



STUDIJŲ KOKYBĖS VERTINIMO CENTRAS

Utenos kolegijos
STUDIJŲ PROGRAMOS ODONTOLOGINĖ PRIEŽIŪRA
(valstybinis kodas - 653A52002)
VERTINIMO IŠVADOS

EVALUATION REPORT
OF ODONTOLOGICAL CARE *(state code - 653A52002)*
STUDY PROGRAMME
at Utena College

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Išvados parengtos anglų kalba
Report language – English

DUOMENYS APIE ĮVERTINTĄ PROGRAMĄ

Studijų programos pavadinimas	Odontologinė priežiūra
Valstybinis kodas	653A52002
Studijų sritis	Biomedicinos mokslų studijų sritis
Studijų kryptis	Burnos priežiūra
Studijų programos rūšis	Koleginės
Studijų pakopa	Pirmoji
Studijų forma (trukmė metais)	Nuolatinė (3 metai)
Studijų programos apimtis kreditais	180 ECTS
Suteikiamas laipsnis ir (ar) profesinė kvalifikacija	Odontologinės priežiūros profesinis bakalauras, gydytojo odontologo padėjėjas
Studijų programos įregistravimo data	2001-08-31, LR ŠMM ministro įsakymas Nr.1254. Naujas valstybinis kodas suteiktas 2010-05-03, LR ŠMM ministro įsakymas Nr.V-634.

INFORMATION ON EVALUATED STUDY PROGRAMME

Title of the study programme	Odontological care
State code	653A52002
Study area	Biomedical sciences
Study field	Oral Care
Type of the study programme	College studies
Study cycle	First
Study mode (length in years)	Full-time (3 years)
Volume of the study programme in credits	180 ECTS
Degree and (or) professional qualifications awarded	Professional Bachelor of Odontological Care, assistant of the doctor odontologist
Date of registration of the study programme	The order No. 1254 of 31st August 2001, of minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania. The new state code is given by the order No. V-634 of 3id May 2010, of minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania.

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The Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education

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I. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the evaluation process

The evaluation of on-going study programmes is based on the **Methodology for evaluation of Higher Education study programmes**, approved by Order No 1-01-162 of 20 December 2010 of the Director of the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education (hereafter – SKVC).

The evaluation is intended to help higher education institutions to constantly improve their study programmes 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 prepared by Higher Education Institution (hereafter – HEI)*; 2) *visit of the review team at the higher education institution*; 3) *production of the evaluation report by the review team and its publication*; 4) *follow-up activities*.

On the basis of external evaluation report of the study programme SKVC takes a decision to accredit study programme either for 6 years or for 3 years. If the programme evaluation is negative such a programme is not accredited.

The programme is **accredited for 6 years** if all evaluation areas are evaluated as “very good” (4 points) or “good” (3 points).

The programme is **accredited for 3 years** if none of the areas was evaluated as “unsatisfactory” (1 point) and at least one evaluation area was evaluated as “satisfactory” (2 points).

The programme **is not accredited** if at least one of evaluation areas was evaluated as "unsatisfactory" (1 point).

1.2. General

The Application documentation submitted by the HEI follows the outline recommended by the SKVC. Along with the self-evaluation report 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

1.3. Background of the HEI/Faculty/Study field/ Additional information

The Utena College is a state institution of higher education in the region of East Aukštaitija (Highlands) that educate specialists in various fields with higher college education who meet the requirements of the labour market of the region, country and the European Union.

The organizational structure of the College consists of two faculties: the Faculty of Business and Technologies and the Faculty of Medicine. There are 178.52 positions in the College, including 90.87 teachers and 15.45 of whom with doctoral degree. There studied 1896 students at the College (by October 1, 2014). The departments of the Faculty of Medicine are organized according to the fields of studies where appropriate study programmes are realized: the Department of Dental Care – Odontological Care, Dental Hygiene and Dental Technologies study programmes; the Department of Health Care and Rehabilitation – General Practice Nursing, Physiotherapy and Beauty Therapy study programmes; the Department of Social Welfare realizes Social Work and Social Pedagogic study programmes. 72 teachers work at this faculty. There are currently 857 students studying at the Faculty (by October 1, 2014).

