



STUDIJŲ KOKYBĖS VERTINIMO CENTRAS

Utenos kolegijos
STUDIJŲ PROGRAMOS *BURNOS HIGIENA*
(valstybinis kodas - 653A51002)
VERTINIMO IŠVADOS

EVALUATION REPORT
OF *DENTAL HYGIENE* (state code - 653A51002)
STUDY PROGRAMME
at Utena College

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Išvados parengtos anglų kalba
Report language – English

DUOMENYS APIE ĮVERTINTĄ PROGRAMĄ

Studijų programos pavadinimas	Burnos higiena
Valstybinis kodas	653A51002
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	Burnos higienos profesinis bakalauras, burnos higienistas
Studijų programos įregistravimo data	2007-07-10, LR ŠMM ministro įsakymas Nr.ISAK-2180. Naujas valstybinis kodas suteiktas 2010-05-03, LR ŠMM ministro įsakymas Nr.V-634.

INFORMATION ON EVALUATED STUDY PROGRAMME

Title of the study programme	Dental Hygiene
State code	653A51002
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 in Dental Hygiene, Dental Hygienist
Date of registration of the study programme	The order No.ISAK-2180 of 10th July 2007 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 (hereafter – UC) 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, and provide graduates with qualifications that gives the individual the ability to learn lifelong. The College consists of two faculties: the Faculty of Business and Technologies and the Faculty of Medicine. The departments of the *Faculty of Medicine* are organized according to the fields of studies. The *Department of Dental Care* manage the study programmes of Dental Hygiene, Odontological Care and Dental Technology. The study programme is supervised by study programme committees that involves students and social partners. Delivering the general subject the Dental Hygiene study programme exploits the teaching staff of the other departments of the Faculty of Medicine. The study programme has seven teachers with a dental profession. Three teachers have a Dental Hygiene qualification and three have a dental degree. The College is working with a systematic Study Quality Management System.

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 qualifications gained by the graduates are a Professional Bachelor's degree of Dental Hygiene. 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 programme aims and learning outcomes are well defined and clear. They correspond overall to the regulations of the higher education in Lithuania and approved professional standard. They also follow many similar programmes in the western hemisphere. The name of the programme is also in accordance with similar programmes elsewhere. It can be verified by the evaluation team that the learning outcomes are suitable for

the type, field and cycle of studies, and these learning outcomes can be achieved within the duration of a 3-year programme.

The aims and intended learning outcomes of the Dental Hygiene study programme are publicly available – 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.

At the previous evaluation the review team recommended in 2012 that the learning outcomes should be more focused on Dental Hygiene (SER, Annex A2). Based on the information gathered from the SER (p. 8) and the on-site visit, the review team found it evident that the study programme committee was indeed working towards this issue, focussed developing the aims and learning outcomes since the last external assessment of the Dental Hygiene study programme. It can be verified by the current evaluation team that the present learning outcomes are indeed developed as it was presented in the SER (Annex A3). During the site visit the review team learned from the staff, social partners/employers, students and alumni that they have all been involved in this process of developing these learning outcomes and that the current programme aims and learning outcomes seem to be reasonable for all parties involved and well balanced in relation to the different stakeholders needs. One of the aims of the programme and the learning outcomes within the programme includes the graduate's ability to take part in health promotion activities working in team with other health care specialists. The evaluation team believes that all of these aspects are achievable and that the programme aims and learning outcomes are very much based on the public needs and the needs of the labour market at present.

2.2. Curriculum design

The programme is being implemented at Utena College, Faculty of Medicine. The volume of this programme is 180 ECTS, a standard professional bachelor programme. The scope of the programme, its subjects, contact and individual work hours correspond to the requirements of legal acts and other legislation documents of the Republic of Lithuania, which regulate studies: “Description of General Requirements for Degree-Awarding First Cycle and Integrated Study Programmes” (approved by the Order No. V-501 of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania of 9 April, 2010), the Law on Science and Study of the Republic of Lithuania (approved by the Order No. XI-242 of 30 April, 2009), the Regulations on Compatibility of the University Study Programmes to the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) approved by the University Academic Council Decision No. V1-75 of 26 January 2011).

Thus, it can be verified that the structure of the study programme is based on the requirements for college studies.

