



CENTRE FOR QUALITY ASSESSMENT IN HIGHER EDUCATION

EVALUATION REPORT
STUDY FIELD of PHILOLOGY
at Mykolas Romeris University

Expert panel:

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Report language – English

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Study Field Data

Title of the study programme	English for Specific Purposes and the Second Foreign Language
State code	6121NX052
Type of studies	University studies
Cycle of studies	First cycle
Mode of study and duration (in years)	Full-time, 3,5 years
Credit volume	210
Qualification degree and (or) professional qualification	Bachelor of Humanities
Language of instruction	English, Lithuanian
Minimum education required	Secondary
Registration date of the study programme	2011-07-12

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I. INTRODUCTION

1.1. BACKGROUND OF THE EVALUATION PROCESS

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

1.2. EXPERT PANEL

The expert panel was assigned according to the Experts Selection Procedure as approved by the Director of SKVC on 31 December 2019, [Order No. V-149](#). The site visit to the HEI was conducted by the expert panel on 2 May 2023.

Prof. dr. Marija Omazić, Expert panel's chairperson; Professor at Josip Juraj Strossmayer University of Osijek, Croatia;

Prof. dr. Josef Schmied, Expert panel's academic member; Professor at Chemnitz University of Technology, Germany;

Ms. Diana Guogienė, Representative of Social Partners; Head of Translation Agency „Magistrai“, Lithuania;

Ms. Viktorija Lankauskaitė, Student's Representative; PhD candidate in the Art Studies programme at the Faculty of Social Sciences, Humanities and Arts Kaunas University of Technology, Lithuania.

1.3. GENERAL INFORMATION

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

No.	Name of the document
1.	Additional information on planned expenditure for 2022 with cost distribution sent by e-mail via the SKVC coordinator.

1.4. BACKGROUND OF THE PHILOLOGY FIELD STUDIES AT MYKOLAS ROMERIS UNIVERSITY

Mykolas Romeris University (MRU) is a state university founded in 2004. It is the largest social sciences university in Lithuania, with 6,000 students and a large share of the international student body. Currently, it offers 85 degree study programmes at all three levels (BA, MA and PhD), with the programme portfolio being predominantly in the field of social sciences, namely in the fields of accounting, communication, economics, educational sciences, finance, computing, law, management, human resource management, pedagogy, philology (English), psychology, political sciences, public security, social work, tourism and leisure, translation studies, public administration, and business studies. 250 MRU study programmes are delivered in English.

MRU conducts national and international research projects and studies and has been recognized as 'the best university in developing social innovation' in an EC supported study *Creating Culture of Social Innovation in HE* (SER, p. 4). It is a member of over 15 national and international organisations and cooperates with over 500 universities worldwide, with strong research links with universities in Asia. The King Sejong Institute was established in 2014 to promote Korean language and culture studies and support studies in Koreanistics.

The study programme assessed in this report is the 1st cycle full-time study programme in English for Specific Purposes.

II. GENERAL ASSESSMENT

The study field of **Philology** and the first cycle programme in **English for Specific Purposes and the Second Foreign Language, and English for Specific Purposes and Korean Studies** (ESPSFL, ESPKS) at **Mykolas Romeris University** is given a **positive** evaluation.

Study field and cycle assessment in points by evaluation areas

No.	Evaluation Area	Evaluation of an Area in points*
1.	Intended and achieved learning outcomes and curriculum	3
2.	Links between science (art) and studies	3
3.	Student admission and support	3
4.	Teaching and learning, student performance and graduate employment	3
5.	Teaching staff	3
6.	Learning facilities and resources	3
7.	Study quality management and public information	3
	Total:	21

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

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

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

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

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

III. STUDY FIELD ANALYSIS

3.1. INTENDED AND ACHIEVED LEARNING OUTCOMES AND CURRICULUM

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

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

(1) Factual situation

The study programme assessed in this report is the 1st cycle full-time study programme in English for Specific Purposes and the Second Foreign Language, specialisation in English for Specific Purposes and Korean Studies (ESPSFL, ESPSK). The duration of the programme is 3.5 years, students earn 210 ECTS credits and the degree *Bachelor of Humanities*. The studies develop general language competence, LSP competence, literary and cultural competence, translation competence and research competence.