1.4. The Review Team

The review team was completed according *Description of experts' recruitment*, approved by order No. 1-01-151 of Acting Director of the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education. The Review Visit to HEI was conducted by the team on 21st of May 2015.

- 1. Dr. Ulrike Stephanie Beier, (team leader)** *Head Associate Professor, Innsbruck Medical University, Austria*
- 2. Bo Danielsen,** *Head of Department, School of Oral Health Care, Denmark.*
- 3. Dr. Andres Pascual La Rocca,** *Co-Director Master in Periodontics, Universitat Internacional de Catalunya, Spain.*
- 4. Mrs. Erminija Guzaitienė,** *personal clinic of E. Guzaitienė, doctor-odontologist, Lithuania.*
- 5. Mr. Benas Gabrielis Urbonavičius,** *student of Vilnius University, study programme Physics, Lithuania.*

II. PROGRAMME ANALYSIS

2.1. Programme aims and learning outcomes

The Odontological Care (hereafter – OC) is a first cycle, professional bachelor study programme, which aims to educate highly qualified dental assistants with good practical assisting skills and managerial abilities. Also it is important to ensure care and prevention of oral health and teaching to healthy lifestyle, to promote the prestige of the profession, to reflect the use of new technologies in dentistry. The studies of general college subjects develop critical thinking, communicative and other abilities. Acquired necessary knowledge is transformed into

professional skills and later into abilities and eventually into professional competences of dental assistant.

The programme aims and learning outcomes are compatible to first cycle of studies and the sixth qualification level of studies according to the descriptors defining levels in the European Qualifications Framework (EQF). The aims and intended learning outcomes of the Odontological Care study programme are published on AIKOS database administered by the Ministry of Education and Science of Lithuania and the most important information about the study programme is available on the website of UC and also in publications about the programmes of UC. A lot of information is spread during study fairs, open-door days, visits to schools and other events. The evaluation team can confirm that the learning outcomes themselves are clearly defined, reflect the profile of the programme and are also related to the activities of dental assistants and also are well disseminated.

Since 2009 this study programme was revised 4 times following professional regulations and the recommendations made by the previous evaluation group. After the external evaluation of the programme in 2012, the Study Programme Committee of the Programme was renewed by involving more members from professional associations and employers: the learning outcomes of the programme have been discussed at the meetings of the Committee and department. The programme was benchmarked with international and national standards (*Dental care professions. Benchmark statement: Health care programmes. Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education 2005*; -*World of Mouth. Careers in the Dental Profession. ADA AMERICAN DENTAL ASSOCIATION*; *Description of Oral Care Study Field (project)* and study programmes (*George Brown College (Canada) programme Dental Assisting*; *Kaunas College's programme of Odontological Care*).

The fact that graduates of UC are successfully employed not only in Utena, but also in neighbouring towns and regions shows that demand of OC remains. The demand for dental assistants is also determined by the increasing number of dental clinics. In the period 2009 - 2014 on average 74 per cent of graduates were employed.

As previously mentioned the complexity of the OC learning outcomes is suitable for the type, field and cycle of studies and meets the qualification requirements described by the European (Level 6) and National (Level 6) Qualifications Frameworks. The learning outcomes are based on the levels of skills described by B. Bloom's Taxonomy.

The aim of the programme is consistent with the Lithuanian health policy guidelines. The name of the study programme corresponds to study type, cycle and qualification degree. Learning outcomes are oriented towards practical applicability of theoretical knowledge. The learning outcomes of the programme for evaluation are adjusted to the Description of study

cycles and conform to the specific learning outcomes as defined in the project *Description of Oral Care Study Field*. Still, the study aims and learning outcomes of the programme should be revised still more actively involving all the members of the programme committee, social partners, graduates and students. Also based on the meetings during the on-site visit, the social partners mentioned that they expect more managerial abilities from the graduates. The team of experts agrees with this position and suggests that more attention is to be paid to managerial abilities of the students.

