

PANEVĖŽYS COLLEGE / STATE HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION

APPROVED BY:
Order No V1-121 of the Director of Panevėžio kolegija/
State Higher Education Institution, as of 12 September 2024;

A PROGRESS REPORT ON IMPLEMENTATION OF EXTERNAL REVIEW RECOMMENDATIONS

| Experts' recommendations | Responsible department/persons | Actions by the HEI to implement the recommendations | A change has occurred or is pending |
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| AREA OF MANAGMENT | | | |
| 1. The College should simplify the Strategic Action Plan with respect to the most important objectives and targets which contribute to its long-term and successful development. | Director, Strategic planning committee | <p>Actions taken: The Strategic Committee and Directorate meetings between 2022 and 2024 reviewed the Strategic Plan and its indicators and sought optimal and effective solutions to measure the College's performance. As a result of consistent improvement, a new version of the Panevėžys College (PC) Action Strategy and Strategic Action Plan for 2021-2026 was approved (Resolution of the Council of Panevėžys College No. KT-1, 2024) https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1igJ5GoNQa81qj2xaOHF9-7377mZ08shi, which highlights the most important goals and objectives of the College, reflecting the current requirements for higher education and contributing to its long-term and successful development. In order to achieve the objectives, set out in the Strategic Plan, an action plan for the achievement of the strategic objectives and targets has been drawn up with specific implementation measures and responsible persons.</p> <p>Next steps: Continuous monitoring and analysis of the Strategic Plan to ensure that its goals and objectives are relevant and in line with the requirements of higher education. To update the action plan for the achievement of the strategic objectives and targets on an annual basis, adjusting or supplementing the implementation measures as necessary and according to the degree of achievement of the objectives.</p> | A new version of the PC Action Strategy and Strategic Action Plan for 2021-2026 has been approved (Resolution of the Council of Panevėžys College No KT-1, 2024). Specific implementation measures are also foreseen in a separate plan to ensure the success of the Strategic Plan's objectives. |
| 2. The College should consider adopting not only quantitative indicators but also a more qualitative approach in | Director, Strategic planning committee, Management Representative for Quality | <p>Actions taken: The new version of the PC Action Strategy and Strategic Action Plan 2021-2026 streamlines performance indicators and refines programme titles. All quantitative and qualitative indicators measuring performance and efficiency are closely linked to the College's processes and constituent activities and are reflected in the updated IQASS Manual adopted in 2024 https://panko.lt/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/Manual-on-the-Internal-Quality-Assurance-System-for-Studies_6-version-2024.pdf.</p> | A new version of the PC's Strategy and Strategic Action Plan 2021-2026 and a new version of the PC IQASS Manual with <i>optimised quantitative and qualitative indicators</i> were approved. |

**List of acronyms
used in the
document:**

IQASS - Internal Quality Assurance System for Studies
ESG - Quality Assurance Regulations and Guidelines of the European Higher Education Area
PDCA – Plan-Do-Check-Act (Deming Cycle)

QMS – Quality Management System
PC – Panevėžys College
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| <p>assessing the implementation of its strategy.</p> | | <p>We used the SMART methodology (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound) to optimise indicators. In optimising the indicators of the strategic plan, the focus was on the long-term strategic goals for the colleges set by the Government of the Republic of Lithuania (the Action Plan for Strengthening the Network of State Colleges 2023-2024, approved by the Government of the Republic of Lithuania by Resolution No. 46 of 18 January 2023), and therefore, some indicators that are not so relevant were eliminated (e.g. R-1.1.2.2. The share of modular study programmes in total study programmes, R-1.1.2.3. The share of modules/subjects certified for distance learning in total modules/subjects, R-2.1.4.4. The level of digitisation of academic processes to improve the efficiency of processes and resources, etc.).</p> <p>Our qualitative assessment was reflected in the overall achievement of the three programmes of the Strategic Plan and their constituent objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Enhancing the quality of studies and the development of student-centred studies, - Competitive development and quality assurance of applied research activities, - Strengthening the coherence between ongoing studies and research development, - Developing bi-directional international mobility of teachers and students, - Ensuring the internationalisation of studies and research applications, - Systematic development of academic staff qualifications and enhancement of subject/professional competences, - Carrying out social projects for the promotion of science, health and culture. <p>The qualitative assessment of the activity is also shown by the following indicators, which include the satisfaction of students and social partners (R-1.1.1.2; R1.1.1.3); modernization of the study environment and infrastructure (R-1.1.1.4); competence of teachers and researchers (R-1.2.1.1; R-1.2.1.2); Relevance of study programs - employment of graduates (R-1.1.1.1), internationality of studies and scientific applied activities (R-1.3.2.1.; R-1.3.2.2; R-1.3.2.3).</p> <p>Additionally, qualitative indicators for performance evaluation are provided in the IQASS manual, which are reported to the Academic Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Quality assurance is based on planning and analysis (the main operational goals, tasks and indicators are determined), - Ensuring the effectiveness of activities (issues of the quality of academic and scientific and other activities are constantly resolved and documents are updated accordingly), | |

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| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improving the quality of management, administration and decisions (digitalization of processes - use, improvement or renewal of electronic processes by applying information technologies), - Compliance of study programs with educational requirements, - Ensuring the internationality of study programs (study programs or modules/subjects conducted in English), - Planning new study programs or updating existing ones, - Application of theoretical knowledge and practical skills acquired by students in specific professional activities, - Students' academic and professional achievements, - Development of the internationality of studies (new/updated Erasmus+ cooperation agreements), - Student satisfaction with the international mobility program, - The composition of the teaching staff (sufficiency of teachers with a degree or practical experience for the implementation of studies in the field), - Planning and monitoring of teachers' scientific activities, - Reducing student withdrawal from studies, - The survey system has been created, is operating and is being improved. <p>To ensure the qualitative and effective implementation of the Strategic Plan indicators and the plan of measures for them, the plans are constantly monitored and controlled by the Monitoring System of College Performance Indicators (MSCPI). The system is described in more detail in point 4 of the "Quality Assurance Area".</p> <p>Next steps: Constantly monitor the indicators and assess their relevance, and if necessary, take appropriate actions and changes.</p> | |
| 3. The College's Strategic Action Plan should be complemented by strategic resource planning. | Chief Accountant, Director, Deputy Director for Research & Development | <p>Actions taken: The newly adopted version of the PC Action Strategy and Strategic Action Plan 2021-2026 complements the Strategic Plan with a Financial Resources Plan 2021-2026. https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1igJ5GoNQa81qj2xaOHF9-7377mZ08shi</p> <p>Next steps: Monitor the adequacy of financial resources to meet the strategic objectives and react as necessary.</p> | The provision of financial resources to achieve the strategic objectives has made it possible to implement the set activities in a targeted manner. |
| 4. The College should set out its management structure and clearly | Director, College Council | <p>Actions taken: Adjusted management structure of the PC approved by the College Council (Resolution 2023-01-25 No KT-1) https://panko.lt/en/about-us/management-structure-of-panevezio-kolegija-state-higher-education-institution/.</p> | The new version of the PC management structure clarifies the structural units and delineates their lines of responsibility. A clear governance |

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| define all reporting lines. | | <p>Next steps: No changes to the governance structure are currently planned, but each year the situation will be assessed (SWOT analysis, annual activity reports, College Council recommendations) and reacted to as appropriate. From 2025 onwards, changes in the organisation of work will be consistently implemented in order to ensure that the share of academic and study support staff in the total number of posts is 75% in 2026 (Indicator R.2.1.4.3).</p> | structure helps to focus the implementation of the organisation's strategy. |
| 5. The College should define clearly and transparently how new academic staff are appointed, including who takes the final decision to appoint a person. | Head of Human Resources & Document Management Department - Director Assistant | <p>Actions taken: In accordance with the recommendations made by the experts during the accreditation process and the findings of the internal audit on HRM conducted in November 2023, as well as the changes in the Law on Higher Education and Research of the Republic of Lithuania as of 1 January 2024-01-01, editorial actions have been made in the PA11 HRM Procedure Description. The current version of the procedure clearly specifies the procedure for recruitment and appointment of academic staff. In line with the changes made, the internal legal acts laying down the requirements for academic staff and the documents covering their working conditions (job description, procedures for conducting attestations at the level of the faculty and the attestation commission, procedures for organising and conducting competitions) were updated. From 1.9.2024, in the case of public competitions, the Admissions Committee will decide on the eligibility of a person for a lecturer's post. The Commission's decisions shall be followed by the recruitment of lecturers by means of an order and an employment contract to be signed by the Director of the College. Lecturers recruited without a public competition (for the current academic year) are recruited on the basis of proposals from the Deans of the Faculties. The final decision on the conclusion of the contract of employment shall be taken by the Director of the College. By 15 September of the current academic year. the Director of the College approves the lists of faculty teaching posts.</p> <p>The internal rules of procedure of Panevėžys College have been further updated, with a detailed description of the conclusion, performance and termination of the employment contract in the first section (Order No V1-77 of 10 May 2024).</p> <p>Next steps: Establishment and approval of the Certification Board and the Staff Admissions Board for a 5-year term of office.</p> | Increased clarification and transparency of the recruitment process for academic staff and updated recruitment documents. |

