potential impact of automation on business and employment. ISM researchers also investigate International Markets, Consumer Behaviour, and inter-organizational networks in projects, employing comparative and cross-cultural perspectives. Significant contributions have been made in Leadership studies, including leader intuition, destructive leadership's impact on Covid-19 spread, and transitions in balanced leadership. Sustainability research focuses on areas like sustainable consumption and ageing, promoting sustainable HRM practices.

There is a clear connection between research activities and studies that are carried out and the study field as the Expert panel could confirm through examples provided in meeting with teaching staff and meeting with students.

Research projects are relevant and well-integrated in the studies and the study field has good levels of participation in international research networks and conferences, as well as a good research output in high quality journals and books published by international publishers. Although the relevance of HEI publications is high, the number of publications is not impressive. As can be confirmed in data provided by SER (Pg. 61, table 29) white a research output (2020-2022) of 105.

Study field has a good level of engagement and collaboration with international academic institutions, such as the GLOBE project, SPRINT, Pop-Machina, and the GUESSS project. These collaborations involve conducting research in Lithuania and contributing to global research efforts.

Also, HEI has a good level of collaboration with private and public organisations for research purposes. Examples include feasibility studies on employee selection systems, research on the impact of physical office environments, effects of innovative work environments on motivation and creativity, employment of persons with disabilities, and implementing good practices in the civil service.

HEI is active in funding research activities through competitive research grants. Some of the ongoing or upcoming projects include reforming business education, sustainable career development, the impact of the remote work environment on well-being and creativity, entrepreneurship across the lifespan, and skills evaluation in Industry 5.0.

HEI emphasises interdisciplinary thematic areas in Management research, including sustainability management and sustainable growth, emerging technologies and data-driven decision-making, and leadership and value co-creation.

Study field has adequate plans for future scientific activities in the field of Management, focusing on the identified thematic areas. The financial viability of these activities is well funded

through funding requests for competitive research grants and ongoing collaborations with external partners.

Overall, the study field demonstrates a strong commitment to research collaboration, interdisciplinary research themes, and addressing current and future challenges in the field of Management.

3.2.2. Evaluation of the link between the content of studies and the latest developments in science, art and technology

The link between the content of the field study program and the latest developments in science, arts and technology is well substantiated, as described in SER and was confirmed in a meeting with teaching staff and in a meeting with alumni, employers and social partners. Overall, the management study field at ISM has built a strong and dynamic link between the content of their studies and the latest developments in science, art, and technology.

Study field shows active and relevant collaboration with professional associations and experts in the field. The study field seems active making students accessing case studies and professional development modules.

Study field is quite active bringing international researchers and practitioners to teach within the programs. Study field also actively prepares cases for teaching purposes, further emphasising the institution's commitment to staying relevant in the corporate environment. Also, HEI promotes participation in professional seminars and workshops for sharing and learning about the newest developments in the study field. For instance, one of the associate professors attends workshops organised by the Institute for Strategy and Competitiveness at Harvard Business School, which enables the integration of cutting-edge research and teaching methods into the curriculum.

Collaboration with corporations is quite dynamic and positioned as strategic for the study field. Examples provided in meeting with alumni, employers, social partners comproved this dynamic and how the two parts collaborate on applied research.

International partnerships play a significant role in the study field. HEI has collaborations with a quite wide number of international universities like, Aarhus Business School, Reykjavik University, Riga Stockholm School SSE, Tallinn University of Technology, Mälardalen University, University of South-Eastern Norway, LAB University, HEC Liege, and the Zagreb School of Economics and Management.

In summary, the study field maintains a strong link between its curriculum and the latest developments in science, art, and technology. Through partnerships with professional associations, collaborations with international partners, participation in seminars and workshops, and the involvement of renowned researchers and practitioners, ISM ensures that its management programs provide students with up-to-date knowledge and practical skills needed in the dynamic field of management.

3.2.3. Evaluation of conditions for students to get involved in scientific (applied science, art) activities consistent with their study cycle

SER highlights the promotion of research engagement among students through modules, research internships, conferences, and research projects. The programs provide opportunities for students to apply their research skills to real-life problems and contribute to the field of management through scientific (applied science, art) activities. It is clear a general effort to ensure the balance between the scholarly dimension of study programs and practice and study field efforts for students of all levels to be involved in scientific activities.

Common to bachelor's and master's degrees, students are offered the opportunity to attend the module of Directed Studies which allows students to work in real research projects and work in international teams. More participation at bachelor level should be promoted in research through this Directed Studies module.

Involvement of students in international contexts is also a positive effort from HEI as it creates opportunities for students to participate in relevant international case competitions and conferences as, for instance, Creative Shock. HEI should increase its focus on this issue, making more students participate in conferences to present their research findings.

At a Bachelor level several courses from Business Management and Marketing and Sustainable Process and Technology Management programs give students relevant methodology skills and opportunities for applied experiences and exercises, as examples provided in SER (pg. 71). Nevertheless, more measures should be taken to engage bachelor students in research activities, as the experts panel could conclude from meeting with students.

At a Master level, study field ensures courses and pedagogical initiatives that allow students to deepen in scientific activities as supported by SER (pgs. 71-74). Joint publications with students and participation of students in international conferences should be considered a priority, for all masters. In fact, although Innovation and Technology Management Masters have good indicators at this level, and Global Leadership and Strategy and Business Sustainability Management are recent masters there is no specific evidence of these dynamics and strategy especially in the Masters of Management and Educational Leadership.