2.2. Curriculum design

The OC study plan is in compliance with the *Description of the General Requirements for Degree Study Programmes, approved by the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania*. OC programme is implemented as the first study cycle degree awarding programme of biomedical sciences studies, oral care trend programme. The graduates receive a professional bachelor degree in Odontological care, also providing a qualification of assistant of the doctor odontologist. The OC study programme consists of 180 ECTS. All 3 study years are equal in volume (60 ECTS credits). The programme consists of general college subjects (15 ECTS credits), study field subjects (135 ECTS) with practice of 36 ECTS credits in scope, for defence of the final thesis (9 ECTS credits) and elective ones. The contact hours in the Odontological Care study programme comprises of total 2200 academic hours (45, 8 per cent): lectures cover 654 academic hours (13.6 per cent); practice covers 970 academic hours (20.2 per cent); consultations cover 576 academic hours (12 per cent). The independent work covers 2154 academic hours (44.9 per cent) including work with the practice supervisor at the institution during professional practice which covers 446 academic hours (9.3 per cent) and independent work during professional activity practices which covers 474 academic hours (9.9 per cent.).

The content of subjects was revised with regard to employers' opinion and renewed learning outcomes of the programme. The matrix of the study programme was adjusted and the list of general competences was shortened with regard to the *Description of Oral Care Study Field (project)*; their development was assigned to specific subjects. According to the previous recommendations made by another evaluation team – the subject *Oral Health* was replaced by the subject *Oral Health and Prevention of Dental Diseases*, and a new subject, *Promotion of Community Health* was introduced. The number of alternatively chosen subjects was reduced; alternatively chosen subjects are given 6 credits (*Philosophy of Medicine/Philosophy of Morale 3 credits, Basics of Public Health Science* and a new field introduced *Health Policy 3 cr.*). Topics of the former alternatively chosen subjects *Personal Health Education, Individual and Professional Dental Hygiene, Prevention of Oral and Dental Diseases, Dental Care of Geriatric*

Patients were included into the main subjects: *Promotion of Community Health, Oral Health and Prevention of Dental Diseases, and Dental Diseases*. Thus the present evaluation team can verify the visible changes in the curriculum design.

The content of the courses is generally appropriate for the achievement of the intended learning outcomes. Changes in the programme content resulted from a comparison of the OC programme with international standards and recommendations provided by experts during the external evaluation 2012. Changes in the programme content are continuously stimulated by active involvement of stakeholders in the improvement of the study programme. Following advice of employers subjects for deeper studies were introduced in the programme: *Assisting during Implantation, Endodontics, Oral Health for Children, Periodontology*. To meet current issues more topics as smoking cessation, common risk factors approach of non-communicable and oral diseases, antimicrobial resistance should be included.

Theoretical training is linked to practical – that gives the background for making the teaching more effective, develop students' independence and form general abilities specific for the profession: communication, ability to make decisions, ethics, responsibility and critical thinking and etc. During practices students are able to apply theoretical knowledge, thus improving necessary skills and abilities. The achievement of the intended learning outcomes is facilitated by different modes of studies (lectures, small groups and individual work) and it depends on the aims and characteristics of the subject. The programme is based on the teamwork principle by applying, modern assisting methods of “four-hand work” and “six-hand work”. By the opinion of the experts' team, the students would benefit from doing some practical training – assisting dental hygiene students. The implementation of some interdisciplinary teaching would be very beneficial for the programme.

Also new trends in dentistry reflect in this study programme. During the visit the evidence was provided that students are trained to assist using the newest equipment of implantology and radiology.