The primary aim of the programme is to educate multilingual language professionals proficient in two foreign languages of the study, who can ensure both intercultural and specialised communication. The stress on intercultural and specialised communication is what makes the programmes distinctive in the Lithuanian higher education context, and the specialisation in Korean is a unique selling point of the programme, developing skills that distinguish graduates in the labour market.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The study programme addresses the real market need for experts with multilingual competences and cross-cultural understanding. The aims and learning outcomes of the field and first cycle study programme are aligned with the needs of Lithuanian society, meeting the requirements of the top 10 potential areas of employment and skills in demand, and the needs of the global labour market. There are, however, some reservations concerning the actual market demand for Korean skills in particular to warrant this specialisation in addition to the already existing offer of Korean as a foreign language, particularly as these are seen by students as not very distinct programmes having a great deal of overlap. Furthermore, the alumni have not reported actually utilising the skills in Korean in their current jobs, but they are viewed more as a curiosity and a bonus in their CVs by their employers during job interviews.

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

(1) Factual situation

The intentions and outcomes of the English for Specific Purposes and the Second Foreign Language, specialisation in English for Specific Purposes and Korean Studies programme are

aligned with the mission and the MRU Strategic Plan 2021-2023, as they contribute to creating a society based on democracy, promoting the sustainable progress of communities by global market-driven studies, advanced science for creating social innovation, sustainable internationalisation development and the promotion of lifelong learning. The programmes aim to prepare professionals with general philological education, knowledge of the culture of countries where the languages they study are spoken, ability to communicate in two foreign languages and function in the dynamic global environment. The delivery of the programme in English allows for better internationalisation of the programme for both teachers and students. The programmes also allow for technological advancement and innovation by relying on ICT tools and methods, digital data processing and language technologies in both teaching and research.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The expert panel assesses that the field and cycle study programme aims and outcomes are adequately aligned with the mission, objectives of activities and strategy of MRU. These strategic documents and orientations are clearly articulated and have the potential to steer the current activities and future development of the institution and the programme under evaluation. The management is clearly guided by this joint vision and great dedication to materialising the plans.

The expert panel, however, urges the management to re-examine the strategic orientation towards a specialisation in Korean beyond just its power to attract a larger student body as a result of the programme’s undoubted uniqueness, and align it more with the real needs of society, student employment options and realistic learning outcomes of this specialisation.

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

(1) Factual situation

The study field and first cycle study programme English for Specific Purposes and the Second Foreign Language, specialisation in English for Specific Purposes and Korean Studies comply with Lithuanian legal requirements for the organisation and delivery of study programmes. They are consistent with Level 6 of the LQF and Level 6 of the EQF. Furthermore, the programme also meets all relevant formal institutional criteria.

Table 1. Study programmes’ compliance to general requirements for *first cycle study programmes (bachelor)*

Criteria	General* legal requirements	In the Programmes
Scope of the programme in ECTS	180, 210 or 240 ECTS	210 ECTS
ECTS for the study field	No less than 120 ECTS	192
ECTS for studies specified by University	No more than 120 ECTS	n/a

or optional studies		
ECTS for internship	No less than 15 ECTS	15
ECTS for final thesis (project)	No less than 15 ECTS	15
Contact hours	No less than 20 % of learning	36,9%
Individual learning	No less than 30 % of learning	63,1%

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The expert panel considers ESPFSL and ESPKS programmes as compliant with all relevant institutional, national and European requirements and legislation.

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

(1) Factual situation

The links between aims, learning outcomes and courses are presented in Annex 1 to the SER. Teaching, learning and assessment methods are defined in course descriptions in Annex 3 to the SER, and each learning outcome is constructively aligned with learning and assessment methods. It is evident that a wide variety of current teaching and learning methods is applied and adjusted to the needs of specific types of courses and intended learning outcomes. A wide range of digital tools is used to facilitate teaching. EU project insights are adopted to further enhance teaching. The assessment procedure is regulated in the relevant institutional documents, a ten-point grading scale is used to assess learning outcomes.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

Overall, the aims, learning outcomes, and teaching/learning and assessment methods seem to be aligned and compatible. However, both students and alumni have expressed concerns regarding the learning outcomes advertised and those actually achieved at the end of the programme, in particular in Korean and second foreign languages, signalling that it may be the consequence of not enough attention paid to actual student progress in the teaching process, causing them to lag behind considerably. It appears that some adjustment of course learning outcomes and teaching methods is required for courses in Korean and second foreign languages, including having a Korean class every day instead of only a couple of times a week to maximise exposure and allow for incremental improvement, and adjusting the speed of teaching to what students can realistically achieve. Furthermore, there seems to be a lot of overlap between the programme in Korean as a foreign language and the specialisation in Korean, which should be addressed as students expected a more distinctive programme, which does not seem to be the case and is somehow left to partner universities (albeit almost all in Europe) where they will do their mobility. The student feedback on the matters expressed in

student surveys and to the panel should be given due attention and the management should act on it more decisively.