In summary, ISM promotes student research engagement through diverse activities like modules, internships, conferences, and projects, fostering their application of research skills and contributions to management. Although bachelor-level courses provide relevant methodology skills and applied experiences, more initiatives are necessary to engage bachelor students in research. At the master's level, courses and initiatives enable students to deepen scientific activities, emphasising joint publications and participation in international conferences. All master's programs, including Innovation and Technology Management, Global Leadership and Strategy, Business Sustainability Management, and Management and Educational Leadership, should prioritise these dynamics.

Strengths and weaknesses of this evaluation area:

(1) Strengths:

1. Research output: Study field excels in research, consistently achieving high scores in annual assessments. The Research and Development activities are relevant at the international level, earning the highest score among all Lithuanian universities in the field of Social Sciences.
2. Engagement with stakeholders: The study field has a good level of engagement and collaboration with relevant stakeholders, namely international academic institutions, professional associations, companies, social partners and experts.
3. Interdisciplinarity: The study field emphasises interdisciplinary thematic areas in Management research.
4. Research support: HEI actively supports research activities through competitive research grants, ensuring the financial viability of future scientific endeavours in the field of Management.

(2) Weaknesses:

1. Bachelor students' engagement in research: There is a need to promote greater participation in research activities at the bachelor's level. Increasing opportunities and encouraging students to engage in research could enhance their research skills and involvement.

3.3. STUDENT ADMISSION AND SUPPORT

Student admission and support shall be evaluated according to the following indicators:

3.3.1. Evaluation of the suitability and publicity of student selection and admission criteria and process

As Lithuania's admission to higher education is regulated and carried out nationally, it is no different in the case of ISM as being a private University.

The students at the meeting mentioned that most of them found out about their studies while they were still at school, as the university's advertising reaches pupils through advertising while pupils in high school.

The University's various collaborations with schools, such as joint projects and classes taught by university lecturers in schools, were well received.

There is a lack of information on the financial incentives and assistance that ISM can provide. Students were also unclear about the conditions for tuition fee discounts and concessions and how to take advantage of these opportunities. It would be important to know where to go before applying to ISM and how well ISM caters for less well-off students.

The bachelor programs had dynamic admission numbers. In the Business Management and Marketing admission numbers boomed from just 24 in 2019/2020 up to 90 in 2021/2022. The number of admitted students remained somewhat stable in the next year and ISM admitted 80 students. The other bachelor program had low admissions and ISM decided not to admit

students in 2022/2023. ISM should find ways to stabilise the admission numbers in bachelor cycle programs, also the admission numbers in Sustainable Process and Technology Management programme shows that there is a need to figure out how to remake the program to attract new students, also this program had the highest dropout rate in all of the evaluated programs.

The master programs had a stable admission of students, also two programs still do not have any graduates (Management and Innovation and Technology Management programs) as they are new programs, only started accepting students from the year of 2021 and 2022. The other masters' programs have a small decline in admissions and applications but are still reasonable.

3.3.2. Evaluation of the procedure of recognition of foreign qualifications, partial studies and prior non-formal and informal learning and its application

In order to take credit for competences acquired additionally or informally, students from the year of the meeting stressed that the University offers the possibility for students who have already studied to take credit for them. The students could not specify the procedure, but they know where they should go and the administration is willing to give advice. Such information is also provided before applying to ISM. Even though the information at ISM is publicly available (link), it would be useful to inform students more often on the crediting of credits, studies, additional studies and non-formal competences in a public space, so that these procedures are transparent and clearly understood by most students.

During the meeting with students , one student said that needed to have extra lessons after finishing a bachelor's degree in another university of applied science, but there is a possibility to have these lessons while you are studying in the masters' program. The system of compatibility of extra lessons and major programs should be improved, because it is difficult to study both together at the same time.

Students should be more informed about their non-formal and informal learning recognition, because students do not know about these possibilities.

Foreign qualifications are recognised well, procedure is clear. International students responded positively to the crediting of competences and the organisation of additional lectures to give them the knowledge they need to continue their studies.

3.3.3. Evaluation of conditions for ensuring academic mobility of students

There was a clear problem during the meeting with the benefits of internationalisation and study mobility for students - they don't understand why they need it and don't know how it benefits them. There is a lack of organisation of short-term exchanges and projects rather than long-term ones. Students benefit from short-term mobility in the form of projects, camps, and a series of lectures. Such mobility is more popular with students who do not have many opportunities to go on long-term exchanges and placements.

Bachelor students are not extremely interested in foreign experience to travel abroad. Masters' students do not understand reasons to travel abroad, to study or have practice - Education Leadership program students think they do not need at all to travel somewhere.

The expert panel suggests finding ways for students to go abroad for short courses, one-week programs, summer camps, practise places, at least to interest the studies to seek some international experience. More possibilities for comfort and more compatibility with job and studies are needed.

3.3.4. Assessment of the suitability, adequacy and effectiveness of the academic, financial, social, psychological and personal support provided to the students of the field

Students know where to go to contact the administration for a wide range of issues, but a few important things are missing: anonymous access to academic, social and psychological support. There is a questionnaire on the evaluation of lecturers, if students are sceptical about, saying they would like to see a change sooner than the end of the semester. The administration also conducts after semester meetings with the Rector, and a suggestion would be to educate students more about the importance and benefits of such meetings, as most students are not aware of such meetings and do not understand their benefits. Such meetings should be organised in the middle of the semester, and it would be more relevant for students to make their comments at the beginning of the semester rather than at the end.