2.3. Teaching staff

The staff engaged in the implementation of the programme complies with legal requirements. The workload rates and remuneration of teachers are in accordance with legal acts. Based on the information from the SER – the programme is implemented by 26 lecturers: 2 professors, 3 docents (2 doctors of science, 1 doctoral student), 18 lecturers, 3 assistants. Directly working with this study programme there are 2 lecturers with dental assistant's qualification (1 of them works as full-time teacher), 4 lecturers with dentist qualification (2 of them work as full-time teachers). In total, 38% of lecturers are full-time teachers, and 72% of lecturers work in the

College as in their main position. It is commendable that teachers working in the study programme have no lower than a master's qualification degree or an equivalent degree. There are 13 lecturers that work in the programme (50%) teaching the subjects in the study field (together with the subjects for deeper studies) who are also practitioners with medical/dental education and practical work experience. Nevertheless, it must be noted that *there are no lecturers with doctor's degree (PhD) in odontology*. Although it could be argued that their practical experience is more important, the students may lack of exposure professionals with an academic approach from the dental and dental hygiene fields. Overall the number, the experience and the qualification of teachers is sufficient for the achievement and realization of the programme aims and learning outcomes.

Teachers are employed for a 5-year term after the competition to the position. The composition of both permanent lecturers and lecturers working in part-time position in the Odontological Care study programme is almost constant. It varies because of the number of students and due to teachers' competence and practical experience in a certain area because of the change of the study contents and legal requirements. Based on the information in the SER, most of the teachers' working in the *Odontology Care* study programme age varies from 40 to 59. The average age of teachers is 47 years, which is very adequate. In the departments of MF there is about 5 % turnover of lecturers on average per year. The tendencies of teachers' turnover are natural and do not cause any negative consequences for the study programme. The average pedagogical experience of the lecturers of the Odontological Care study programme is about 17 years and that of practical experience about 16 years. During the on-site visit the experts' team can state that the staff is enthusiastic, motivated and also have an ambition to start a professional master programme in the future by the new framework (if possible).

The distribution of the staff by age ensures the dissemination of good practice in the study process and study programme and creates favourable conditions to update the content, thus achieving the learning outcomes. Teachers' professional development is carried out and encouraged by providing formal and informal ways without interrupting pedagogical work for a longer period of time. During the period of professional development teachers have a flexible timetable (as far as it is possible). Teachers that work in main positions are provided with financial support once in an academic year. Lecturers who work in part-time positions have a possibility take part in project activities. College lecturers can apply for creative holidays: once in 5 years for no longer than year period. UC constantly publishes information about opportunities to go to courses, conferences, internships, take part in international exchange programmes. Teachers are provided with an opportunity to acquire an additional degree, though they could be more motivated to pursue it.

Following the previous external evaluation team recommendation the College organized the course of foreign languages during which 10 lecturers improved their skills. Other lecturers improved their foreign language skills by taking part in project activities or on their own. At the meeting with the experts teachers did in fact communicate in English. Although for other teachers there is still room for improvement. In the year of 2013-2014 teachers have attended: 53 times CPD (Continuing Professional Development) courses of subjects, pedagogical courses – 50, 7 teachers had internships, 6 of the teachers attended foreign languages courses. Thus it could be concluded that the professional development level of teachers is quite sufficient and is supported by College administration.

The number of foreign partner institutions related with the Odontological Care study programme has been increased as well: 5 agreements of international cooperation were signed in the frames of Erasmus+ programme (Riga No.1 School of Medicine (Latvia), Cluj Napoca University of Medicine (Romania), Plovdiv School of Medicine, Modena University (Italy), Tallinn Health Care College). Relations are maintained with Riga Stradins University (Latvia), TePe Company (Sweden). New cooperation contacts are looked for not only in Europe, but beyond as well (e.g., George Brown College (Canada). An Erasmus academic coordinator of the faculty was appointed who transfers information directly to lecturers. Regarding the mobility rate – there were around 28% of lecturers' participating in the period of 2011-2012. During the period between 2012-2015 the mobility ratio of lecturers' working in the OC programmes mobility is very much the same - approximately 25%.