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

(1) Factual situation

The ESPSFL and ESPKS study programmes include 32 courses (Annexes 1 and 2 of the SER), each having the workload of 6 ECTS credits. Language study learning outcomes are based on CEFR for Languages. The learning outcomes for English upon graduation are at the level of C1-C2, whereas for the second foreign languages, it is B2. ESPSFL consists of three subject groups: general university education courses, study field courses and electives. All the subjects are arranged in an order that enables a consistent and appropriate development of students' general philological competences, competences of foreign languages for specific purposes and their use in specialised communication, translation skills and research skills. To address certain gaps identified in the programme by teachers and students and as a result of changes in national and institutional legislation, some new courses have been introduced, including *Academic Writing* to strengthen writing and research skills, *English for Finance* to strengthen the ESP offer, *Computational Terminology Research and Management* to strengthen the applied strand and use of language technologies. In addition, *Chinese* and *Spanish* were added as new second foreign languages. A mobility window was scheduled for the 6th semester and additional electives were added for students who cannot realise the obligatory mobility.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The programme is broadly conceived and diverse, and it is further strengthened by the amendments and additions described above, which further align it with the goals of the institution and the actual market needs, and allow for more personalization and internationalisation of the programme through obligatory mobility. The progression through courses each semester seems logical and feasible. Even though there is an occasional course that seems out of place in the programme, like *Innovative Language Teaching Methods*, which seems to be unrelated to the programme learning outcomes, and possibly only serves as some sort of incentive for the continuation of their studies at the MA level, should they want to become teachers. The programme includes the unique component of the Korean language and culture, which is commendable, but raises questions concerning concrete competencies students have upon graduation, their vertical mobility in the system of higher education and real employment opportunities for this profile. More attention is needed to make sure students from different backgrounds and previous knowledge of both Lithuanian and other foreign languages are catered for and their competencies are developed consistently so that they all achieve the desired learning outcomes and language competence as defined in the study programme. The concern shared by students that they do not achieve the intended B2 level in their foreign languages should be taken seriously – it should be addressed by taking concrete steps to ensure this outcome is achieved, or the outcomes should be revised so as not to create false expectations. The learning outcomes for Lithuanian are not covered sufficiently, even though the programme claims to develop translation competence, presumably in Lithuanian,

too. Students also expressed the need for more practice in translation and the second foreign language. This request is justified as the programme claims to develop translation skills, but in reality, it is developed in only one core course (*Basics of Translation*), and one elective (*Translation Technologies*) they may, but need not, choose, and there is very little room for electives anyway.

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

(1) Factual situation

The SER lists many opportunities for personalising the structure of study programmes to match student interests (second language choice, thesis topic choice, electives, mobility). The offer of electives listed appears to be diverse.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

Despite the existence of electives in theory, the programme is heavily built around core (obligatory) courses, with very little room for students to personalise their coursework in most semesters. Some of the electives which are central to developing important skills and competences this programme aims and claims to develop (like translation technologies) can potentially not be selected by students. This should be re-examined, especially since students express the need for more translation content in the programme. There seems to be little real choice of electives in most semesters, other than in the one intended instead of mobility, and even then students cannot really choose and are 'forced' into those that will actually be delivered. In practical terms, this means that some students are left with a small fraction of electives in the programme and very little actual choice.

Furthermore, the window for obligatory mobility can, in theory, allow a lot of room for personalization, but the actual realisation of mobility is lacking in terms of support provided to students to ensure equal access to all on the same terms (in terms of funding and finding appropriate mobility placements in Korea in particular).

The inherited practice of having the same ECTS credits for each course somewhat limits the possibility to diversify the programme. Having more courses with fewer ECTS credits would allow for more actual choice of electives, for example.

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

(1) Factual situation

The list of theses defended in the evaluated period (SER, Annex 6) illustrates the diversity of topics and approaches of the study programme. The final theses submitted for evaluation comply with field and cycle requirements.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The three final theses submitted to the expert panel for evaluation meet the requirements of the field and 1st cycle of studies. They seem to be appropriate for the research skills of students at this level and provide a certain degree of personalization of studies, as students can choose the topic in line with their interests and capabilities. The expert panel considers the theses in terminology to be even more advanced and ambitious in scope and methodology applied than one would expect at the BA level, which is commendable. Other disciplines taught in the programme should take the same approach in defining more applied and more market-relevant theses topics in cooperation with social partners and potential employers. The involvement of external stakeholders and members from other institutions in theses committees guarantees a more impartial and more practical perspective, ensuring the maintenance of valuable contacts with the community and keeping the theses topics relevant outside the academic circles only.