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| <p>6. The College may wish to strengthen its efforts at integration and perhaps recruit more full-time teaching staff so that a higher proportion have their primary allegiance to the College and its norms.</p> | <p>Director, Deans, Head of Human Resources & Document Management Department - Director Assistant</p> | <p>Actions taken: In accordance with the Government of the Republic of Lithuania Resolution No.46 of 18 January 2023 on the Action Plan for Strengthening the Network of State Colleges for 2023-2024, and in order to improve the composition of the College's academic staff, the College's Strategic Action Plan indicators R-2.1.5.1 (Share of lecturers with a degree and working at least 0.5 FTE) and R-2.1.5.2 (Share of full-time lecturers) were adjusted and made more ambitious.</p> <p>The College aims to reach 50% of full-time lecturers and 25% of lecturers with a degree and at least 0.5 FTE by 2027. To achieve the indicators, 20 teaching positions have been openly advertised for 20 in 2023, of which 7 are 1 FTE; 11 are 0.5 FTE; and 14 are Associate Professors. In 2024, a public call for applications was launched for 15 teaching posts, of which 11 at 1 FTE and 4 at 0.5 FTE. For the period 2024-2025, 5 lecturers (4 posts) and 3 assistants (2.5 posts) have been recruited.</p> <p>The academic staff has been expanded with qualified lecturers at a minimum of 0.5 FTE.</p> <p>In line with the strategic objective of increasing internationalisation and the recommendations of the experts (paragraph 42), the aim is also to attract visiting professors from abroad. Each year, applications are submitted to the Educational Exchange Support Fund to support visits by foreign professors.</p> <p>Next steps:</p> <p>Workload planning for existing lecturers and public tendering for lecturers as from 1 September 2025, ensuring an increase in the number of lecturers at 1 FTE and an increase in the number of lecturers with a degree at 0.5 FTE or more (in percentage terms). Recruitment of researchers for R&D projects.</p> | <p>Consistently improving the quantitative and qualitative composition of the academic staff to achieve strategic goals and to engage with the culture and values of the College:</p> <p>In 2024-2025, the percentage of lecturers with 1 FTE was 35.9% and the percentage of lecturers with a degree with at least 0.5 FTE was 23.9%.</p> <p>The strategic indicators are on track and the conditions are in place to achieve the right percentage of lecturers with a full-time job and a degree in 2026.</p> <p>To improve the quality and internationalisation of the College's staff, applications have been submitted to the Educational Exchange Support Fund and successful applications have been received for the following visits by foreign teachers:</p> <p>Professor Laszlo T. Koczy (Logistics) from Széchenyi István and Professor Laszlo T. Koczy from Budapest University of Technology and Economics in 2022.</p> <p>In 2023, funding was received for a visit by Dr Ivan Acosta Pazmiño HÖGSKOLAN GÄVLE (Renewable Energy), scheduled for October 2024.</p> |
| <p>7. In addressing its target of internationalization</p> | <p>Head of International Relations, Marketing</p> | <p>Actions taken: The College's website is regularly updated as needed, and in order to achieve internationalisation, particular attention is paid to ensuring that all key</p> | <p>Improved accessibility and visibility of the College's public information to</p> |

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| <p>of the College should make the information that it provides available not only in Lithuanian but also in English, internally as well as externally.</p> | <p>& Projects Department , Heads of structural departments</p> | <p>information and documents on studies, programmes and other activities are available in English as well as Lithuanian for both students and partners. Social networks have a large amount of information in Lithuanian, but they also have a tool that automatically translates the information into a foreign language, so that foreigners interested in the College's activities can find all the information they are interested in on social networks. The LinkedIn platform provides information in English.</p> <p>Next steps:</p> <p>Continuous monitoring, updating and addition of information in Lithuanian and English languages.</p> | <p>international audiences, more information in English:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The information on the College website in English and Lithuanian is regularly and systematically updated. ▪ Information published on Facebook and Instagram social networks is constantly updated and available in foreign languages. ▪ Improved communication with foreign partners. ▪ Increased number of foreign followers on the College's social networks. ▪ Increasing number of international students (15 students in 2022; 97 students in 2023; 178 students in 2024.) |
| AREA OF QUALITY ASSURANCE | | | |
| <p>1. The College should reflect on the adequacy and applicability of its present ISO 9001 quality management system. Even though the College has taken measures to simplify the system by making incremental changes, it is still very large and complicated for a relatively small institution.</p> | <p>Director, Management Representative for Quality</p> | <p>Actions taken: The College continuously strives to rationalise the quality management system by optimising key processes and streamlining the activities that make up the system, in order to maximise the relevance of the system to day-to-day operations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The College's Quality Management System (QMS) has been developed based on the Quality Assurance Regulations and Guidelines of the European Higher Education Area ESG, international quality management standards, and various experiences of higher education institutions, where best practices are adapted to our own activities and specificities. - The ESG Guidelines are the main and most important document for the design and development of the QMS system and are the College's guiding principles for quality assurance and quality development in its activities. This is reflected in the College's main quality assurance document, the Internal Quality Assurance System for Studies (IQASS) Manual. - Another supporting instrument is the internationally recognised ISO 9001 Quality Assurance Standard and the corresponding ISO 21001 standard for | <p>The implementation of all the recommendations for improving the quality system recommended by the experts has created the right balance between managing quality processes and the expected quality impact, without being overburdened by redundant activities and fostering a culture of quality in the organisation. The improved QMS facilitates improved operational efficiency, effective human resource and risk management and the development of management competences.</p> <p>The use of the Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA) cycle in all activities ensures</p> |

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| | | <p>educational institutions, which provide guidelines for successful quality management within an organisation. The College's adherence to these standards has led to a better understanding and mapping of the processes and the development of QMS linked to strategic indicators and their achievement. The modern ISO standard is very flexible and does not impose additional activities and requirements but allows the creation of an optimal QMS and creative adaptation to its own needs and specificities, with its own QM objectives, structure and quality culture, and the necessary community involvement.</p> <p>- We work with stakeholders both internally and externally. Having a standard is particularly helpful when dealing with external social partners, as most businesses and public bodies have quality standards in place or follow them in their operations, making it easier for them to understand our needs, processes and quality management.</p> <p>– In line with the recommendations of the College's external evaluation experts to simplify the quality management system and in line with the ESG guidelines, the system has been progressively updated by combining the quality management and internal quality assurance of the studies descriptions (version 5 was approved in 2022 and final version 6 in 2024). This newly approved IQASS Manual https://panko.lt/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/Manual-on-the-Internal-Quality-Assurance-System-for-Studies-6-version-2024.pdf has substantially updated the process framework and provides clear and specific descriptions of the processes, i.e. the processes, their constituent activities, descriptions of activities, responsibilities and the documents governing them. The refined process framework reveals how the management, maintenance and improvement processes ensure the quality implementation of the core processes (studies, R&D and non-formal education), and how all processes are subject to the PDCA (Plan, Do, Check, Act) cycle. Both the IQASS Manual and the regularly updated process descriptions clearly identify the stages of the PDCA cycle that guide the quality assurance, improvement and enhancement of each process and its constituent activities. For the College's social partners and the international academic community to see how the College follows the stages of the PDCA cycle, information in English and Lithuanian is available on the College Quality webpage under the section "Continuous Improvement". https://panko.lt/en/about-us/quality-assurance/.</p> <p>– Participation in seminars and training sessions is used to ensure quality management of the College's processes and to achieve continuous improvement.</p> | <p>continuous improvement and enhancement of the system.</p> |