Scientific activities of UC lecturers are evaluated in accordance with the Utena College regulation. OC study programme parallel to pedagogical work are also actively involved in scientific work related to topics of subjects taught. During the period under assessment the number and quality of teachers' scientific publications in peer-reviewed scientific journals has increased (6 articles have been published), it shows that their scientific studies related with the content of the subjects taught have intensified. Teachers present the results of their applied research by making presentations in conferences. There were 2 lecturers working in the study programme who also take part in editorial boards of scientific journals. Lecturers of the programme take an active part in expert, educational activities: evaluate and expertise programmes, publications, methodical aids organize international scientific conferences, participate in public events. Teachers have significantly contributed to project activities in relation to the study programme. The Department of Dental Care has implemented three projects financed by the EU in order to increase the quality of study programme and its internationality and actively involved lecturers. Despite their activity, the evaluation team must point out that their participation in research activity is solely on the National level. That is why the experts

encourage the teachers of the programme be more active performing research at an international level producing papers in peer-reviewed journals.

2.4. Facilities and learning resources

The premises for studies are adequate both in their size and quality. The infrastructure within faculty facility includes computerised and well equipped lecture halls, laboratories and classrooms, clinical units, library, reading and computer rooms. Thus it can be verified that the premises for learning are suitable and sufficient for the implementation of this study programme.

There is a computer class which consist computer technologies – there are 14 computerized workplaces with an internet connection. Computers are upgraded on a standard computer life-cycle basis and new ones are obtained. During the period between the two assessments, 85% of computers were renewed. Students have an opportunity to make use of services provided by the electronic learning centre, where there are 16 workplaces. Computers and multimedia equipment of the electronic learning centre are used in the process of studies, various conferences, and presentations.

For study field studies there are specialized classrooms: nursery classrooms, and also theoretical and practical classes of the First Aid. Laboratories of microbiology and chemistry classrooms are equipped with technical, visual means, there can work 10-15 students at a time. There are equipped theoretical and practical training classrooms in the Odontological care specialists' training centre where theoretical and practical (simulation) classes of dental diseases, oral surgery and anaesthesia, periodontology, oral health, orthopaedic odontology, infection control, radiology and other subjects take place. There is a possibility for 6 students to work at a time. Taking in mind that the number of students in the OC programme is lower compared to other programmes in the Faculty, it can be concluded that there is more than enough work places for the students. The classrooms are equipped with all the necessary equipment for studies – new sets of instruments were acquired after students and employers feedback from practices. Also the evaluation team also could see the new quality phantom class.

The dental clinic of the students training centre has a license to perform health care activities and provide services of oral care. Students are provided with possibilities to observe and work with a patient. There are also 6 computers which have the OSMS (Odontological Services Management System) programme is installed. As mentioned, it is suitable for 6 students to work at a time, which is enough. Classes of *Introduction into Clinical Odontology* take place here as well; the students are taught to organize administrative-managerial work of a clinic. In addition there is a reception room, a room for sterilizing instruments and preparation of materials, also an x-ray. In conclusion – the equipment and also classes of study field subjects

and practical professional training are suitable and sufficient for learning. There are 33 students studying in the programme, which is a good ratio between the numbers of students' and working places. Also considering there is a flexible shift system which allows every student to engage in practical work.

The library funds were renewed with the newest publications; e-materials for subject studies are developed (in Moodle, First Class media), literature is accumulated at the training centre so that students would be completely provided with any methodological material necessary for their studies.