The number of credits per semester is 30 ECTS and the number of contact hours are 26-27 per week on average (SER; p 11 & p 27). Thus, the load of studies seems to be sufficient. This was also confirmed by the students and teachers at the site visit. The present review team acknowledges the change in the curriculum since the last external assessment of the Dental Hygiene study programme. The College has collaborated with the Lithuanian Dental Chamber and several other institutions that provide dental and oral care in order to provide clinical lectures specific for the present programme and support to the study programme development.

Although the subjects in the study programme seem to be closely interrelated, extend and supplement each other, this is not always how the students see the connection between the content of the general subjects and the usability hereof within the provision of oral health care and their future profession as Dental Hygienists. The students seem to lack some linking of topics and knowledge across the curriculum.

The content of the subjects is consistent with the type and level of the studies, however, during the site visit – students and alumni expressed the need for more clinical training and especially clinical training on a larger variety of patients from the very easy ones in the beginning to the more severe and difficult cases before the students go out in the external practice. At the site visit the social partners expressed that graduates could benefit from a more comprehensive knowledge on practice management and understanding how a dental clinic and the team working here operate. The alumni expressed some of the same concerns. It could be considered by the College to include additional subjects related to clinical management, entrepreneurship, etc. in order to fulfil the expectations of the stakeholders.

The curriculum is very much subject based – teaching takes place within 37 subjects (SER; Annex A6). The learning outcomes of the study programme, however, are divided according to 5 areas of learning outcomes (SER; p 5 & Annex A3). Therefore, there are many interrelations of study subjects which contribute to the different competencies and learning outcomes (SER; Annex A5). During the site visit the students expressed themselves in a way that it seems they have more focus on learning the content of the different subjects in order to pass the assessments rather than on focusing on the broader learning outcomes drawing on several subjects. Thus, the obvious fragmentation of assessment of the learning outcomes might hinder the students' learning progression of the profession.

Another thing should be pointed out that the curriculum description reveals teaching and examination that seems overall to be very subject oriented rather than problem solving oriented. More integration of different subjects seems to be desirable. The evaluation team would

suggest considering more interdisciplinary teaching and assignments that could develop problem solving competencies even further. More integration of the general subjects into the core of the dental hygiene studies will strengthen the professional proficiency of the graduates.

Several of the recommendations in the last external assessment of the Dental Hygiene study programme (SER; Annex A2 recommendations 3.3, 3.4 and 3.6) was about embedding English as a foreign language into the study programme and the teaching. The present evaluation team can indeed confirm the ongoing progress, however, there is still much to be done in order to meet these recommendations. The college has signed more exchange agreements (SER; p 17) and 5 of those include dental educations. It is unclear if those exchanges agreements has had any influences on the development of the curriculum e.g. in form of development of periods of time – so called “window for exchange” – during which the college can send out students and receive students and teach the subjects in English language. Thus, there seems to remain a task for the college to develop more opportunities within the curriculum opportunities for the students to speak and listen in English.

The teaching methods used in the study programme are adequate; the students seem to be quite happy with it. It was confirmed during the on-site visit that most of the teaching material is available on MOODLE (the virtual learning environment).

The final work initialised in 2010 contains many of the elements which professional bachelor's thesis at similar educations internationally normally contain. The final work as it is carried out account for 6 credits. At the site visit the expert team saw many examples of the final work. Some included small elements of research. Most of them, however, did not reveal that the students can interpret international scientific dental literature. Having in mind that this is a professional bachelor programme it would be a commendation if the College would bring the final work up to international standards and allocate at least 9 credits, which should include some empirical work and a critical approach to own research as well as to the current international dental literature. This would also support some of the present learning outcomes.