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| | | <p>During 2022-2024, the following seminars on process quality improvement and quality system management organised by LAQM (Lithuanian Association for Quality Management and Innovation) were attended:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ "Efficient Processes" (basics of process management, implementation of process management), ▪ "Process Management and Efficiency" (process management and efficiency practices, process standardisation and examples), ▪ "Designing a Quality Management System from A to Z" (quality management and assurance, designing a quality management system to the highest standards; linking people and activities; the role of indicators in quality management), ▪ "Process quality assessment: process audit" (process audit design, methods and tools, identification of the place of the process in the organisation's process system and objectives - integrity analysis, evidence gathering and evaluation, assessment of opportunities for improvement of the processes analysed, argumentation of findings), ▪ "Process Maturity Assessment" (process management maturity, process maturity assessment, added value of process maturity assessment results), ▪ "Practical Quality System Management (benefits of an effective quality management system, best practices, maintenance/improvement of the quality management system), etc., ▪ Internal audit of the quality management system (objectives of internal audit; standards, in particular with regard to ISO 9001 and ISO22000 requirements; implementation of effective audit in the organisation). <p>– - Panevėžys College, in order to keep abreast of the latest quality assurance trends and requirements as well as examples of good practice, regularly participates in events organised by SKVC, has been a member of the Lithuanian Association for Quality Management and Innovation (LAQM) since 2014.</p> <p>Next steps:</p> <p>The development of the Quality Management System (QMS) is a continuous process aimed at ensuring that the system is effective, relevant and meets the ever-changing needs and requirements of higher education. The following activities will continue to be carried out in order to continuously improve the relevance and adaptability of the QMS:</p> <p>1. Continuous performance monitoring and process optimisation</p> | |

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| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Performance assessment: We will continuously assess key performance indicators (KPIs) to determine whether the current QMS is meeting its objectives. – Process analysis: Continuous analysis and monitoring of processes to identify bottlenecks and opportunities for process optimisation and improvement. – External and internal audit procedures: We will conduct periodic audits to identify non-conformities and to ensure the system's continued compliance with international standards, ESG guidelines and other international and national regulatory documents. <p>2. Staff development and awareness raising</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Training and development: We will regularly update staff on the latest trends and practices in quality assurance. – Promoting involvement: We will seek to involve as many staff as possible in the quality management process to ensure a clear understanding of their role in quality improvement. <p>3. Feedback mechanisms</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Feedback from students and social partners: We will collect feedback and continuously analyse it to understand how to better meet their expectations. – Internal feedback: We will give staff the opportunity to provide suggestions and feedback on the QMS in order to identify problems or opportunities for improvement. | |
| <p>2. The College should evaluate critically the need for its Quality Management System to consist of two separate parts, both very detailed, rather than one comprehensive whole that would simplify the functionality of the system for staff and</p> | <p>Management Representative for Quality</p> | <p>Actions taken: To simplify and make the system more functional, the quality management system and its main description, the IQASS manual https://panko.lt/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/Manual-on-the-Internal-Quality-Assurance-System-for-Studies_6-version-2024.pdf , have been revised and updated, combining the two previous parts describing the system. The functionality of the IQASS is based on more detailed quality assurance and improvement, distribution of responsibilities for quality assurance and improvement, involvement of stakeholders in the management and improvement of the quality of studies, principles and processes for curriculum development, implementation of a student-centred teaching and learning process, assurance of the competence of teachers etc.</p> <p>For the clarity of the external and internal College community, all the processes and/or activities described in the IQASS Manual have indicators measuring their</p> | <p>To enhance the functionality of the QMS, the internal document governing quality assurance and improvement at the College, the IQASS Manual, has been substantially updated and optimised in line with the experts' recommendations (by merging and revising the existing two parts), and is based on the Quality Assurance Regulations and Guidelines of the European Higher Education Area (ESG). A clearer and more functional quality management system makes it easier for</p> |

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| external stakeholders. | | <p>effectiveness and efficiency, which are included in the College's Strategic Plan. The system has also been supplemented with qualitative indicators in line with expert recommendations.</p> <p>Accordingly, by combining the two parts of the quality management system into a single manual (IQASS), the procedures related to these changes have been updated in the period of 2022-2024:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Document and records management PA 01 ▪ Strategic Management PA 03 ▪ Risk Management PA 07 ▪ Academic Project Management PA 14 ▪ Communications Management PA 15 ▪ International Relations Management PA 18 ▪ Organisation and administration of non-formal education PA 22 ▪ Research and experimental development management PA 23 <p>Next steps:</p> <p>Simplifying the Quality Management System (QMS) helps to improve efficiency, reduce the administrative burden and ensure that the system is more adaptable to the needs of the organisation and understandable for all stakeholders:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Regular reviews/audits of QMS processes will be carried out and monitored to ensure that there is no unnecessary duplication of effort/processes. - The aim will be to ensure that the quality management system and the ESG and other national quality requirements for higher education work coherently within a single integrated framework, as reflected in the new IQASS Manual. - We will continue to digitise processes and document management wherever possible. | the College community to engage in quality assurance and improve the performance of the College. |
| 3. The College should benchmark its quality assurance and quality system with another Lithuanian College, even better, a | Management Representative for Quality | Actions taken: To compare the quality management system, we were interested in the experience of international and Lithuanian higher education institutions and for this purpose we visited higher education institutions and got acquainted with their quality assurance system: Decroly S.L, Santander, Spain (23-27/06/2022/); Instituto Politécnico de Santarém, Portugal (27-30/06/2022/), a good practice visit to the Lithuanian Military Academy, during which the experience of the developed, implemented and ongoing quality assurance system improvement | Drawing on the experience and good practice of other HEIs, the quality system and its manual have been improved, processes have been updated, redundant documents or activities have been eliminated, and the survey system |

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| comparable foreign institution of higher education. | | <p>activities was shared (27/04/2022), and in 2023, visits were made to the University of Daugavpils and the University of Szechenyi István (Hungary). A meeting was held to discuss quality assurance in higher education with Professor L.T. Koczy, who is a member of higher education accreditation committees in Hungary and also participates as an expert in the Lithuanian SKVC.</p> <p>The following events on quality assurance in higher education for 2022-2024 were also attended to learn about the latest trends and practices in quality assurance in higher education:</p> <p>2022-12-01 SKVC meeting with representatives of higher education institutions to discuss the follow-up phase of the external evaluation of the performance of higher education institutions and the preparation of Panevėžys College for the implementation of quality improvement measures;</p> <p>2022-11-09 Šiauliai College organised a Quality Forum, where representatives of higher education institutions discussed quality systems, sharing of good practices in ensuring quality of studies and other activities.</p> <p>2022-12-16 EURASHE remote seminar "EURASHE talks on quality assurance (ongoing and finished projects in QA and ENQA study on Micro-credentials)". Topics presented included: Equipping institutional leaders to maximise the benefits of quality assurance; Quality assurance fit for the future; Key findings of the ENQA Micro-credentials Working Group.</p> <p>2023-09-18 "Quality Assurance for the Future" (ENQA, EUA, EURASHE 2023). The European University Association (EUA) and the European Association of Higher Education Institutions (EURASHE) presented the results of a study to find out how the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) quality assurance provisions and ESG guidelines have been adapted at country and institutional level and are helping to address pressing issues.</p> <p>2023-10-03 SKVC Forum "Effective Feedback in Higher Education Institutions"</p> <p>2023-11-09 LAQM Conference "Performance Quality under Uncertainty"</p> <p>2023-11-20 LAQM discussion on "Quality of Performance in Higher Education Institutions - Evaluation Marathons and Everyday Activities".</p> <p>2024-04-11 at the SKVC International Seminar "Internal Quality Assurance in Higher Education Institutions", where good practices in quality assurance were presented at the University of Antwerp (The Netherlands) and the FH Munster University of Applied Sciences.</p> | and feedback management have been improved. |