Teachers and students can use the following databases EBSCO, Academic Search Premier, Business Source, Business Wire News, MEDLINE, Health Source, ERIC and others. Now the academic community can access to 26 825 electronic magazines in scientific databases subscribed to. Students can use resources of Lithuanian academic libraries. For the readers of the library information offered by EBSCO Publishing is accessible anywhere where there is an Internet access. The newest literature of foreign authors - 5 text books for the studies were acquired in 2015 not yet mentioned at SER. Though it should not stop there and the need for international literature should grow each year. Teaching/materials used in the Oral Care study programmes are adapted to modern teaching/learning methods, and a lot of necessary for studies information is placed on the College's Moodle and First Class media. Taking in consideration the conditions of the OC programme, the evaluation team believes that the material resources are quite impressive for a College level and are indeed very good for the needs of the students and this programme.

2.5. Study process and students' performance assessment

Admission of students to the programme is competitive and based on grades in secondary School maturity exam and annual scores. Admission score is mainly based on biology, chemistry or mathematics, Lithuanian and one extra subject final exam scores. There are no entrance exams or minimal admission score. In 2014 admission score calculation scheme was change to 1-10 scale from the previously used 1-20 scale.

There is a prominent competition to the programme. In 2014 there were 16 applicants to one state funded place. In 2012-2014 period there were similar amount of students willing to study in the self-funded places as in the state-funded places. These figures indicate that the programme is popular and is able to attract good. The admission rules are consistent with the nature of the studies and skills required from the students. The admission procedure is made publicly available. Thus the team of experts can verify that *the* admission requirements are clear

and in accordance with the rules of admission to higher education institutions and accessible by internet.

The study programme employs a wide range of teaching and learning methods including lectures, projects, practical work, self-study etc. which are appropriate to the programme aims. For the practical works students are divided into smaller subgroups and supervised by one teacher. Practical work is done with real-world equipment, even with real patients. An important part of the studies is the Final Work (project), done under supervision of a senior staff or as option under supervision of the outside scientist during the last study year. Also students can start scientific work from the first year, but not all of them use this possibility so they should be encouraged, as the team of experts could only find few signs of a culture of research or development of the profession.

The students are able to participate in international mobility programs to obtain important experience and contacts, but there are no students that have been or plan to use this option. As it was explained during the on-site visit – this is mostly due to the fact that most of students of the programme already have short or long-term working agreements. The students could be encouraged more to participate in exchange programme. To promote students' mobility, information about exchange possibilities to students is transferred through the tutors of group and also students are encouraged to learn foreign languages by choosing optionally chosen subjects “Compensatory English” and “Technological English”.

The students' schedule is flexible and there are various options available for consultations with the teachers through IT. This includes possibilities to use online tools like Skype and social networks like Facebook. This works really well for students that have work arrangements. Students can get various financial supports as there are scholarships available for mobility as well as social scholarships for students from poor financial or social background. Up to this date all students that met the requirements for a social scholarship have got it. It should be noted that disabled students get financial support as well. Various student-driven activities (organizations, clubs, and events) within the College provide important social support too.

During the visit students stated that the motivational scholarship (grants) system should be revised and some changes should be made to motivate students to seek better results. As currently the size of the scholarship does not make a huge difference for the students to seek better results.

The assessment of study results is based on the assessment criteria defined in the description of the study subjects, they have clear descriptions of assessment criteria. Subjects are assessed on the principle of cumulative score whose composition is calculated according to

proportions set in the description of the subject using three main criteria: 1) a teacher's assessment; 2) students' self-assessment; 3) assessment of the group.

Starting with 2013, the Odontological Care studies are completed with a qualification exam and preparation and defence of the final work. Revising the Final Thesis on-site, the experts' team would recommend that the final thesis should be more oriented to applied research. The assessment of the qualification exam consists of demonstration of practical skills in the clinical training base by solving a practical situation. The Qualification Commission for the defence of the final work and qualification exam consists of scientists from biomedical study field, employers, and speciality teachers.

In cases where students' fail their exams, the academic debt can be retaken twice, only the first time free of charge. On a student's request due to personal reasons there is a possibility to halt the studies and repeat a year no more than twice during the whole duration of the studies. These regulations comply with the general requirements of Higher Education.