Strengths and weaknesses of this evaluation area:

(1) Strengths:

1. Involvement of external stakeholders and academic members from other institutions in thesis committees.
2. Excellent terminology work in submitted theses and excellent cooperation with terminologists working for the European Commission and the Consilium.
3. Unique specialisation in Korean as a means to increase enrolment but also ensure added skills to distinguish graduates in the labour market.
4. Increased internationalisation efforts as a follow-up from previous evaluation, resulting in increased incoming and outgoing mobility.

(2) Weaknesses:

1. The programme is heavily built around core (obligatory) courses, with very little room for students to personalise their coursework. There seems to be little real choice of electives in most semesters. The electives that are listed as options are not actually delivered and students may be 'forced' to select something else.
2. The programme focuses mainly on English and foreign language competence but takes no account of competence in Lithuanian.
3. It appears that students do not manage to reach the expected (advertised) B1 or B2 levels in all foreign languages.
4. Whereas obligatory mobility is a good idea in theory and has attracted much of the student body, its execution is lacking and should be reexamined, in particular the outgoing mobility to Korea, for which students are not offered enough support and do not have equal opportunities. The execution does not seem to match the unique selling point used to attract them in the first place and the expectations it created.
5. More attention is needed to follow up on student complaints, both expressed informally and recorded in student satisfaction surveys.

3.2. LINKS BETWEEN SCIENCE (ART) AND STUDIES

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

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

(1) Factual situation

In the past three years, the members of the teaching staff have published 96 publications, mostly in international journals, of which one-third are indexed in WoS and Scopus (Annex 7 to the SER). The research topics are in the areas of terminology and terminography, general and applied linguistics, world literature, translation, ESP and SFL didactics, information and media literacy, multilingualism and multiculturalism. In addition to the publishing efforts, the research activity largely focused on predoctoral and postdoctoral research, organising academic events and research networking through COST and other projects. The MRU has many national and international academic and non-academic partners with which it implements a number of projects, like the national *DVITAS* project, membership in the national *CLARIN-LT* consortium, participation in four COST Actions, the international *ELEXIS* project (with observer status). The University also cooperates with *CEESOK* and is active in the *Baltic Association of Korean Studies* and the *Baltic Alliance for Asian Studies Charter*. There are also links with EU institutions, resulting in relevant and current term papers and BA theses, and companies providing internship opportunities for students. The MRU has established an internal Research Promotion Fund in 2022 aiming to support research efforts at MRU.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The research profile of the institutions has been strengthened in the assessed period compared to the previous period in terms of output, both in quantitative and qualitative terms, resulting in increased international visibility. There is considerable involvement in international networking and collaboration (like COST), but there is still an apparent lack of more ambitious international projects. Networking, research and publication efforts and outcomes in the field of terminology in particular are commendable and could serve as a model to be followed by other sub-disciplines too. However, the research efforts do not seem to be distributed equally across all segments of the studies, with some researchers/teachers being clearly much more involved and engaged than others, which is then reflected in the quality of their teaching, publications and theses. Even though the institution claims its project application success rate is 30%, which is surprisingly high, it is not really evident from the list of projects IOH participates in.

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

(1) Factual situation

The research outcomes and insights from collaborations are integrated into the curriculum and relevant courses by applying different study materials and methods, keeping track with the latest developments in science and technology and updating the curriculum accordingly. This refers to the language technology in particular: using SketchEngine, terminology extraction tools, terminology annotation software, corpus tools like AntConc, AntPConc, LF-aligner, CAT

tools like Trados and Memsource (now Phrase), CmapTools in both teaching and theses preparation.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

Most research conducted by the teaching staff is linked with the content of studies and the latest developments in science and technology. There are some excellent examples of including the latest developments in the field in the studies and final theses, in particular in the field of terminology, with some overlap with the programme in Translation and Editing. MRU should extend the SketchEngine subscription, update the Phrase academic partnership, use the opportunity to become an academic partner of RWS to secure free Trados Studio 2022 licences for staff and students and access to their Language Cloud Solutions for working with Trados in the cloud. A similar academic partnership is possible with memoQ, which also offers free one-year subscriptions for students.