There is also no data on students' academic appeals or ethical cases. It is important to collect such data, despite the fact that ISM is a relatively small university and open communication and communication in general is very much encouraged here, which is very welcome. However, a student should have the right and the opportunity to appeal to independent committees about his/her various academic and ethical situations, and it is important to collect and keep a record of such cases and the results of their resolution in order to be able to monitor the evolution of the figures over the years.

At ISM there are some options for financial support. Students can get funds, projects step ups and social scholarships. ISM offers various discounts on tuition fees, but students are unclear about the reasons for these discounts and how to access them. The advice would be to clarify the financial incentives and to focus these incentives more on undergraduate students, as it has been observed that the university focuses more on graduate students than undergraduate students.

Students highlighted one of the biggest challenges is balancing study and work, that it is not easy to study, as most students are employed. The advice is to pay more attention to the flexibility of studying, to combine distance lectures with contact hours.

3.3.5 Evaluation of the sufficiency of study information and student counselling

SER mentioned a midterm student meeting with the rector, to talk about studies. The meeting is ranked well, but bachelor students mentioned that they do not get comments back after their feedback, so this is not well. Administration should collect all comments and present students the result, the action plan which will be taken to improve. Masters' students mentioned survey spam, that they receive too many letters to their email.

Students have a positive perception of the University's academic counselling, and they know who to contact and where to ask for information.

When comparing all the support provided by the university, Master's students feel that they are better provided with academic support than Bachelor's students. The latter express a desire to be more enlightened about opportunities, but Masters' students mention that the large amount of information they receive from the administration is frustrating and then the information gets lost and is no longer reviewed. The advice is to review the communication channels and assess which information should reach which group of students. Also, assess how to better support undergraduate students.

Giving students more opportunities to view videos remotely while they work would be a great opportunity to make their studies more flexible.

Students highlighted one of the biggest benefits of studying here is that there is a general aura of internationality in the university. Most students feel they are at an international university even though they are studying in Lithuania. One of the most important things is the important projects and the opportunities to put their studies into practice. Integrated projects are therefore highlighted and praised by students.

Students highlighted the lack of joint alumni networking events where students could network, present their projects and find more peers, future colleagues, employers and collaborators. This was also expressed by alumni that they would like to see more networking after graduation in order to keep in touch. The university alumni club is not well known and would be a great opportunity to keep in touch, create new activities and maintain traditions.

Overall, the students get enough attention and their needs are met. The expert panel noticed a distinct division between bachelor and master students which needs to be resolved as soon as possible. Especially the information asymmetry, networking and in the long-run mobility.

Strengths and weaknesses of this evaluation area:

(1) Strengths:

1. Cooperation and communication between students, administration and lecturers
2. Integrating various internships and projects into the study process

(2) Weaknesses:

1. Bachelor students have less attention and care due to master students.
2. No defined avenues for appeals against the study process and for analysing cases of ethical breaches.
3. Students are not adequately and sufficiently encouraged to engage in a variety of research projects and papers, and the benefits and opportunities for doing so are not sufficiently demonstrated.

3.4. TEACHING AND LEARNING, STUDENT PERFORMANCE AND GRADUATE EMPLOYMENT

Studying, student performance and graduate employment shall be evaluated according to the following indicators:

3.4.1. Evaluation of the teaching and learning process that enables to take into account the needs of the students and enable them to achieve the intended learning outcomes

Based on the expert visit, it was determined that the teaching and learning processes at HEI are well developed and thoroughly planned. The teaching approach is learner-centred, providing students with deep insights into current managerial and business challenges and enabling them to find feasible solutions. This approach is supported by various research findings. The university employs a variety of teaching and learning methods, such as case discussions, group projects, research, debates, seminars, and study visits. This allows students to integrate theoretical and practical knowledge and work both individually and in groups.

One notable aspect of HEI is its well-established network of guest speakers and social partners, which facilitates a strong connection between academic theory and real-world practice. This connection enhances the relevance and applicability of the education provided.

During meetings with students, some areas for improvement were identified. Balancing work and life can be challenging due to the intensity of study programs, which do not offer flexible schedules for working students. Additionally, some students expressed an interest in more elective courses, which may not always be available in bachelor-level programs.

The alumni surveys conducted by the Career Centre provide valuable statistics for comparing programs and evaluating the skills gained by graduates. Although the recommendation scores are generally high, the evaluation of skills varies across different programs. Lower scores were observed in decision-making skills in Sustainable Process and Technology Management, professional competences in Innovation and Technology Management, and foreign language skills in the Master of Management and Educational Leadership programs.

During the visit, experts initiated discussions about the ultimate goals, learning outcomes, competencies, and skills acquired by students in the management study programs. It became evident that there were some misalignments between different groups, highlighting the need for additional clarification and a clear understanding of program goals, learning outcomes, and assessments. It is crucial to document and communicate these aspects effectively between management, faculty, and students. The survey evaluating skills gained by graduates should be given more importance as it provides clear indications of how teaching methods should be adapted or changed. Furthermore, the management should prioritise clear and comprehensive communication of the survey findings to all stakeholders.

Overall, while the teaching and learning processes at HEI were highly regarded, there were areas identified for improvement, particularly regarding work-life balance, availability of elective courses, and the need for better alignment and communication of program goals and learning outcomes.