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| | | <p>2024-06-20 International Forum "Enhancing the Quality and Coherence of Post-Compulsory Education and Training in Lithuania", organised by the OECD and the SKVC, to discuss the challenges in quality assurance, assessment and accreditation of higher education institutions.</p> <p>Next steps: Continue to participate in the following national and international organisations related to quality in higher education, in order to strengthen competences in quality assurance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Central and Eastern European Management Development Association (CEEMAN), - European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA), - European Association of Higher Education Institutions (EURASHE), - European University Association (EUA), - Lithuanian Association for Quality Management (LAQM). <p>Currently registered to participate in the International Symposium on University Rankings and Quality Assurance 2024 on 17 October organized by The European University Association. Registration has also been confirmed for the EUA meeting on Quality in Higher Education on 30 September. A report of the meeting and decisions will be sent after the event.</p> <p>The Erasmus+ programme will also be used to further visit foreign universities and learn about quality assurance management.</p> | |
| <p>4. The College should streamline its quality management system in order to avoid overburdening the organisation. It should carefully assess and improve the efficiency of its quality management system, evaluating the resources allocated in relation to the results achieved from the quality management</p> | <p>Management Representative for Quality</p> | <p>Actions taken: To maintain an optimal balance between the inputs and outputs of the quality system, systematic monitoring of the adequacy and effectiveness/efficiency of the QMS and its ability to meet the requirements set out in the QMS is carried out:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The effectiveness of the quality management system is presented to the Directorates once a year during the Management Review. Here, the management representative for quality reports on the operation and effectiveness of the QMS and presents the improvements that have been made or are being made. The management Review includes a comprehensive examination of the performance of the QMS to determine its effectiveness, compliance with requirements and to identify potential improvement actions (Protocol No. D2-4, 2022; No. D2-3, 2023; No. D2-4, 2024). The Management of the College, following the presentation of the Management Review, having assessed how the College has achieved the planned quality objectives, the implementation of the planned QMS improvement actions, and the effective and efficient management of the QMS | <p>Continuous evaluation of the results of the quality management system processes and their compliance with the quality policy helps to identify areas for improvement and to provide the necessary measures for quality improvement and enhancement.</p> <p>In this way, an optimal balance between the system's inputs and outputs is maintained, and the quality system operates efficiently and provides prerequisites for organizational improvement and the achievement of set strategic goals.</p> |

List of acronyms used in the document:

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| <p>system. An optimal balance between input and output of the system should be accomplished.</p> | | <p>processes, risks and opportunities, concludes that the College's QMS is adequate, appropriate and effective.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It should also be noted that the detailed functioning of the QMS, i.e. quality assurance at the College, and various other aspects of the system are presented annually in the Annual Activity Report of Panevėžys College (Part 2: Quality Assurance) https://panko.lt/apie-kolegija/dokumentai/veiklos-ataskaitos/ , which is reviewed and approved by the College Council, and - The Academic Council annually considers and approves the results of the Quality Assurance System for Studies (Protocol No. V4-4 for 2022; V4-4 for 2023; V4-4 for 2024). - Continuous improvement and customisation of the QMS, optimising the use of resources and time, without burdening it with additional activities, is also carried out in accordance with the recommendations of the internal auditors, following a process evaluation carried out during the audit. Following the findings and recommendations of the internal audits, 14 procedures are currently being updated in 2022-2024, the IQASS Manual. <p>To monitor the effectiveness of the College's performance, the College has established and operates the Monitoring System of College Performance Indicators (MSCPI), which continuously enters, monitors and analyses the College's performance indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Qualification Development System <p>It shows the participation of staff and faculty members in seminars, trainings, conferences and other events on a yearly basis. It also shows the duration of the event and the funds allocated.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Results of activities <p>This reflects conference presentations by faculty and students, articles published by faculty and students, dissertations commissioned by students, events organised, Erasmus+ mobility of students and faculty.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Monitoring of study fields <p>The program indicators of each field of study are separated and monitored according to program indicators 1 and 3 in the Strategic Plan (R-1.1.1.1, R-</p> | |

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| | | <p>1.1.1.2, R-1.1.1.4, R-1.1.2.1, R-1.1.2.3, R- 1.2.1.1, R-1.2.2.1, R-1.2.1.2, R-1.2.2.2, R-1.2.2.3, R-1.2.2.4, R-1.3.1.1, R-1.3.1.2, R-1.3. 1.3, R-1.3.1.4, R-3.3.1.1), the number of students and graduates.</p> <p>- Monitoring the indicators of the College's Strategic Plan 2021-2026</p> <p>Indicators of the Strategic Plan are summarised and analysed, the methodology for their calculation is visible, and the person responsible is identified.</p> <p>- Plans for the implementation of the goals and objectives of the College's Strategy 2021-2026</p> <p>This is a new activity, only launched in 2024. It contains a plan for the implementation of the 2024 strategic goals and objectives, with specific actions, deadlines and implementers.</p> <p>-Environmental Monitoring System</p> <p>The College is committed to contributing to global initiatives in the field of sustainability and has implemented the Environmental Standard ISO 14001:2015. This section contains the following information: a list of the College's environmental aspects and their significance, a methodology for assessing their significance, emergency management, and a register of legislation related to environmental protection.</p> <p>Panevėžys College, in order to continuously improve its operations and to clarify and simplify processes, is optimising its descriptions and documents, for example, in 2023-2024:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Elimination of the descriptions of the Quality Management System and the Internal Study Quality System and creation of a single functional and simpler description of the IQASS; - the duplication of activities in the "Procedure for the Assessment of Study Achievements" is abolished and replaced by the "Description of the Procedure for the Assessment of the PK Study Achievements" and the "Procedure for the Planning and Organisation of Studies", - the names and descriptions of the processes and their corresponding procedures have been revised on the basis of an updated and simplified process diagram. | |

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| | | <p>A number of documents regulating studies (descriptions of procedures, regulations, plans) have been updated in order to respond to changes and new requirements in higher education and to improve the quality of studies. Annual updates and the effectiveness of the QMS are reflected in the College's annual activity reports.</p> <p>The functioning of the College's quality management system for maintaining and improving the quality of its activities is the responsibility of one staff member, the Management Representative for Quality (MRQ), and the Deputy Director for Studies, together with the MRQ, is responsible for ensuring the quality of studies. The College continues to follow the basic quality assurance principle that every employee is responsible for the quality of his/her work. This is reflected in the job descriptions of departments and staff and in the continuous maintenance of a quality culture. This is the optimum option and does not require excessive costs to maintain the system.</p> <p>It is also important to note that the College's quality management system in place replicates the basic principles of quality assurance found in all higher education institutions that follow the ESG provisions and guidelines and has not burdened its system with additional procedures or documents that would not be available in other higher education institutions. The College applies all good practices to its own needs in order to achieve its strategic objectives and meet the needs of its stakeholders.</p> <p>Next steps:</p> <p>Simplifying the Quality Management System (QMS) helps to improve efficiency, reduce the administrative burden and ensure that the system is more adaptable to the needs of the organisation and understandable for all stakeholders:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Regular reviews/audits of QMS processes will be carried out and monitored to ensure that there is no unnecessary duplication of effort/processes. - The aim will be to ensure that the quality management system and the ESG and other national quality requirements for higher education work coherently within a single integrated framework, as reflected in the new IQASS Manual. - We will continue to digitise processes and document management wherever possible. | |

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| | | <p>- We will strive to make the QMS flexible, so that you can react quickly to changes and adapt to new needs and conditions.</p> <p>- We will strive to ensure that all processes are described in a clear and simple way and that staff have a clear understanding of their responsibilities. This will speed up decision-making.</p> <p>These actions can make QMS simpler, more efficient and less costly, while maintaining quality standards and delivering the intended results.</p> | |
| <p>5. The College has identified and named 25 different processes in management, studies and research, support and improvement activities. However, the College has not actually defined the content of these processes and could not provide adequate descriptions when requested by the Panel. The College should identify, define and describe its relevant and most important processes in the quality system.</p> | <p>Management Representative for Quality</p> | <p>Actions taken: The College's key processes have been optimised and the activities that make them up have been refined. Instead of the former 25 processes, 10 have been identified. All processes and their constituent activities are described in general terms in the new IQASS Manual and its annexes (Annex 3 - detailed process flowchart; Annex 4 - description of the processes and their constituent activities, the persons responsible and the documents governing them) https://panko.lt/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/Manual-on-the-Internal-Quality-Assurance-System-for-Studies_6-version-2024.pdf .</p> <p>Most of the management, maintenance and improvement processes are described in procedures using the PDCA (Plan, Do, Check, Act) cycle, while the main study-related processes are managed in accordance with the legislation adopted by the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport and the College (methodologies, descriptions of procedures, regulations, etc).</p> <p>To achieve an optimal balance of processes, the QMS is continuously improved through the management of non-conformities, potential problem areas and opportunities for improvement identified during the year of internal audits, in accordance with the PA 17 Quality and Environmental Management Internal Audit Procedures and PA 19 Performance Improvement Procedures. For all non-conformities, problem areas and improvement opportunities, implementation actions, responsible persons and a timeframe for implementation are identified. The Management Representative for Quality shall oversee the implementation of improvement actions.</p> <p>Next steps:</p> <p>Continuous review of processes and seek opportunities for improvement through external expertise, audits, internal feedback.</p> | <p>The College's processes have been streamlined and structured, a new process flowchart and process description have been approved, and there is a clear assurance of the PDCA cycle in existing processes. PDCA cycle is shown on College webpage in the subsection "Continuous improvement" of section "Quality" https://panko.lt/en/about-us/quality-assurance/</p> |