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

(1) Factual situation

Student involvement in research concentrates mostly on their work on term and bachelor papers and occasional participation in student conferences. Since 2015, the FLOWS conference has been organised annually to encourage student research, but no data is provided on actual student participation and presentations they made at this conference. SER lists only six examples of student participation in actual research, conferences and projects.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

Students are offered opportunities to conduct small-scale research for their term papers and BA theses. Their participation in other research activities, like projects, publications and conferences, is modest at best.

Strengths and weaknesses of this evaluation area:

(1) Strengths:

1. Increased number of publications in international journals indexed in WoS and Scopus in the assessed period compared to the previous period.
2. Existence of the internal Research Promotion Fund.
3. Existence of institutional requirements on top of national requirements for appointments and promotions to academic ranks.
4. Strong networking, research and publication efforts in the field of terminology.

(2) Weaknesses:

1. Uneven distribution of research efforts across different sub-disciplines and their links to teaching, student research and theses.
2. Lack of more ambitious international research projects.
3. Student involvement in projects and conferences is modest. Students are informed of research opportunities only sporadically.

3.3. STUDENT ADMISSION AND SUPPORT

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

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

(1) Factual situation

The application and admission to Mykolas Romeris University and its programmes is organised by LAMA BPO (Association of Lithuanian Higher Education Institutions for Centralised Admissions). The requirements for the study programme of English for Specific Purposes and the Second Foreign language include the results of state maturity exams of Lithuanian Language and Literature (0.4 of the competitive score, Foreign Language, and English (0.2 of the competitive score), and the results of either the exams or average annual score of History or Geography, or Mathematics, or Information Technology (0.2 of the competitive score), and Any subject that does not coincide with other subjects for which the state maturity exam is organised that year (0.2 of the competitive score).

The additional points can be awarded to both state-funded and non-state-funded applicants. High score on the maturity thesis, completing basic military training or mandatory military service, significant achievements in national and international Olympiads and competitions, cum laude graduates of vocational programmes of the same field, and volunteering are the activities for which the state-funded applicants can get additional points. Lithuanian Junior Achievement programme graduation, competitions, Leadership academy completion, Korean Language course at King Sejong Institute completion with certificate, National Student Academy completion with diploma, Young Philologists Academy completion with certificate are the activities for which the non-state funded applicants can get additional points.

The information regarding admission procedures and additional point allocation is available on LAMA BPO website, as well as on the website of Mykolas Romeris University. The information, according to SER, is also shared with potential students in various meetings and study fairs.

The number of first priority applicants during the evaluated period was 37, 53, and 40, with the remaining priorities consisting of 118, 132, and 139, in the years 2019, 2020, and 2021 respectively. Out of these numbers, the agreements signed were: 18 to state funded places, 16 to non-state funded places in 2019, 15 to state funded places, 28 to non-state funded places in 2020, and 24 to state funded places, and 11 to non-state funded places in 2021.

These admission results and trends are influenced by the demographic situation, as fewer students are graduating from secondary schools; by the increased competitive score of the applicants; and by the raised tuition fee across all higher education institutions (especially visible in the admission results of 2021). The total number of admitted students remains steady with slight fluctuations. During the analysed period, the lowest admission score has been increasing (from 5.21 to 5.63). This is accredited to the fact that the minimum admission score

of 5.4 was set in 2019, although MRU has kept it at 5.00 for non-state funded places that year. Highest admission score has been decreasing (from 9.80 to 8.74), while the average fluctuated only slightly, with 6.73 in 2019, 6.65 in 2020, and 6.76 in 2021.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The admission procedures are clear. They follow national regulations, and pose no specific issues to the applicants. While keeping the 5.00 score in 2019 did not necessarily follow the national regulations, and the lowest admission score of 5.21 does seem to show that students might have been less academically ready (or that there was a bigger gap of readiness among students, with the 9.8 admission score on the other side of the scale), it did not affect the admission numbers too much, i.e., the number of applicants with first priority was the lowest in 2019, during the period of 2019–2021, and the number of signed agreements was also the lowest.

While the numbers slightly increased in 2020, in 2021 they decreased again, especially in non-state funded places. The numbers in themselves are not bad, given the decreased drop-out rate as well, but some safeguards for the future have to be thought about, since the situation in the whole country is in no way favourable when it comes to student numbers.