3.4.2. Evaluation of conditions ensuring access to study for socially vulnerable groups and students with special needs

According to SER, HEI declares itself as a socially responsible organisation that promotes equality and inclusion for all students. The university welcomes students with special needs to apply to all programs, and although the number of such students was limited (only 4 in 2022), HEI strives to provide a healthy and enriching environment for them.

However, it is noted that the quality standards for education at HEI are not modified specifically for students with special needs. The assistance provided in this regard tends to be more reactive than proactive. HEI encourages students with disabilities to actively communicate their needs to the Study Services department. It is the responsibility of this department to ensure equal access to studies and make necessary accommodations for these students to participate fully in the study process alongside their peers.

To support students with disabilities, HEI has already made special arrangements. This includes providing appropriate facilities such as accessible bathrooms, entrances, and classrooms. The organisation of studies is also adapted to individual needs, offering individual study plans and providing suitable learning and teaching materials as well as access to library resources. Financial support may also be available to assist students with disabilities.

Furthermore, statistics on students with special needs are available over the reporting period, which indicates that HEI keeps track of the number of students requiring special accommodations.

It is important for HEI to continue actively working on creating an inclusive and accessible learning environment for students with special needs. This may involve further proactive measures, ongoing dialogue with students, and continuous improvement of support services to ensure equal opportunities and a fulfilling educational experience for all students.

3.4.3. Evaluation of the systematic nature of the monitoring of student study progress and feedback to students to promote self-assessment and subsequent planning of study progress

The achievement of learning outcomes is measured at two levels: the program level and the module level. At the program level, the assessment of learning outcomes is based on the Assurance of Learning (AOL) system, developed in 2019 as part of the SER Assessment. This process includes various assessments such as exams, written assignments, projects, presentations, and final theses. These assessments are designed to evaluate the students' mastery of the program-level learning outcomes.

At the module level, the assessment is conducted regularly according to the "ISM Regulation of Studies." Each module has a syllabus prepared by the respective lecturer and coordinated by the Programme Director. The syllabus specifies the topics to be covered, as well as the forms of interim assignments and grading criteria. The detailed syllabuses and grading systems are introduced during the first class and are also available online on the ISM e-learning system.

According to university regulations, lecturers are required to provide feedback to students after each assessment. They are encouraged to provide formative feedback whenever possible, which can be used by students to prepare for future studies. Students have the freedom to choose the means and forms of feedback, and they have the opportunity to follow up on it.

During an expert visit, it was confirmed that there is a presence of a feedback-giving, mentoring, and coaching culture in the educational institution. Students themselves validated the importance of feedback as a means to promote self-assessment and acknowledged its crucial role in the learning process. Timely feedback was specifically emphasised as essential by the students.

At the bachelor's level, students expressed a desire for more feedback throughout the entire duration of their courses. They sought feedback during classes, after presentations, midterms, and even before final exams to ensure they had a comprehensive understanding and could adequately prepare. Clear and timely communication from instructors back to students was also highlighted as important for their study progress. Students appreciated the two-way communication, as their feedback is collected to improve and enhance the courses, but they felt that the outcome results are not effectively communicated back to them.

In the master programs, students noted the value of professional mentors and coaches and suggested that this practice should be continued or expanded. These mentors and coaches provided significant support and guidance to the students in their professional development.

Overall, the students positively received the feedback-giving culture, as well as mentoring and coaching practices. They recognized their importance in the learning journey and emphasised the need for timely feedback, clear communication, and ongoing support throughout their academic programs.

3.4.4. Evaluation of employability of graduates and graduate career tracking in the study field

ISM has a well-documented and statistically proven evaluation of employability and a comparison with its main competitors in the market. According to the STRATA (Government Strategic Analysis Center, 2020) report, graduates of ISM's Master of Management program demonstrated a high employment rate after 12 months of graduation. Specifically, 88% of graduates were employed according to the level of qualification gained. For Bachelor's level graduates, the employment rate was 70%, with the remaining individuals either actively searching for a job, continuing their studies at the master's level, or starting their own businesses.

During the visit, there was a strong demonstration of the relationship between academia, graduates, alumni, and social partners at ISM. Many students at HEI combine their studies with work, allowing them to easily apply the theoretical examples from lectures in real work environments. The possibility to expand career paths is quite broad, as ISM's strong alumni network creates numerous opportunities for students to gain valuable internships or participate in common projects, thereby acquiring real-life experiences.

This emphasis on practical application and the connection between academia and industry contributes to ISM's high employability rates and prepares students for successful careers in their chosen fields.

3.4.5. Evaluation of the implementation of policies to ensure academic integrity, tolerance and non-discrimination

Code of Ethics was implemented in 2011 and covers several important issues to ensure ethical practices within the institution. These issues include impartiality, freedom of speech, non-discrimination, academic solidarity, assurance of teaching, learning, and research quality, confidential information, conflicts of personal and university interests, anti-bribery policy, and relationships in the workplace.

To address breaches of ethics, the institution has an Ethics Committee that follows a procedure outlined in the Code of Ethics. This committee considers cases where ethical violations have occurred and takes appropriate actions.

The Regulation of Studies also includes a chapter specifically dedicated to Rules of Academic Ethics. This chapter provides a detailed explanation of what constitutes plagiarism, falsification, and other forms of misbehaviour during the studies. The information is properly introduced and consistently reminded to students throughout their years of study.

While the documentation and procedures are well-prepared and in place, the university confirms that such cases of ethical violations are rare, and they have not encountered any in recent years. This indicates that the institution's efforts in promoting ethical conduct and providing clear guidelines to students have been effective in maintaining a high standard of academic integrity.