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| <p>6. The College should concentrate on a realistic and balanced set of quantitative and qualitative performance indicators in its quality management system to follow. The current number of quantitative indicators is unnecessarily large, but on the other hand no qualitative indicators are defined, even if the College has set qualitative targets in its strategic programmes. If the College endeavours to achieve its own goals such as ensuring innovative study process, the achievement cannot be measured solely with quantitative indicators, as qualitative assessment is obviously needed also.</p> | <p>Director, Strategic planning committee, Management Representative for Quality</p> | <p>Actions taken: The new version of the PC Action Strategy and Strategic Action Plan for 2021-2026 has streamlined performance indicators and added qualitative indicators to the substantially updated and newly approved Internal Quality Assurance System for Studies Manual. It now reflects qualitative and quantitative indicators measuring performance and effectiveness, which are linked to the Strategic Plan.</p> <p>A more detailed description of the optimisation of quantitative and qualitative indicators is given in point 2 of the "Governance Area".</p> <p>Next steps: Continuous monitoring and assessment of the relevance of the indicators and, if necessary, appropriate actions and changes.</p> | <p>A new version of the PC Action Strategy and Strategic Action Plan for 2021-2026, as well as the IQASS manual with optimised quantitative and qualitative indicators, were approved.</p> <p>The values of the indicators are measurable and quantifiable, clear directions and ways to achieve the objectives ensure the implementation of the strategic management process and allow quantitative and qualitative measurement of progress.</p> |

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| <p>7. The College should publish its quality assurance information in English and place the relevant internal quality documentation, now only available on its intranet, on the public website. Publishing most of the documents only in Lithuanian makes them much less accessible for external stakeholders and the international academic community.</p> | <p>Management Representative for Quality</p> | <p>Actions taken: The College's webpage on Quality has been revised and the information about quality assurance at the College has been substantially updated in both Lithuanian and English. It is easily accessible and understandable to the internal and external community and international partners https://panko.lt/en/about-us/quality-assurance/.</p> <p>The main QMS documents (e.g. the IQASS Manual, the Quality Policy and other key quality assurance documents) are available to stakeholders on the QA website in the Quality section of the PC website and in the Quality Assurance Documents sub-section.</p> <p>In addition, the College's staff use the Document Management System (DVS) and the Intranet, which contains the current versions of the QMS documents and other relevant information (process descriptions, internal audit documents, the performance improvement register, plans, director's orders, procedures, minutes, etc.).</p> <p>The College's website is continuously updated and, in order to achieve internationalisation, particular attention is paid to ensuring that all key information and documents about the College, its studies, programmes and other activities are available to both students and partners in both Lithuanian and English.</p> <p>The following actions are planned: Continuous monitoring, updating and addition of information in Lithuanian and English languages.</p> | <p>Improved accessibility of information to both internal and external audiences. The website on Quality has been substantially updated in English and Lithuanian and key documents have been uploaded.</p> |
| <p>8. The College management should pay attention to creating an open atmosphere and culture where change, innovation and initiative are encouraged. Continuous improvement should include also a willingness to</p> | <p>Management Representative for Quality</p> | <p>Actions taken: The continuous and consistent involvement of the academic community in the promotion of quality at the College is ensured by the Quality Culture, which is based on meeting the needs of external and internal stakeholders, continuous improvement and overall participation. Overall participation is not possible without ensuring communication, which the experts observed during the visit to be sufficiently implemented (<i>57 'During the meetings, it became clear that internal processes among staff are well established, and that communication is good'</i>). However, the College continues to strive to involve as much of the community as possible at various levels in the continuous improvement of the quality of studies and other activities.</p> <p>Some examples:</p> | <p>Improved quality culture and greater community involvement in continuous improvement and change.</p> <p>Improvement suggestions received verbally, through surveys or through the VMA and AKADIS are implemented and made public on the website https://panko.lt/en/about-us/quality-assurance/feedback-to-students/</p> |

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| <p>improve the quality system itself. In all the interviews with management, teachers and staff, all these internal stakeholders uniformly rejected any suggestion that there might be any need to change anything or that there might be any scope for improvement in the existing quality management system.</p> | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - At the level of the Academic Council, in line with the latest trends and requirements of the HEIs and the implementation of the ESG provisions, the Academic Council continuously discusses and approves new or updated descriptions of procedures related to studies and their quality, plans, reports and other relevant documents and their revisions throughout the year. - Students and social partners are involved in quality improvement through surveys leading to the implementation of improvement measures https://panko.lt/en/about-us/quality-assurance/the-outcomes-of-student-surveys/. - For organisational development and quality improvement, the College has created a new opportunity for the whole academic community to express their preferences and comments through the VMA (Virtual Learning Environment) and AKADIS (Academic Information System) throughout the year without waiting for the end of semester surveys. - The surveys are more easily accessible to students, who can also complete them on their phones. Although experts have recommended the use of a phone application for completing the surveys, for reasons of data security and confidentiality, we do not use any external vendor applications. The internal system in place is now tuned to allow easy access to the survey system on the phone via a web browser and ensures that all data entered remains internal to the institution only. - Regular consultations with the Chairs of the Degree Programmes and Deans on quality assurance issues. For example, on 31.01.2024, the Management Representative for Quality conducted a seminar-consultation on quality assurance of studies in the implementation of ESG provisions and guidelines. The meeting was attended by the Chairpersons of the Degree Programme Committee, Deans of Faculties, representatives of the Study Group and the Deputy Director for Studies. It was decided to collect suggestions from the academic community for updating the student survey questionnaires and to implement them. The updated PA 10 Survey Procedure was approved on 27 August 2024. College staff are involved in the improvement of the QMS as internal auditors and process/procedure hosts. -The College has 15 staff members who are trained in internal audits and carry out internal audits in accordance with the annual approved audit programme and make recommendations for process improvements. Procedures and other descriptions | |

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| | | <p>are updated accordingly. The Management Representative for Quality oversees the implementation of all planned corrective actions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lecturers often make suggestions for improvement (written, oral), e.g. an oral suggestion was received and implemented to improve the College's marketing activities, as well as to bring them up to date through R&D or non-formal education. A suggestion was made to start counselling on oral hygiene care for primary school students; another suggestion was to teach students and, individually, teachers about the new school subject "Computer Networks" and its modelling programme, and other suggestions were continuously received. The suggestions received are being implemented. - January 2024: implementation of the proposals of the Faculty of Biomedical Sciences for a short survey of social partners and monitoring of graduates' employability and careers. This is already reflected in the approved 2024 survey plan. - Quality, operational efficiency and community involvement in continuous quality improvement are reflected in the traditional annual Quality Day event of the College: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ awards the best College staff members: "Lecturer of the Year", "Researcher of the Year" "Employee of the Year", discusses topical issues of quality assurance and improvement, and shares best practices. ✓ The QMS improvements made during the year are presented. - 2023-01-24 "Values Workshop" was organised for the whole College community, during which common values were searched for in order to find the most effective solutions for improving the College's activities and overcoming current challenges in a common way, focusing everyone's efforts on promoting change and improvement, building a culture of cooperation and quality. - In order to ensure continuous improvement of the QMS and to identify opportunities for improvement, the management representative for quality makes regular presentations in the Directorates on quality-related issues (discussion of the findings of the institutional evaluation and development of a plan of action to address identified weaknesses and improve performance, implementation of the College's sustainable development, management of the College's risks, contextual change (SWOT)); reports on the QMS improvements made and subsequently implements the recommendations for improvement of the quality system proposed by the members of the Directorate (minutes of 2022 No D2-1, D2-3, D2-6, D2-7; 2023 No D2-2, D2-3, 2024 No D2-3, D2-4). The results of surveys of students | |