2.3. Teaching staff

The teaching staff for this programme complies with the legal requirements in order to implement this study programme. According to the SER (p. 16) the total number of teachers of the programme is 25. The average age is around 46 years of age, which is very appropriate, as it can be noted that there are teachers in all age groups. The turnover of teachers is about 5% (SER; 15) per year. Since it is desirable that the staff have lots of clinical experience and at the same time experience in teaching it might be wise to have a low turnover. A mix of experienced and younger clinicians is desirable. One dental hygienists lecturer works full time, two dental

hygienists lecturers work part-time, two dentist lecturers work full-time and one dentist lecturer work part-time. It is appreciated that about 20% of the teaching staff takes part in academic exchange programmes or participates in international conferences. It is also a strength that the greater part of the programme is taught by specialists-practitioners who work in the dental field and have substantial practical experience and excellent clinical skills. It is, however, a weakness that the study programme lacks teachers in the core subjects of the study programme with scientific merits and experience (SER; p 20). It should be noted that none of the teaching core have a PhD and some of the lectures do not have a master's equivalent, however it could be argued that their professional experience in the field is more important for a college programme. Nevertheless, the number of the teaching staff and their experience is adequate to ensure learning outcomes for the number of students in the Dental Hygiene programme.

It could be noted once again that the College has a cooperation with the Lithuanian Dental Chamber and several institutions that provide dental and oral care in order to provide clinical lectures specific for the present programme and support to the study programme development. Some of these lectures include A. Baliulienė - a dental hygienist at JSC, A. Vadapolas from an Odontological clinic, A. Sulskienė – a member of the Lithuanian Dental Hygienists Association and a dental hygienist at PI Utena PHCC, also A. Puisys, a doctor-periodontologist at Vilnius Implantology Centre. These people who deliver the lectures have also contributed to the development of the study programme and learning outcomes.

Although 20% of the teaching staff participates in academic exchange or participating in international conferences, so in general the teaching staff is not very productive performing research at an international level or producing papers in peer-reviewed journals. In recent years outgoing visits have been made to Sweden, Finland and Latvia, while incoming teachers have come from Sweden and Kazakhstan. However, most of the exchanges have been of short term and Utena College does acknowledge this as a matter that should be improved (SER; p 19-20). Though it is not mandatory for teaching staff of a college level programme to be actively participating in research themselves (as they are active professionals of the dental and oral health fields), doing so could benefit the study programme and the students.

Several of the teachers at the programme have previously been involved in writing several chapters in a national dental textbook consisting of five volumes. This initiative is described in more details under learning resources in a later section. This large effort witnesses of very dedicated and competent teachers.

The present review team are totally in accordance with the previous review team from earlier that have recommended use of more English language during the delivery of the programme, use of more international recognised scientific literature and more English textbooks

to be integrated into the environment of college and the study programme of Dental Hygiene. The staff should take part in applied scientific research. The Utena College should create conditions for the development of research experiences in order to give the teaching staff the provisions necessary for the programme.

2.4. Facilities and learning resources

The premises for studies are adequate both in their size and quality. It was verified from the information received in the SER, from the meetings with the students and the examination of the facilities during the on-site visit. There seems to be enough classrooms at the Utena College many of which all have the basic necessary equipment – boards, projectors, etc.

As it was previously mentioned, Utena College uses the e-learning environment “Moodle” as their portal for communication with and tutoring of students. This software also allows distribution of teaching material to the students. The college itself has classrooms with computers and a supervisor who consults on IT matters. There are 14 computerized workplaces with an Internet connection in this class. Computers are being upgraded on a regular basis and new ones are obtained. During the period between the assessments around 85% of computers were renewed. In addition, Utena College has a well-equipped library and many workplaces for students around the campus. Several rooms with computers are available for the students at different sites.

For study field subjects 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 and visual means (an internal database that consist a number of visual examples).

Utena College has a separate facility where it has a special room for pre-clinical work on mannequins (Phantoms), as well as clinics where the students treat real patients. The students have access to Dental Service Management System and a library with free information services (SER; p 20-21). The College subscribes to a number of different dental & medical periodicals, various databases like EBSCO, Academic Search Premier, Business Source, Business Wire News, MEDLINE, Health Source, ERIC and others. The academic community can access 26 825 electronic magazines in scientific databases subscribed to and students can use resources of Lithuanian academic libraries.

The teaching and learning equipment especially for Dental Hygiene (SER; p 21 and seen during the site visit) consist of enough dental clinics and manikins, dental equipment and consumables for the amount of students at the Utena College. The clinics for treating patients have equipment enough to accommodate 6 students at a time. There are mannequins and

equipment for another 6 students at a time. In addition there is a reception room, a room for sterilizing instruments and preparation of materials and also an x-ray. Although the ratio between the students and the workplaces is good, a higher number of students in the future would cause difficulties.