3.4.6. Evaluation of the effectiveness of the application of procedures for the submission and examination of appeals and complaints regarding the study process within the field studies

During the expert visit, it was confirmed that ISM has a policy in place for handling appeals and complaints. However, it appears that the interpretation and practical implementation of the procedure may vary based on individual circumstances. In some cases, the lecturer and program director may invest effort in resolving the issue before it becomes officially recorded or statistically accountable. As a result, statistics regarding the number of appeals and their outcomes may not be readily available.

This approach suggests that ISM aims to address and resolve issues at the initial stage, involving the relevant parties to find a satisfactory resolution. By doing so, they prioritise resolving concerns internally and mitigating the need for formal appeals or complaints. This individualised approach may contribute to a more personalised and responsive handling of cases.

While statistics may not be readily accessible, this emphasis on proactive resolution and addressing concerns early on reflects a commitment to addressing student grievances and maintaining a positive learning environment.

Strengths and weaknesses of this evaluation area:

(1) Strengths:

1. Networking Opportunities: Studying at ISM provides excellent networking possibilities for students and social partners, offering a competitive advantage to the university.
2. Strong Community: ISM has successfully built a strong community with a clear sense of belonging and emotional pride, which is a unique and valuable characteristic.
3. Long-standing Partnerships: The university has established enduring partnerships not only with social partners but also with the business community at large, both locally and internationally.
4. Real-life Case Studies: Management study programs at ISM are based on real-life cases and current challenges faced in the business world.

(2) Weaknesses:

1. Lack of Clarity in Hybrid Learning: The availability and clarity of hybrid learning options, such as participating in lectures online or accessing recorded lectures, need improvement to cater to the needs of all students.
2. Incoherence in Organisational Alignment: The alignment between different stakeholders regarding learning objectives/competencies and the assessment of outcomes needs to be improved and reemphasized.
3. Feedback Process Improvement: The feedback process could be enhanced, as students have expressed that it does not work both ways. While feedback is collected in a timely manner, the results and outcomes are not always effectively communicated to students. Midterm feedback should be gathered, and improvements/adjustments should be communicated back to the students.

3.5. TEACHING STAFF

Study field teaching staff shall be evaluated in accordance with the following indicators:

3.5.1. Evaluation of the adequacy of the number, qualification and competence (scientific, didactic, professional) of teaching staff within a field study programme(s) at the HEI in order to achieve the learning outcomes

A list of permanent teaching staff of the field Is provided, with information about number, and years of experience in relation to scientific, didactic and professional experiences.

The number of teaching staff is in general adequate to the number of students and in none of the programs exceeds 1 teaching staff to 9 students and in most programs the ratios are considerably lower.

The scientific qualifications are evaluated in terms of selected publications within the last five years for each staff member. The number, the quality and the relevance of publications are on an adequate level. Many publications are in English and published in international journals. At the site visit, it is confirmed that all teaching staff have published research articles within the last two years and that they regularly attend and make presentations at international conferences. All teaching staff have attended conferences within the last two years.

The site-visit demonstrates that senior management is committed to increasing the number of high quality, international research publications in leading journals. ISM incentivises this by a reward system for high quality publications. The faculty confirms the numbers, but questions the impact of these bonuses. If a group of three or four authors share, the amount to each is quite limited.

The workload is presented and shows that academic staff have a minimum of 30 % work time for research activities and many have up to 50%. This is on par with faculty positions internationally. The teaching staff at the site visit confirms that these numbers are accurate and although they also state that it can be difficult to find enough time for research, this is found to be a rather universal challenge for academics.

The teaching staff are experienced teachers with a high average number of years of teaching experience. Many of the teaching staff have the same number of years of professional experience as teaching experience. This indicates that they hold combined positions. The program also holds 39 full-time faculty, but no-one of the teaching staff listed have a 100 % load in the program. Only one has 75 % load and the rest has 50 % or less.

All in all, the number, qualifications and competences of teaching staff are on an adequate level.

3.5.2. Evaluation of conditions for ensuring teaching staffs' academic mobility (not applicable to studies carried out by HEIs operating under the conditions of exile)

It is stated in the SER that except for 2020/2021, because of COVID-19, about 70 % of the full-time faculty take advantage of mobility programs. The Erasmus+ programme is the most commonly used programme for staff mobility. This is a high number and indicates that conditions for mobility are adequate. Examples of the benefits of the mobily are mentioned. Also, the incoming mobility of staff is high in most years, except for 2020/2021, and this contributes to the international environment at ISM.

Furthermore, a list of presentations at international conferences in recent years is presented. The list evidence that faculty prioritise and find support for attending international conferences in their research field.

The level of English language skills is generally fine and at the site-visit, all participating teaching staff spoke English at a good level. This is a precondition for further staff mobility.

All in all, the conditions for teaching staff's academic mobility are satisfactory.

3.5.3. Evaluation of the conditions to improve the competences of the teaching staff

ISM has established an incentive system to promote academic publications which is rewarded financially on two levels, based on well known publication rankings like AJG and FT 50. The financial rewards are only substantial, though, if the paper is published by a single or a couple of researchers. Information is not provided about the impact of this system and if it has increased number of 4 and 4* publications, but based on the talk with teaching staff at the site visit, the impact is limited.

It is stated in the SER that faculty are supported by research training activities like brown bag sessions and research seminars. Examples of topics are mentioned. Twice a year, writing retreats are organised. Several of the teaching staff attending at the site visit have taken advantage of more than one of these activities and all have attended at least one within the last year.