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| | | <p>and, where appropriate, of social partners and the implementation of improvement measures are regularly reviewed (Minutes of 2022 No. D2-5, D2-8; 2023 D2-3), the results of the ranking of the College and its fields of study (minutes of 2022 No. D2-6, D2-9; 2023 No. D2-4; 2024 D2-1), the relevance and quality of implementation of R&D activities (minutes of 2022 No. D2-7; 2023 No. D2-1, D2-5, D2-6, 2024 No. D2-1, D2-2), the improvement of the survey system (2023 No. D2-4).</p> <p>- For continuous improvement of the quality management system, the College implements recommendations of external auditors and international experts.</p> <p>The College encourages the involvement of external social stakeholders (the College has 251 cooperation agreements in 2024) in the quality assurance processes, as they provide input and impetus for change. This happens at different levels –</p> <p>1. through general or joint forums to discuss new challenges in higher education and the changes needed in the college, some examples in 2023:</p> <p>- Joint forum with the Panevėžys Chamber of Industry and Crafts PPAR "Perspectives of Panevėžys College, assessing the potential of the region's general education network and the need of individuals for lifelong learning";</p> <p>- meeting with the Minister of Education, Science and Sport of the Republic of Lithuania Jurgita Šiugždinienė to share the vision and perspectives of Panevėžys College in the context of the region, assessing the plan for strengthening the network of state colleges approved by the Ministry of Education, Science and Sports;</p> <p>- representatives of the College, together with the President of PPAR, visited Turība University, where they met with the founder of Turība University, the President of the Latvian Chamber of Commerce and Industry Aigars Rostovskis, the Rector of the University - Zane Driņķe, and the Chairman of the Board of the Turība University - Imants Bergs, and discussed cooperation in the development of studies and internationalisation, as well as the transfer of good practices;</p> <p>- Panevėžys College hosted a meeting of the Panevėžys Regional Development Council College, attended by Justas Nugaras, Deputy Minister of the Ministry of</p> | |

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| | | <p>Education, Science and Sports. The issue of preserving the autonomy of Panevėžys College was discussed;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Panevėžys College was visited by members of the Education Committee of the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania. The members of the Committee got acquainted with the College's educational base, the Centre for Applied Research and Innovation, and interacted with the higher education community and social partners; - participated in a strategy session organised by the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, which discussed how to meet the needs of the regional labour market in terms of studies and education in the regions of Panevėžys, Šiauliai and Utena; - A cooperation agreement was signed at Panevėžys College between the region's higher education institutions - Panevėžys College, Kaunas University of Technology and the region's vocational training centres - taking into account the importance of education and science for society, the importance of training specialists for the Panevėžys region, the potential for cooperation between vocational training, science and study institutions, the integration of science, the importance of science and study and the most effective dissemination of results, and the potential of closer partnership/cooperation between the parties to this agreement in terms of study and practice; <p>2. through the activities foreseen in the cooperation agreements and in the context of participation in the programme committees of the fields of study, in thesis defence committees, in supervising students' internships, in surveys, etc. in joint activities.</p> <p>This is the quality culture of cooperation between the College and the social partners and is understood as a spontaneous process that takes place continuously and influences change at the College. Since this system is in place, our staff and social partners reacted to the Panel's question in this way, that there is no need to change anything for the moment, because changes, bigger or smaller, are happening all the time in our College, as needs arise and as suggestions are received. This implies that the College maintains a Quality Culture.</p> <p>Next steps:</p> | |

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| | | <p>To maintain an open atmosphere in the organization, a culture where employees feel free to share ideas, motivated and supported will continue to be fostered through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Leadership, fostering openness and transparency. Managers share information about decisions, changes, and organizational direction, making employees feel more involved and willing to contribute to change. - Confidence in employees by developing a culture where employees feel that their voice and initiatives are valued. - Investing in employee development, promoting mentorship and collaboration. - Motivating employees through recognition of their contribution to the activities of the College. | |
| AREA OF STUDIES AND RESEARCH | | | |
| <p>1. The College should ensure that its study programmes not only meet today's business and market needs but also foresee tomorrow's needs in today's changing world. This could include providing students with the skills that would enable them to build careers not only locally and nationally but also internationally</p> | <p>Deputy Director for Studies, Deans, Chairmen of study field(s) program(s) committees</p> | <p>Actions taken: In implementing the College's activity strategy for 2021-2026. priorities, in order to ensure high-quality and competitive studies that meet the needs of not only the national but also the international labour market, it was planned to review and update all study programs conducted at the College. The plan for updating the study programs was approved by the academic council of Panevėžys College in 2022. October 26 by resolution no. V4-12, and in 2024 the plan is already fully implemented.</p> <p>Next steps: In order to ensure that the study programs of the College continue to remain relevant, competitive and meet the needs of the future both at the national and international level, the following is provided for:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Carry out continuous review and improvement of study programs. The college has study program committees that carry out continuous supervision, monitoring and improvement of the quality of study programs. 2. To ensure the high quality of teaching by investing in improving the qualifications of teachers. in 2024 February 1 by order no. V1-26 approved Program for the improvement of the qualifications of teachers and researchers for the years 2024-2026, the purpose of which is to create and develop an effective system for improving the competences of teachers and researchers as a priority means of improving the quality of studies, scientific applied research and experimental development, enabling the achievement of the College's strategic goals. Apply the implemented <i>Qualification Improvement and study course monitoring system</i> for monitoring the qualification improvement of teachers and planning qualification improvement events. | <p>The following study programmes were renewed as part of the implementation of the Plan for Renewal of Study Programmes at Panevėžys College:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Dental Hygiene (state code – 6531GX020) 2. Physiotherapy (state code – 6531GX021) 3. General Practice Nursing (state code – 6531GX022) 4. Beauty Therapy (state code – 6531GX023) 5. Emergency Medical Aid (state code – 6531GX048) 6. Social Work (state code – 6531JX013) 7. Electromechanics (state code – 6533EX005) 8. Electric and Automatic Equipment (state code – 6531EX037) 9. Electronics Engineering and Robotics (state code – 6531EX037) 10. Construction (state code – 6531EX039) |

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| | | 3. Strengthen the feedback system, involving as many employers and alumni as possible in the process of evaluating study programs. 4. Continue to promote international cooperation and academic mobility for both students and teachers by expanding the network of international partners. 5. Regularly monitor and evaluate student achievements, student dropout and employability indicators, applying the implemented <i>Qualification Improvement and Study Field Monitoring System</i> . Adjust study programs according to these indicators and ensure their quality. | 11. Development and Maintenance of Information Systems (state code – 6531BX036) 12. Development of Online Business Systems (state code – 5701BX003) 13. Informatics engineering (state code – 6531BX017) 14. Business management (state code – 6531LX062) 15. Logistics (state code – 6531LX063) 16. International Business (state code – 6531LX096) 17. Accounting (state code – 6531LX064) 18. Law (state code – 6531KX005) 19. Pre-school and Pre-primary Education (state code – 6531MX007) |
| 2. International mobility and employability are enhanced by competence in English, especially in technical fields. Hence to support its mission the College should embed the use of spoken and written professional English into all its programmes. | Deputy Director for Studies, Deans, Chairmen of study field(s) program(s) committees | <p>Actions taken: As part of the implementation of the Plan for the Renewal of Study Programmes at Panevėžys College, all programmes were reviewed by the programme committees of the field(s) of study in 2022-2023. They include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ allocation of at least 6 credits for professional foreign language, updating the content of this subject. ▪ modules/subjects to be taught in English. <p>Students who come for part-time study are integrated into common groups of students, with the module/subject being taught in English, thus enabling students to develop their English language competences.</p> <p>Next steps: To strengthen the international competitiveness of the College, the following actions are planned: To strengthen the College's international competitiveness, it includes: 1. To strengthen students' English language competences in all modules (subjects) of the field of study, providing for compulsory study of professional literature in English.</p> | <p>During 2022-2023, all study programmes were updated to include at least 6 credits of professional foreign language subject alongside updating the content of this subject, plus with various modules/subjects taught in English in study programmes.</p> <p>English language modules are taught in Management, Information Systems Development and Maintenance, Pre-school and Pre-primary Education, Physiotherapy, General Practice Nursing study programmes.</p> <p>From 2023 onwards, all students who choose the International Business study programme will study all modules (subjects) in English.</p> |