Some years ago Utena College participated in publishing a very substantial textbook of dentistry consisting of five volumes and a volume of “Dental Hygienist’s Activities: Theory and Practice” all in Lithuania language (SER, p. 22 and observation at the site visit). This and other publications in the general order are distributed to the students. Thus, teaching materials are adequate and accessible and fairly up-to-date. The experts’ team is impressed by the detailed textbooks. However, there might also be a downside to this positive point – as the richness of the local textbooks might stop teachers and students from looking elsewhere and this might thereby become a barrier to use materials in English language. This risk should be taken into account and English should be used in books and materials developed in the future.

2.5. Study process and students’ performance assessment

Admission of students to the programme follows the rules of the Utena College and is in accordance with the rules of general admission of the Lithuanian Association of Higher Schools for Organization of General Admission. Information on the procedures is disclosed on the college’s website. The programme has no entrance exams. There is a moderate competition for being admitted to the study programme. In recent years there have been 6-7 candidates for each enrolled student. Due to the attractiveness of the programme, there is a 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 students (SER; p 23-24).

The vast majority of students complete their studies and less than 10% of the students do not finish the programme due to personal reasons, academic failures, failure of responsibilities or their movement to other schools or programmes (SER; p 25). In addition to the clinical training the students get at the dental chair at the College premises (where the students treat real patients), the College also have adequate arrangements for students’ practice in clinics outside the college in Utena and the surrounding areas. Utena College has signed 22 bilateral agreements with social partners to provide practical training for the students (SER, Annex A11).

The study programme employs a wide range of teaching and learning methods including lectures, projects, practical work and self-study which are appropriate to the programme aims and learning outcomes. For the practical work, the students are divided into smaller subgroups and supervised by one teacher. Practical work is done with real-world

equipment working on manikins and real patients. Another part of the studies is the Final Work done under supervision of a senior staff during the last study year. The duration of the Final Work is 6 credits (SER; p 13 & Annex 4). During the site visit the review teams saw some of the Work. It was clear to the review team that the quality of the Final Work leaves more to be desired. Thus, the duration and format of present Final Work do not support the students to achieve the learning outcome on abilities to carry out research to a sufficient extent. Students can in principle be involved in scientific work or participates in development of profession from the start of their study; however, very few, if any, seemed to take advantage of this possibility. During the site visit we could not find any signs of a culture of research or development of the profession. The best encouragement for students to start being involved into research and development might be the example of students ahead of them and staff doing so. Although this is not mandatory for a professional bachelor programme to be actively involved in research, as it is more orientated towards practise, the evaluation team suggest that more involvement in these activities would be beneficial for the students.

The students are introduced to international mobility programs. Nevertheless, very few students are taking the opportunity to study abroad. In the period from year 2012-2015 only 4 students have been outgoing on exchange visits abroad (SER, p. 27). Regarding the incoming students to the Dental Hygiene programme at Utena College – 2 students have been coming from South Korea to study in Utena in the period 2012-2015 (SER, p. 27). More emphasis on internationalization abroad and at home could support the students learning outcomes, employability and readiness for future further education and studies. This is suggested to be done in numerous ways simultaneously, e.g. exchange of teachers and students, benchmarking with others, using up-to-date international textbooks and peer-reviewed scientific literature, teaching staff should do research in collaboration with foreign researchers. In order to support this approach the faculty could strategically select to develop one or two areas having a special focus within the field of dental hygiene or within teaching and learning dental hygiene to an extent that it will attract foreign students and lectures. The faculty could also develop distance learning courses/flexible learning courses in corporation with international partners.

Students' schedule is quite flexible and there are various options available for consultations with the teachers, their tutors, department of studies and others. This includes possibilities to use online tools like Skype and Facebook. Much of the material is also available for the students on the Utena College's internet portal for students "Moodle" (based on the SER, p. 28 & students' statements during site visit).

There are scholarships available for mobility, as well as social scholarships for students from poor social/financial background. However during the site visit students stated that the

scholarship system should be revised as the funds given in most cases do not have a size which makes a significant difference. The students suggested handing out fewer scholarships each with larger amounts of money. Various student-driven activities (organizations, clubs and events) within the College provide important social support for students.