Development of teaching skills are supported through ISM summer and winter research and teaching academies. To incentivize excellence in teaching, a teaching award has been established in 2021. A teaching grant was established the same year to support innovations in teaching. A Digital innovation lab has been established. ISM does not have a dedicated unit to offer didactical training.

Teachers confirm that they all have attended professional didactical development in recent years and some have also used the Digital Innovation Lab. Students likewise confirm that they experience the teachers and the teaching as student centred and that teachers in general are accessible and responsive.

Strengths and weaknesses of this evaluation area:

(1) Strengths:

1. Good teacher-to-student ratio.
2. Clear and transparent incentive structures established in terms of research performance.
3. High mobility and international outlook.

(2) Weaknesses:

1. No clear and transparent incentive structure in place for teaching performance (except for a teaching award and Teaching Grant).
2. No dedicated unit for continuous professional teacher training.

3.6. LEARNING FACILITIES AND RESOURCES

Study field learning facilities and resources should be evaluated according to the following criteria:

3.6.1. Evaluation of the suitability and adequacy of the physical, informational and financial resources of the field studies to ensure an effective learning process

According to the SER information, the University campus relocated to new premises in March 2023. The new building offers a range of facilities, including multiple auditoriums with varying seating capacities, computer classes, a library with co-working space, individual working and meeting rooms, areas for student associations and clubs, a reception area, a large gathering space, and a digital innovation LAB. The premises seem to provide ample resources and spaces to support various activities and meet the needs of students and staff.

In terms of digital infrastructure, students are provided with mailboxes and cloud storage, and communication between students and staff is facilitated through a specialised help desk

information system. Learning materials are distributed through the learning management system Moodle, and the occupancy of auditoriums and equipment is managed through a specialised booking information system. The university also utilises a specialised application integrated with financial accounting software to manage studies. Students and staff use MS Office 365 and the Windows 10 operating system.

Having a university library with a comprehensive collection of textbooks on business and management, as well as access to various databases, is a valuable resource for students and faculty. The large number of titles (7500) and copies (1500), particularly in the management field, indicates a commitment to providing relevant materials for academic studies. The involvement of the head of the library, experts, program directors, and heads of individual study departments in forming the library's stock is a positive approach. Performing a quality assessment of library services on an annual basis demonstrates a proactive approach to meeting the needs of library users. This assessment helps identify any areas for improvement and ensures that the services provided are effectively meeting the expectations and requirements of the university community.

During feedback sessions with various stakeholders, the physical premises of the new campus received positive feedback and appreciation from faculty, students, alumni, and social partners. However, the level of digitization was identified as an area for improvement, specifically by increasing the availability of online classes or recorded lectures. This suggestion, particularly valuable for Master degree programs' students with busy work-life schedules, would enhance accessibility and flexibility. Another proposal was to create an internal system, such as an "internal ChatGPT," to optimise the utilisation of the university's intellectual property. This system would streamline knowledge sharing and collaboration among faculty and staff. On the downside, the limited parking availability at the new location was identified as a challenge, leading to increased commuting time, parking congestion, and frustration within the campus community. Addressing this issue and improving parking availability would greatly enhance the overall campus experience and alleviate transportation-related stress for students and staff.

University facilities are currently limited to the university community only, opening certain facilities, such as the amphitheatre and library, to the public can still be a beneficial strategy for collaboration and enhancing the university's brand. By allowing public access, the university can foster community engagement and create opportunities for collaboration with external organisations, businesses, and individuals. This can lead to joint research projects, public lectures, cultural events, and other initiatives that promote knowledge sharing and exchange. Additionally, opening facilities to the public can help showcase the university's resources, expertise, and achievements, thereby strengthening its brand and reputation.

3.6.2. Evaluation of the planning and upgrading of resources needed to carry out the field studies

Due to the relocation to the new building substantial investments were made: in 2022/2023 450K EUR for IT equipment, 933K for furniture and 700K for other resources. Based on SER investments are planned for the upcoming 5 years: 50K euros for IT equipment, 30K euros for furniture and 70K euros for other investments annually.

During the visit some premises (e.g. student association space) were still under construction and more investment might be needed for that.

Overall, the expert panel can conclude that the University has allocated enough resources for the annual planning and a budget for upgrading of resources. ISM should continue having the pace and not forget that the new resources will need maintenance and renewal in the future.

Strengths and weaknesses of this evaluation area:

(1) Strengths:

1. Modern Learning Environment: The new premises of the university, including modern auditoriums, shared spaces, labs, and a library, are renovated and equipped with the necessary tools to create a contemporary and comfortable learning environment.
2. Advanced IT Infrastructure: The availability of a modern printing system and the latest IT equipment and software programs provide students with access to up-to-date technology resources.
3. Collaborative Spaces: The new open spaces and shared facilities are highly appreciated by students, as they foster collaboration, cooperation, and networking opportunities.
4. Central Location: The university's central location contributes to better brand visibility potential and offers improved marketing opportunities.

(2) Weaknesses:

1. Limited Public Access: Opening certain facilities, such as the amphitheatre and library, to the public could be considered as a means of collaboration and further strengthening the university's brand.
2. Parking Availability: The lack of parking possibilities creates inconvenience for students, and addressing this issue could contribute to a more convenient and accessible campus environment.