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| | | <p>2. Ensure flexible access to scientific and professional literature in English through regular subscription to scientific publications and e-book platforms in English.</p> <p>3. Provide opportunities for lecturers teaching modules/subjects in English to continuously improve their English language competences by organising English language courses at different levels.</p> <p>4. To review and update the lists of modules/subjects taught in English on an annual basis.</p> | |
| <p>3. It could also consider developing a plan to deliver some of its study programmes entirely in English, with appropriate support for staff as well as students.</p> | <p>Deputy Director for Studies , Deans, Chairmen of study field(s) program(s) committees</p> | <p>Actions taken: The Academic Council approved the lists of study programmes to be run in English, with admission of foreigners:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ or the admission of the year 2023 - Academic Council Resolution No V4-10T of 28 December 2022. ▪ or admission for the year 2024 - Academic Council Resolution No V4-1 of 31 January 2024. <p>Next steps:</p> <p>Review and update the list of English-language study programmes each year and submit it to the Academic Council for approval.</p> | <p>Increasing number of international students studying at the College: 15 students in 2022; 97 students in 2023; 178 students in 2024.</p> <p>In 2023, the following study programmes were offered in English to applicants:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. General Nursing (state code - 6531GX022) 2. Construction (state code - 6531EX039) 3. Development and Maintenance of Information Systems (state code - 6531BX036) 4. International Business (state code - 6531LX096) <p>The following study programmes were offered in English to applicants in 2024:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. General Nursing (state code - 6531GX022) 2. Physiotherapy (state code - 6531GX021) 3. Electronics Engineering and Robotics (national code - 6531EX037) 4. Development and Maintenance of Information Systems (state code - 6531BX036) |

List of acronyms used in the document:

IQASS - Internal Quality Assurance System for Studies
 ESG - Quality Assurance Regulations and Guidelines of the European Higher Education Area
 PDCA – Plan-Do-Check-Act (Deming Cycle)

QMS – Quality Management System
 PC – Panevėžys College
 MSCPI – Monitoring System of College Performance Indicators

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| | | | 5. International Business (state code - 6531LX096) 6. Business Management (state code - 6531LX062) |
| 4. The College should develop an explicit internationalization strategy with indicators that measure its success in internationalizing its teaching and research. | Strategic planning committee, Deputy Director for Studies, Deputy director for Research and Development, Head of International Relations, Marketing & Projects Department | <p>Actions taken: The Council of Panevėžys College approved amendments to the Panevėžys College Action Strategy and Strategic Action Plan for 2021-2026 by Resolution No KT-2 of 12 April 2023, adjusting the indicators assessing the progress of internationalisation of studies and research and development, and the Council of Panevėžys College approved amendments to the Strategic Action Plan of Panevėžys College by Resolution No KT-2 of 1 February 2024. On 24 February 2020, the College Council, by Resolution KT-1, set more ambitious indicators for attracting foreign students for full-time studies, attracting internationally renowned scientific publications, preparing international scientific project proposals and implementing projects.</p> <p>A specific action plan with measures, deadlines and implementers has been drawn up for the implementation of the College's Strategic Action Plan.</p> <p>To strengthen the foreign language competences of teachers working in English language study programmes, English language courses were organised: in 2023 - 2 groups (B2 and C1 level, 40 academic hours), in 2024 - 2 groups (B2 level, 40 academic hours).</p> <p>Lecturers working in English language study programmes participated in the project "Digital Transformation of Education (EDTECH)" in 2023 No 10-004-P-0001 and developed digital tools in English for taught modules.</p> <p>4 May 2023 On May 5, 2018, Panevėžys College of Education and Science hosted the 13th edition of the traditionally organised student research conference "Science Roots 2023". For the first time, the event became an international one, with about 100 participants not only from Lithuanian higher education institutions - Lithuanian University of Sport, Lithuanian University of Health Sciences, Kaunas University of Technology, Vytautas Magnus University of Technology, Kaunas University of Technology, Klaipėda University of Science and Technology, Klaipėda State University of Science and Technology, Kolpingo University of Science and Technology, Vilnius University of Science and Technology, Vilnius University of Science and Technology, and Panevėžys University of Science and Technology, as well as from Latvia, Poland, the</p> | <p>A clear internationalisation strategy with ambitious indicators for internationalisation of science and studies has been developed (Resolutions of the Council of Panevėžys College 2023-04-12, No KT-2; 2024-02-01, No KT-1).</p> <p>In 2023, the share of foreign students coming for full studies was 4.58% (i.e. an increase of almost 3% compared to 2022).</p> <p>To attract foreign students, an International Studies Coordinator was recruited in April 2024.</p> <p>6 digital tools for teaching modules in English were developed.</p> <p>The indicators for internationalisation of research activities in the previous Strategic Plan 2021-2026 have been largely met by 100% or more in 2022 and 2023.</p> <p>From 2022 onwards, the number of scientific papers published in peer-reviewed journals with a citation index of JIF CA JCR and/or SNIP in the Scopus database and scientific articles in international journals is increasing at the College:</p> |

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| | | <p>Ukraine, Turkey, Portugal, Spain. More than 80 students' research papers were presented at the conference remotely.</p> <p>The 14th Student Research Conference in 2024 further developed the dimension of internationalisation, with 85 research papers presented.</p> <p>Next steps:</p> <p>Currently, the strategy for internationalisation of studies and research with specific KPIs (E-4, E-5, E-8) and indicators for the third objective of the first programme of the Strategic Plan (R-1.3.1.1., R-1.3. 1.2, R-1.3.1.3, R-1.3.1.4, R-1.3.2.1, R-1.3.2.2, R-1.3.2.3) is integrated into the overall strategic plan of the College's activities, and additionally, a plan of measures has been drawn up for the implementation of the internationalisation and is under implementation. At the end of the year and after evaluation of the indicators achieved, a decision may be taken to take additional measures and efforts to implement the envisaged internationalisation strategy by preparing a separate strategy for the internationalisation of studies and research.</p> | <p>In 2022, there were 70 publications in international peer-reviewed journals, 5 of which have a citation index; in 2023, there were 78 publications and 3 of which have a citation index.</p> <p>Increasing internationalisation of student conferences and their proceedings.</p> |
| AREA OF IMPACT ON REGIONAL AND NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT | | | |
| <p>1. Since the College aims to become the centre of applied sciences in the region and in the SER acknowledges R&D as an area to improve, it should allocate some of its funds to strengthen the basis of R&D.</p> | <p>Deputy Director for Research and Development</p> | <p>Actions taken: PC foresees the establishment of a percentage of its own funding each year to strengthen the R&D base:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In 2022, 56 thousand EUR were used to strengthen the R&D base, of which 15.8 thousand EUR were generated by the College's income (28.21%). - To ensure the smooth running of the research work, the computer network was partially replaced with an upgraded computer network (increased bandwidth), the computer network equipment was upgraded, the cyber security of the computer network was increased, and the computer equipment was updated. The Automation and Biomedical Laboratories have been equipped with the necessary components for their activities. - In 2023, a major focus has been placed on the research equipment for Electromechanical Studies and Mechanics, with the purchase of a CNC machine tool laboratory and the addition of a mechanics laboratory. The Faculty of Biomedicine has also received a robotic manikin to safely study the body's reactions to drugs and their doses. In the construction laboratories, measurement and 3D scanning equipment has been upgraded, and a leakage measurement laboratory is being prepared for certification. | <p>Regular, strategically sound investments in strengthening the base have opened up greater opportunities to become more responsive to the needs of both business and public administrations to strengthen the competences of staff and researchers. This is reflected in the increasing collaboration between stakeholders and the increase in orders for applied research: applied research contracts have increased from 19 in 2022 to 45 in 2023.</p> |