The assessment of study results is based on the assessment criteria defined in the description of the study subjects in the SER (Appendix A6). All the subjects have descriptions of their assessment criteria. Assessment methods and criteria are following well described and public announced norms and standards. There are possibilities for students who have not passed an assessment to have another trial and catch up at a later occasion (SER, p. 31). During the site visit the students seemed to be very satisfied with the assessment procedures at the Dental Hygiene programme at Utena College.

The majority of graduates from the Dental Hygiene Programme at Utena College get a job in the oral healthcare system. Some of the graduates are doing bridge studies and some are taking work outside the profession. Only 10% of the graduates are unemployed. This shows good prospects for students of this programme. According to the employers of the Dental Hygienists the review team meet during the site visit they are quite satisfied with the graduates' theoretical as well as clinical competencies. At the site visit the employers also explain that some patients have started to ask for Dental Hygienists and that there is a big unmet demand for Dental Hygienist in the larger cities of Lithuania. There are more than five dentists per dental hygienists in Lithuania and there is a big need for oral health care.

2.6. Programme management

The responsibilities for the monitoring, quality improvements and decisions of the implementation of the study programme development are well described and clear (SER; p. 34-35). The processes of decision-making, implementation and supervision of study programme involve students, graduates, teachers and social-partners/employers. There is also a Study Programme Committee for Dental Hygiene study programme which consists of members of the above mentioned parties. The process is well described in the SER (in a flow-chart) that shows both – who is responsible for each element of the programme development processes and also shows the sequence of individual elements in the processes. From the Dean's office, Faculty board, Admission service, Department of Studies to the Deputy Director for Academic Activity. At each step – one or more of the stakeholders contribution is taken into consideration in the development of the study programme. This is continuously following the cycle of the programme management accordingly to the Study Quality Management System of Utena College.

In order to ensure the quality of the Dental Hygiene study programme, various data is collected systematically and accumulated. There is a focus on admission, students' progress and achievements. Surveys of students, graduates and employers are being conducted constantly, analysed and used systematically. From the SER and the study visit it is clear to the review team that Utena College has a long lasting tradition performing quality development of their study programmes.

It is evident from the SER and what the review team experienced during the site visit that the development of the study programme for Dental Hygiene at Utena College within the last years have made use of many of the recommendations from internal and external evaluation that have taken place within the last years. Many important improvements have been implemented e.g. change in programme aims and learning outcomes, curriculum design and the study process. In addition, the clinical facilities have been improved and developed.

It is evident from the SER (p. 36-37) and the review team's conversations with some of the stakeholders during the site visit, that students, graduates, employers and representatives from relevant dental organisations are all invited to participate in the evaluation and improvement processes of the Dental Hygiene programme at Utena College. In order to further qualify the study programme the College might benefit from strategic collaboration with other similar programmes.

Utena College have a well described and systematic quality management system that seems to ensure proper administration of the study programme (Study Quality Management System of UC) SER (p. 32-27). This consists of annually repeated processes which embrace teachers' self-analysis of their activities; assessment of their own quality of teaching and research. The teachers' self-analysis serves as basis for the department self-analysis and report of activities, which is also carried out annually at the end of the academic year. Further information is collected on various sources on Students' admission, preparation and approval of the timetable of the study, organization and management of learning activities, examinations and assessments in order to identify areas where improvements are needed. Subsequently improvements are planned for the following semester or year. After implementation they are evaluated the following years. The internal quality assurance and development of studies seems to be carried out transparently and effectively.

When asked stakeholders expressed that the content of the study programme corresponds to present needs or needs of the near future in the labour market. The college could consider if it would be relevant and worth to consider methods for information collection on which future scenarios will emerge in the labour market. It would allow incorporating the competencies that might be expected or demanded, into the development of the study