3.7. STUDY QUALITY MANAGEMENT AND PUBLIC INFORMATION

Study quality management and publicity shall be evaluated according to the following indicators:

3.7.1. Evaluation of the effectiveness of the internal quality assurance system of the studies

In the Fall of 2020, the ISM Quality Manual underwent a thorough review to establish the principles, processes, and functions for quality assurance.

The management of academic quality is maintained on various levels, including institutional, program, and module levels. The principles and processes align with the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG) and the Business Standards of The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB). HEI has adequate formal mechanisms for internal quality assurance, which are regularly monitored through targeted assessments of specific components of the quality assurance system. The academic standards and quality committee is authorised to audit institution-wide processes to

ensure greater compliance and identify opportunities for improvement. Additional initiatives, such as the creation of a Dashboard and early alert system, have been implemented to improve overall student success rates.

Furthermore, ISM is dedicated to monitoring teaching and learning methods to ensure a student-centred approach is consistently implemented across all programs.

In summary, The management of academic quality is maintained at various levels, aligning with international standards and guidelines. HEI has effective internal mechanisms for quality assurance, regularly monitored through targeted assessments.

3.7.2. Evaluation of the effectiveness of the involvement of stakeholders (students and other stakeholders) in internal quality assurance

Following expert recommendations provided during the last external evaluation of Business Management and Marketing study aims, outcomes, and content in 2016, more formal procedures were put in place to inform curricular developments and ensure program quality assurance. This includes soliciting feedback from company representatives who supervise study field students through the use of questionnaires, organising focus group discussions with company representatives for the revision and development of new programs, and formally including employer representatives in working groups for new programs. To measure quality perception, the Net Promoter Score calculation was implemented.

In addition to these measures, the higher education institution (HEI) integrates alumni, employers, and industry/sector representatives into its quality assurance efforts through formal representation on university committees such as the Senate, Advisory Boards, and Sustainability Council. They also provide insights and expertise in program development or review. A municipality representative is included in the Educational Leadership Committee, and industry representatives are formally included in final thesis defence committees, as per ISM regulations.

Although HEI develops questionnaires to monitor students' careers, as understood in meetings with alumni, there seems to be room for improvement in developing methods that allow a better tracking of alumni careers.

Industry professionals are also informally involved in classroom settings as guest speakers, and they mentor master's students. These efforts demonstrate the HEI's commitment to ensuring program quality and relevance, while fostering collaboration between academia and industry.

In conclusion, the higher education institution has implemented formal procedures and measures to enhance curricular developments and ensure program quality assurance system.

3.7.3. Evaluation of the collection, use and publication of information on studies, their evaluation and improvement processes and outcomes

ISM collects and makes public various data related to the delivery of their field studies. This includes information on study programs, admission requirements, learning outcomes, and acquired qualifications. The university conducts surveys to collect feedback from different

stakeholders, such as the EXIT survey for graduates, internship supervisors, and employers' NPS survey. Additionally, ISM regularly organises focus groups with business representatives to get their opinions on the quality of their programs.

ISM also involves students in its quality assurance and enhancement processes, allowing them to play an active role in university committees and participate in direct communication with staff and faculty. The university conducts module questionnaires at the end of each semester to gather feedback from students. They also launch university-wide questionnaires to collect information about the general student experience.

Overall, ISM strives to collect and make public a wide range of data about its field studies, ensuring transparency and continuous improvement of their programs.

3.7.4. Evaluation of the opinion of the field students (collected in the ways and by the means chosen by the SKVC or the HEI) about the quality of the studies at the HEI

Students are actively involved in the quality assurance process through mid-term meetings with Programme Directors. The feedback provided by the students is discussed within the faculty and students are given feedback on their suggestions. Additionally, at the end of each semester, students are invited to complete feedback questionnaires which are then reviewed by the Programme Directors who determine if any necessary improvements have been effective. The faculty and the Study Committee collaborate to create an improvement plan which is later implemented. At the end of the academic year, an assessment is conducted to determine if the program adequately meets the needs of current and future students. As the number of students is low, the system seems adequate.

In summary, the quality assurance process actively involves students through mid-term meetings with Programme Directors, feedback questionnaires, and collaborative efforts between faculty and the Study Committee to implement improvements, ensuring the program meets the needs of current and future students, which is deemed adequate.

Strengths and weaknesses of this evaluation area:

(1) Strengths:

1. The study field has a well-established internal quality assurance system aligned with the European Higher Education Area (ESG) standards and the Business Standards of The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB).
2. The study field actively involves through adequate mechanisms feedback from stakeholders such as students, employers, and industry/sector representatives ensuring that the programs remain relevant and aligned with the industry.
3. The information is transparent as HEI collects and publishes a wide range of data on its studies, evaluation processes, and outcomes.

(2) Weaknesses:

1. Although the study program develops questionnaires to monitor students' careers, there is room for improvement in developing methods that allow better tracking of alumni careers.