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| | | <p>- In 2023, 429 thousand EUR were used to strengthen the R&D base, of which 152 thousand EUR were generated by the College's income (35.43%).</p> <p>Next steps: In 2024, 598 thousand EUR from the state budget will be allocated for investments in the development of the R&D material base. Up to 100 thousand EUR of own funds are planned.</p> | |
| <p>2. Applied sciences and R&D will be difficult for the College to handle if it relies solely on project revenue. Therefore in addition to the base of funds allocated by the College itself, other sources of funding should be sought, such as EU Structural Funds and local and regional funds.</p> | <p>Deputy Director for Research and Development, Research groups</p> | <p>Actions taken: The strengthening of funding for applied research is developed through project activities with partners, the recruitment of new researchers and the strengthening of existing researchers' competences, and other activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The recruitment of two researchers in the field of technology/engineering has strongly strengthened the College's potential to participate in R&D activities. - A new Researcher Incentive Programme has been approved and PhD studies have been supported. - In the period 2022-2024, the competences of researchers were strengthened, and 53 lecturers were upgraded through training, seminars or courses: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Data protection in research ▪ Current cases of punctuation in research papers ▪ Artificial intelligence in higher education: opportunities and challenges ▪ Research data: data types, data management, data management plans ▪ Key indicators and sources for science evaluation ▪ How to identify R&D services/works ▪ Agile project management and SCRUM ▪ Qualification training for building energy performance certification experts ▪ Training on quantitative research data processing using SPSS ▪ Qualitative research: content and thematic analysis. Case study ▪ Qualitative research in the social sciences ▪ Data processing with SPSS ▪ Training in quantitative research data processing with SPSS ▪ Talking to the future: how AI tools are helping researchers work more creatively. - Social partners are also involved in R&D activities, and there is active cooperation with business and business associations (LINPRA, PPAR, Panevėžys Regional Business Women's Network. Cooperation agreements have been signed with vocational training centres operating in the region and Kaunas University of Technology, VšĮ Panevėžio Igoninė, UAB* Kalnapilis,*AB IGNITIS, AB | <p>The College's commitment to strengthening the competences of its staff and researchers is already bearing fruit, with 4 applications for participation in R&D competitive projects with social partners submitted in 2023-2024:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. UAB Furnibay; 2. UAB Techvitas; 3. MB Protoritmas; 4. UAB Lietkabelis. 5. UAB Optronika <p>As of 1 September 2024, the applications with UAB Techvitas and UAB Lietkabelis have already been successful.</p> |

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| | | <p>Panevėžio energija, UAB JUTRIX, UAB ADAX, UAB TPA, Lithuanian Energy Institute.</p> <p>(*UAB – private limited company, *AB – joint stock company)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To strengthen R&D, the PC has also made structural changes: the TTIC (Applied Research and Innovation Centre) has been established with the aim of conducting applied research, experimental, social and technological development and study, consulting activities, assistance in developing practical skills of the College students and development of scientific applications in engineering, informatics, health, business and education laboratories. The team formed by TTIC has been expanded with a manager and an engineer. - Research groups have been formed https://panko.lt/en/research/research-groups/: <p>T 007 Computer Engineering; T 002 Civil Engineering; T 009 Mechanical Engineering; T 001 Electrical and Electronic Engineering; M 001 Medicine; M 002 Public Health; M 005 Nursing; S 003 Management; S 007 Education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To ensure the intensification and efficiency of applied science, the R&D management process has been revised and the procedure PA 23 has been substantially updated (Director's Order No V1-25 of 1 February 2024). - The strengthening and intensification of R&D and implementation measures are continuously discussed in the Directorates (Protocol No. 2022 D2-3, D2-4, D2-5, D2-6, D2-7, D2-8; 2023 D2-2, D2-5, D2-6; 2024 D2-1, D2-2). - R&D contracts with companies, applications for competitive R&D projects. <p>Next steps:</p> <p>Attracting funding for applied research is an important aspect in order to increase innovation and promote the practical application of research. Funding sources are expected to be attracted:</p> <p>1. In cooperation with business</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Partnerships with companies. Many companies are interested in innovation and research that helps develop new products or services. Through direct partnerships with industry companies, direct funding can be obtained for specific projects. | |

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| | | <p>Since we are a regional college, we inevitably have to respond to the implementation of research and services relevant to regional business.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The applied research and innovation center (TTIC) was established and implemented, cooperates with regional companies and institutions, gathers researchers and raises qualifications for the joint implementation of projects using available equipment suitable for research. <p>2. Using European Union and other international funds</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Horizon Europe. Look for opportunities to participate in an EU program that supports research and innovation in various fields, allocating large sums to joint projects between academic and business partners. - European Union projects. As the state develops the largest EU railway transport infrastructure project in the Baltic region, Rail Baltica, the aim of which is to integrate the Baltic countries into the European railway network, and as a result, a large logistics center near Panevėžys will be established, the need for research becomes urgent - it also provides funding for scientific projects, especially related to technologies development. <p>3. By participating in competitions and receiving scholarships</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Participation in the Research Council of Lithuanian (LMT) and other national and international competitions can help to obtain funding for both fundamental and applied research, including the promotion of business initiatives. We are actively looking for partners to implement projects. - Scholarships and research grants. Can be received from various sources - state support programs or private companies. <p>4. Commercialization and licensing of intellectual property</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Patenting and licensing of intellectual property can be a source of income. Researchers can commercialize their inventions or technologies by licensing them to businesses or creating start-ups. To encourage the process, we have planned additional bonuses for the achieved results. <p>5. Marketing and public information</p> | |

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| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Successful publicity of scientific activities helps to reveal available potential opportunities in order to attract more applied research orders, attract joint projects from interested businesses, investors and even private individuals. - To organize public lectures, conferences and other events that would help to present the results of scientific research and their commercial potential to a wider audience. | |
| <p>3. As the College itself mentions in the SER as an area for improvement, it could publicize more widely information about the research teams and available packages it can offer by way of R&D services.</p> | <p>Head of International Relations, Marketing & Projects Department, Heads of research groups</p> | <p>Actions taken: In accordance with the recommendations of the experts and the new wording of Article 51 of the Law on Higher Education and Research regarding the publication of scientific results, the College's website on research activities has been substantially updated, and information on research groups, their research areas, and the dissemination of scientific works has been placed on https://panko.lt/en/science/.</p> <p>Next steps: Keep up-to-date information on ongoing research activities and results in the public domain. Discuss in ongoing meetings with the social partners, among other relevant issues, the possibility of collaborating with the College in joint research.</p> | <p>Increased dissemination, publicity and visibility of the College's research results.</p> |
| <p>4. The performance of R&D services and non-formal education should be evaluated by separate KPIs so that their individual achievements can be recognized.</p> | <p>Deputy Director for Research and Development</p> | <p>Actions taken: The performance assessment distinguishes between R&D services and non-formal education activities.</p> <p>In line with the College's updated Strategic Action Plan 2021-2026, a separate evaluation of R&D and NFE (non-formal education) outcomes is being carried out from 2022. In 2023, the R&D performance indicators of the Strategic Plan were revised and supplemented. The R&D activities in the Strategic Plan are reflected in the following indicators: E-2; R-1.2.1.1; R-1.2.1.2; and the NFE indicator - R-2.1.3.1. For 2022, the target result for R&D activities was 300 euros per full-time employee, 204 euros was achieved. For 2023, we set a target in the Strategic Plan of 500 euros per teaching post - achieved 505. For 2024, we have set a target of 800 euros per teaching post to activate R&D. Initiating and increasing R&D and NFE activities annual plans are approved (30 November 2022. No V1-147 Director's Order "On the approval of the plan for 2023 on the income from research and experimental development". 8 March 2023 No V1-34 'On the approval of the revenue generated by the NFE plan for 2023').</p> | <p>Regular and systematic achievement of strategic goals and motivation of researchers is felt by seeing the increasing amounts of orders and received income.</p> |

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| | | <p>A plan of measures has been developed for the implementation of the R&D activities foreseen in the Strategic Plan. The targets are monitored in the MSCPI system and discussed quarterly in the Directorates.</p> <p>Next steps:</p> <p>Monitor and implement the planned indicators for science and non-formal education.</p> | |
| <p>5. By helping students to acquire competence in other languages widely understood in the region, as mentioned earlier under 3.3. Studies and research (art), the College could support local industries and business needs focused in the free economic zone, where mostly international companies are being developed and where foreign investors are highly interested.</p> | <p>Deputy Director for Studies, Deans, Chairmen of study field(s) program(s) committees</p> | <p>Actions taken: During the implementation of the plan to update the study programs at Panevėžys College, all study programs were reviewed and updated in the program committees of the study field(s), providing at least 6 credits for a professional foreign language, updating the content of this subject, providing modules (subjects) taught in English in the study programs. Panevėžys College Academic Council 2023 March 17 by resolution no. V4-4 updated the procedure for organizing the studies of freely optional subjects at Panevėžys College. List of optional subjects in 2023-2024 m. was approved by the director of Panevėžys College in 2023 March 29 by order no. V1-40, and in 2024-2025 m. by order no. V1-54 of 2024 April 11, including foreign language subjects that meet the needs of the region.</p> <p>Next steps:</p> <p>Review and update the list of English-language study programmes each year for approval by the Academic Council.</p> | <p>Prerequisites are made for students to study in English as well, thus meeting the needs of modern business and investors.</p> <p>From 2023 in the study programs of Information Systems Development and Maintenance, Business Management, Physiotherapy, and General Practice Nursing, individual modules (subjects) are taught in English, with the lectures of Lithuanian and foreign students combined into one stream.</p> |