The majority of graduates from the Odontological Care programme start their carriers in the healthcare system. Less than 8% of the graduates are unemployed. This shows good prospects for students of this programme. Good placement trends shows that OC programme meets study programme providers expectation. Students are provided with conditions to deepen their practical skills in clinics of dental care according to agreements of mutual cooperation with dental clinics. Since 2012 the number of places for professional activity practices has been increased from 19 to 26 by signing bilateral cooperation agreements. One practice supervisor works with 2-4 students. Overall, the studies are organized in a way that facilitates the achievement of the learning outcomes and accustoms the students with their future work.

2.6. Programme management

The processes of implementation and supervision of study programme and decision-making involve students, graduates, teachers and social partners. At the programme level the Study Programme Committee (which's of 3 teachers, 1 student, 1 graduate and 3 representatives of the employers) is responsible for the continued improvement of the programme following feedback from the various stakeholders, including the social partners. Although the social partners are involved within the Study Programme Committee, the evaluation team believes that there should be more activity from their perspective.

Department teachers are responsible for issues relating to the quality of the subject teaching. The process is well described in the SER and these statements were confirmed to the review team during the on-site visit.

In order to ensure the quality of the Odontological Care study programme – data is collected and accumulated about admission, students' progress and achievements. Surveys of students, graduates and employers are conducted and analysed. Afterwards this information is presented to the College's community, stakeholders and also to responsible departments. Thus the improvement of the quality of the programme is made. This is considered to be the strong areas of responsibility for implementation of study programme and other activities.

It is worth noting that recommendations of internal and external evaluation were taken into account; changes were performed defining programme aims and learning outcomes, curriculum design, study process. Various stakeholders (students, graduates, employers, representatives of the Lithuanian Dental Chamber, members of the Dental assistant's 'association) are involved into processes of the quality evaluation and improvement, have contacts with other higher schools. Social partners participate in final exams and in the working groups for updating the study programme.

The quality management system ensures proper administration of the study programme, its internal assurance of the quality of studies is carried out transparently and effectively. The quality of teaching of College teachers is ensured by carrying out teachers' attestation every 5 years and by employing new teachers in the way of public contest. The teachers of the department perform an annual self-analysis of their activities; assess their own quality of teaching, scientific, methodological activities, etc. The teachers' self-analysis serves as basis for the department self-analysis (report of activities), which is also carried out annually at the end of the academic year. Annual experience of implementation of the programme of activities of the academic year is summarized as well as areas to be improved and activities and measures are planned.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The study aims and learning outcomes of the programme should be revised more actively involving all the members of the programme committee, social partners, graduates and students.
2. To meet current needs more attention could be paid to managerial skills of students, as well as to meet current issues in a form of more topics as smoking cessation, common risk factors approach of non-communicable and oral diseases, antimicrobial resistance should be included.
3. During the visit students stated that the scholarship system should be revised to motivate students to seek better results.
4. To promote students' mobility and encourage more participate in research work.
5. More active members of employers could be involved into the Study Programme Committee.

IV. SUMMARY

The aim of the Odontological Care study programme and learning outcomes are clearly defined, reflect the profile of the programme, are related to the activities of dental assistants and also are well disseminated through internet and public events. Since the previous external evaluation this study programme was revised systematically followed recommendations previously made and new professional regulations. The programme was benchmarked with international and national standards. The aim of the programme is consistent with the Lithuanian health policy guidelines. The demand for dental assistants is determined by the increasing number of dental clinics and graduates are successfully employed. The evaluation team suggest that the study aims and learning outcomes of the programme would still be revised more actively involving all the members of the programme committee, social partners, graduates and students. To meet today's expectations from the labour market; the team suggests paying more attention to managerial abilities of students.