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

Evaluation Area	Recommendations for the Evaluation Area (study cycle)
Intended and achieved learning outcomes and curriculum	1. Dependency on independent learning: a) Provide clear guidance and resources for independent learning. b) Establish support systems like mentorship programs and peer learning groups. c) Teach self-directed learning skills through workshops and lessons. 2. Diversity of assessment methods: a) Clearly communicate expectations and requirements for assessments. b) Offer practice opportunities and provide feedback for different formats. c) Provide tailored study materials and resources for each assessment method. 3. Necessary updating of learning outcomes: a) Develop a systematic process for reviewing and updating outcomes. b) Allocate resources and involve stakeholders in curriculum development. c) Strive for a balance between staying up-to-date and maintaining stability. 4. Consider the impacts of digital transformation: a) Enhance faculty's digital skills and teaching approaches. b) Bridge the digital divide by addressing students' technological needs. c) Implement quality assurance processes for online materials. d) Ensure data privacy and security through protocols and training. e) Modernise the curriculum with emerging technologies and interdisciplinary subjects. f) Foster continuous improvement through feedback and adjustments.
Links between science (art) and studies	1. To further develop research skills and involvement among students at bachelor level, the study field should focus on creating more opportunities for motivating undergraduate students to participate in research activities.
Student admission and support	1. Stabilise admission numbers. 2. More comfortable time schedules for students that come to study masters' at ISM from other study fields or professional bachelors and need additional lessons. 3. Increase outgoing student mobility by firstly informing the students why mobility programs are essential. 4. Introduce more short-term mobility opportunities. 5. More formal approach to appeals and other processes. 6. Provide publicly how to receive discounts on tuition fees, reasons for these discounts and how to access them. 7. Revise study programs so they would be more work-study balanced and provide more flexibility for online and contact hours.

	8. More information and overall care should be provided to bachelor students. 9. Improve networking options for students.
Teaching and learning, student performance and graduate employment	1. To improve the availability and clarity of hybrid learning options, such as participating in lectures online or accessing recorded lectures, to cater to the needs of all students. 2. To improve alignment between different stakeholders (management, faculty and students) regarding learning objectives/competencies and the assessment of outcomes. 3. To enhance the feedback process, as students have expressed that it does not work both ways and the results and outcomes are not always effectively communicated back to them.
Teaching staff	1. To evaluate the impact of the reward system and see if some adjustments could increase the impact as an incentive system and if teaching performance can be included in the system. 2. To establish support for teacher training beyond the media and digital support done by the Digital Innovation Lab. This could be done by broadening the scope of the Digital Innovation Lab.
Learning facilities and resources	1. To consider opening certain facilities, such as the amphitheatre and library, to the public as it might be considered as a means of collaboration and further strengthening the university's brand. 2. To find ways for alternative parking.
Study quality management and public information	1. Focus on developing more effective methods for monitoring and collecting data on the career progression of its graduates. This could include implementing more systematic follow-up surveys, alumni networking platforms.

V. SUMMARY

ISM University of Management and Economics in Lithuania stands out for its exceptional academic programs, offering a comprehensive and relevant curriculum that prepares students for real-world business challenges. The university's key strengths lie in its focus on critical thinking, ethical decision-making, and social responsibility, encouraging students to analyse complex business scenarios and develop innovative solutions. ISM also provides an international perspective, exposing students to diverse perspectives, cultures, and business practices worldwide. Collaboration with industry experts bridges the gap between academia and industry, equipping students with the skills needed for success in the global marketplace.

Sustainability and responsible leadership are significant priorities at ISM, incorporating modules and discussions on environmental conservation, resource management, and corporate sustainability initiatives. The university aims to produce responsible leaders who contribute to sustainable development and positive change within organisations. ISM places a strong emphasis on promoting independent learning and problem-solving skills, preparing students to become self-directed learners and equipping them with tools for their future careers.

Diverse assessment methods, including written assessments, case study reports, and presentations, strengthen students' academic literacy and critical thinking abilities. ISM regularly reviews and updates its learning outcomes to align programs with industry needs and best practices, considering feedback from students, social partners, and changes in the external environment.

Customization options and flexibility are prioritised, allowing students to tailor their studies to their interests and career goals. The university's strong research output, interdisciplinary approach, networking opportunities, and sense of community enhance the student experience. ISM maintains a modern learning environment with advanced IT infrastructure and collaborative spaces, fostering cooperation, teamwork, and networking opportunities.

Strategically located, ISM benefits from improved brand visibility and marketing opportunities. The university adheres to international standards through its well-established internal quality assurance system, continuously involving stakeholders to ensure program relevance and alignment with industry demands.

According to the Expert Panel, it is crucial for the ISM University of Management and Economics to consistently evaluate, reflect on, and enhance its curriculum to meet market demands, involving key stakeholders. To offer students a future-oriented learning experience, they should be empowered to learn independently and self-directed. Transparency and fairness play a vital role in assessing learning processes. The ISM should effectively communicate expectations to students and provide practice opportunities and customised learning materials. Constructive feedback assists students in understanding their strengths and areas for improvement.

The digitalization of learning offerings and processes should be advanced, with a focus on enhancing the digital skills of the faculty. Research opportunities for students should be

expanded. In teaching and research, the needs of working students should be embraced as an opportunity. Hybrid learning options and optimised admissions for double-degree programs should be considered.

In conclusion, ISM University of Management and Economics in Lithuania is a top-tier business university dedicated to innovation, lifelong learning, and thought leadership. With its comprehensive curriculum, emphasis on critical thinking, international perspective, commitment to sustainability, and promotion of independent learning, ISM provides a high-quality and up-to-date education. The university's research output, interdisciplinary approach, networking opportunities, supportive community, modern learning environment, and commitment to quality assurance contribute to its stellar reputation. ISM stands as a beacon of excellence in business education.

At the end of this report we, the Expert Panel, would like to express our sincere appreciation to the entire team at ISM for the comprehensive and substantive Self-Evaluation Report (SER), as well as for the warm welcome and the engaged discussions during our site visit.

Expert panel chairperson signature:

Prof. Dr. Thomas Bartscher **(signature)**