programme, its learning outcomes, the facilities, teachers' competencies, teaching methods and assessments in the longer perspective.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. In order to get the best possible input to the development of the Dental Hygiene study programme, the review team suggest the college to focus much more on internationalization abroad and at home.
2. The review team recommends that the Final Work would be extended to 9 ECTS and that the format and content should be aligned with the Final Work at Professional Bachelor in Dental Hygiene elsewhere in Europe including some empirical work, critical thinking and the state of art international peer-reviewed literature.
3. As the students clinical competencies progress the review team suggest that the students should be introduced to more and more difficult and complex patients, thus at the end of their study the students should have been treating a variety of different types of patients.
4. The college should continue to focus on the development of the core competencies of the Dental Hygienists profession that are different from the other professions in the dental team e.g. in health education, health promotion and health coaching. The college should consider if they could develop the learning outcomes even further by describing them in terms of Knowledge, Skills and Competence in accordance with descriptions within the European Qualifications Framework (EQF).
5. The programme should increase integration of interdisciplinary subjects by introducing more teaching performed by team of teachers and interdisciplinary assignments and examinations – this would lead to fewer but more comprehensive examinations that support more efficient acquisition of the learning outcomes.
6. The College could discuss if it would be relevant and worth to consider methods for collection information on which scenarios will emerge in the future in order to consider future needs for competencies that might be needed to incorporate into the development of the study programme.

IV. SUMMARY

The aim and objectives of the study programme of Dental Hygiene at Utena College correspond overall to the regulations of the higher education in Lithuania and approved professional standards. The aim of the programme is clear and with focus inspired by international descriptions of the profession. The overall aim of the programme could be strengthened paying more attention to the professions need, also for being proficient in mastering health education and promotion, too. The compliance of learning outcomes are describes in five main arears. They are further disseminated into 22 specific learning outcomes. In order to support the graduates capability of providing health promotion, clearer learning outcomes, regarding mastering health education and coaching, would strengthen the programme. So would a stronger focus on the special facets that distinguish the dental hygiene profession from the other professions in the dental field.

During the last three years the Utena College has worked on developing the curriculum and has achieved many important improvements. One of the aims of the Dental Hygiene study programme at Utena College is to qualify professionals who can solve problems in relation to people's oral health. However, the curriculum description reveal teaching and examination that seems overall to be very subject oriented rather than problem solving oriented. Thus, more integration of different subject could be implemented. More interdisciplinary teaching and assignments could develop problem solving competencies even further. Also a better connection between the general subjects and the core of the dental hygiene studies will strengthen the professional proficiency of the graduates.

In order to achieve the needed learning outcomes regarding the clinical and human competencies more time working with patients in a clinical setup would be beneficial. Also it would be beneficial if the students' clinical training involved a wider variety of patients as the complexity and severity should increase parallel to the students' progression. The Dental hygiene study programme is completed by the evaluation of the graduate's competency by means of a final work and an assessment. The number of ECTS for the Final Work should be improved with a more comprehensive focus on Professional Bachelors work including some empirical work by the students. The curriculum should include learning activities which supports internationalization. Furthermore, the structure of the curriculum should support the possibilities of exchange for students and staff, too. Some teaching should be delivered in English and it is recommended to integrate more international textbooks for the students in the curriculum.

Overall the lecturers are all fulfilling the requirement of having at least a master's or equivalent degree and many of them having scientific and professional experience from the

medical and dental field. The dental hygiene students are exposed only for 6 teachers having a dental or dental hygiene degree, half of which are working full-time. The lack of PhD teachers could result in students lacking exposure to professionals with an academic approach from the dental and dental hygiene fields.

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, mannequins (phantoms), instruments, etc. Students have good access to the offered teaching materials in paper and online. Nevertheless the acquisition of English printed publications and textbooks by the library and the department seems much to be desired.

Admission of students to the programme is competitive. The admission procedure seems is clear and transparent. Course information and students' performance assessment is clearly described and available online. Students learning would benefit from more and systematic feed-back on the individual student's learning during the semesters. The dropout rate from the programme is low (7%). The vast majority of the graduates are employed as Dental Hygienists and some continues on masters educations. About 10% of the graduates are unemployed. The Final Work could be improved in terms of requirements and quality.

The quality management system for study programmes is well described and the responsibilities for the monitoring, quality improvements and decisions of the implementation of improvements are well described. Many stakeholders are involved in the process of developing the quality of the study programme. A strategic plan could be prepared by the College in order to foresee the future tendencies of the labour market for Dental Hygienists.

V. GENERAL ASSESSMENT

The study programme Dental Hygiene (state code – 653A51002) 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	3
5.	Study process and students' performance assessment	3
6.	Programme management	3
	Total:	18

*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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