The OC study plan is in compliance with the legal acts and requirements also the scope of programme is sufficient to ensure learning outcomes. OC programme is implemented as the first study cycle study programme, awarding a professional bachelors' degree in Odontological care, also providing a qualification of assistant of the doctor odontologist. The content of subjects was revised with regard to employers' opinion and renewed learning outcomes of the programme the list of general competences was shortened. Some new subjects were included in the curriculum design. Following advice of employers the subjects for deeper studies were introduced in the programme as well, such as *Assisting during implantation*, *Endodontics*, *Periodontology*, and others. Nevertheless, to meet today's current issues should also be included such as smoking cessation, antimicrobial resistance and others. The programme is based on the teamwork principle by applying modern assisting methods. By the experts' opinion students would benefit from doing some practical training – assisting dental hygiene students.

The staff engaged in the implementation of the programme complies with legal requirements. Teachers working in the study programme have no lower than a master's qualification degree or an equivalent degree and practical work experience. The number of teachers is sufficient for the achievement of the learning outcomes. Also the qualification of all lecturers working in the programme is sufficient for realization of the aims and learning outcomes of the programme. Staff members are enthusiastic, motivated, the average age of the staff is adequate. The professional development level of teachers is sufficient and is supported by College providing creative holidays, financial help, flexible timetable, possibilities to mobility programmes and etc. Although the evaluation team recommends the teachers to be more active

in exchange programmes and also encourage their students to participate. Teachers are actively involved in scientific work at a domestic level. Although the number and quality of teachers' scientific publications in peer-reviewed scientific journals is increasing experts would like to encourage the teachers to be more active performing research at an international level.

The Faculty premises are good, with all the necessary things for the programme. There are enough classrooms, work places, computers to use in the Faculty. Also students have good access to working places in the clinical building. There is enough equipment for the implementation of the study programme – dental chairs, instruments. Study field's specialized classrooms are well equipped – new phantom class, sets of instruments were acquired after students and employers feedback from practices. Students have good access to the offered teaching materials in paper and online. The ratio between the students and the working places are very well balanced, thus the facilities are very good for the implementation of this programme. Also library funds were renewed with the newest publications; e-materials for subject studies are developed in Moodle, First Class media.

The study process is well organized. The prominent competition (16:1) to the programme indicates that the programme is popular and is able to attract good students. The admission requirements are clear and in accordance with the rules of admission to higher education institutions and are publicly available. The study programme employs a wide range of teaching and learning methods, which are appropriate to the programme aims. Practical work is done with modern equipment and with real patients. Students can start scientific work from the first year, but not all of them use this possibility and should be encouraged. The students are able to participate in international mobility programs, but do not use this option because of already existing working agreements. Students can get various financial support (social scholarships), although the motivational scholarship system should be revised to motivate students to seek better results. The OC studies are completed with a qualification exam demonstrating practical skills and defence of the final work. The evaluation team would however suggest that the final thesis should be more oriented to applied research. Overall, the studies are organized in a way that facilitates the achievement of the learning outcomes and accustoms the students with their future work.

The responsibilities for the monitoring, quality improvements and decisions of the implementation of the OC study programme development are well described. The processes of implementation and supervision of study programme and decision-making involve students, graduates, teachers and social partners. These members form a Study Programme Committee which is active in terms of developing this study programme. Data from surveys are collected, accumulated and analysed and the improvement of the quality of the programme is made.

Stakeholders are involved into processes of the quality evaluation and improvement. The quality management system ensures proper administration of the study programme, its internal assurance of the quality of studies is carried out transparently and effectively. Annual experience of implementation of the programme of activities of the academic year is summarized as well as areas to be improved and activities and measures are planned.

V. GENERAL ASSESSMENT

The study programme Odontological Care (state code – 653A52002) at Utena College is given **positive** evaluation.

Study programme assessment in points by evaluation areas.

No.	Evaluation Area	Evaluation of an area in points*
1.	Programme aims and learning outcomes	3
2.	Curriculum design	3
3.	Teaching staff	3
4.	Facilities and learning resources	4
5.	Study process and students' performance assessment	3
6.	Programme management	3
	Total:	19

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

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

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

4 (very good) - the field is exceptionally good.

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