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

(1) Factual situation

For the recognition of foreign qualifications, partial studies and prior non-formal and informal learning the university follows the Order of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania (TAR, 2017-04-24, No. 6855) on “The common principles for the assessment and recognition in higher education of non-formal and informal learning competences”; Study procedure of MRU, approved by the Senate resolution No. 1SN-36, and The Procedure for the Recognition of Study Credits (publicly available on MRU website) approved the Senate resolution No. 1SN-4 (as described in the SER).

To be credited, Learning Outcomes must be compatible with the MRU studies in these ways: 1. They have been acquired during studies at MRU and the study programme or subject has experienced no substantial change; 2. LOs have been acquired by part-time studies in another HEI through a study exchange agreement with MRU.

If there is a wish to seek credits for the LOs that do not fulfil those requirements, the person should submit an application, with the information about the study programme where the LOs were acquired, and where they are to be credited. If there is a higher education obtained, the diploma with the appendix and subject descriptions should be submitted too. If the person has not completed the studies, the transcript of records should be provided, for MRU staff to evaluate and recognise the LOs, based on the study field, cycle, form, and other features. According to SER, from 2019 to 2021, 100% of LOs were credited for students who went on Erasmus+ study or internship programmes.

Partial credits are confirmed before the mobility period, according to the preliminary learning agreement. With some changes after, the crediting of LOs was completed for 3 students, after they have submitted the required documents. They had 120 credits, 12 credits, and 48 credits validated respectively, out of 210 for the whole programme.

Non-formal and informal learning (paid, unpaid, voluntary work, and independent learning) can be evaluated if these requirements are met: candidates have at least secondary education; have at least 3–5 years of experience working in the field they wish to credit; and evidence should be provided about learning achievements in non-formal education. According to SER, the 1st cycle Philology by language (English) study field had no applications to recognise prior learning.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The University follows the procedures, both set by the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania, as well as the ones set by the University Senate. The procedures are well outlined, and the criteria are clear.

The only note would be the availability of the procedures and the criteria on the MRU website. They are there, but might be more difficult to reach for a user less familiar with the structure.

3.3.3. Evaluation of conditions for ensuring academic mobility of students

(1) Factual situation

MRU provides students with opportunities to participate in exchange programmes, and study or do internships abroad. The main programmes that allow to do that are Erasmus+, bilateral university agreements, international traineeships in Lithuanian schools and Lithuanian communities through Lithuanian Exchanges Support Fund, and student mobility for studies and summer schools under cross-border contracts. Additionally, the students can be involved in different projects at the University, allowing them to participate in intensive studies or internships abroad.

The information about such possibilities is published and can reach students in a number of ways: posters, leaflets, social media, and the MRU website. The International Office representatives can also visit lectures and present exchange opportunities to students there. Additionally, different events are organised, and once the application season begins, the students get informational emails.

According to SER, since 2019, ESPSFL had 13 international degree seeking students. The share of such students in the programme during the year 2019–2021 is as follows: 6% in 2019, 13% in 2020, and 3% in 2021. The students come from Azerbaijan, Belarus, China, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kosovo, Russia, Ukraine, and Turkey.

In terms of outgoing students, the numbers are as follows: 8 outgoing students in the period of 2019–2020 (going to Kosovo, Malaysia, Norway, Serbia, and Spain); 4 students in 2020–2021 (going to the Czech Republic, Norway, and South Korea), and 21 student in 2021–2022 (going to France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Latvia, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, South Korea, Spain, Switzerland, and the USA). All of the students went on the exchange for the duration of 5 months.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

It is understood that the fluctuation of incoming and outgoing students was influenced by COVID, but as the data show an increase in the years after the pandemic, there should be no issue in restoring the numbers. However, the numbers could be higher, especially when the numbers of incoming and outgoing students are compared, so perhaps more effort should be put in attracting exchange students to maintain similar numbers (not only for exchange purposes, to have similar numbers of students in lectures, as well as for the level of internationalisation, but also to be able to maintain the agreements).

While there is enough information reaching the students about the exchange opportunities, the evaluation visit revealed students have difficulty going for exchanges in South Korea, as there is limited financing, and not everyone who wants to go is able to. This should be looked into, as the Korean side of the study programme is one of the strengths, and if the students learn that in reality it is financially impossible (for some at least) to go there, especially after already joining the programme for that reason, the quality of the studies, as well as the student well-being suffers.

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

(1) Factual situation

MRU provides students academic, financial, social, psychological, and personal support in these ways:

Academic support takes a number of different forms. Firstly, the lectures are planned without any gaps in the first part of the day as much as possible, to provide students afternoons for independent studies. Moodle use provides an opportunity for students to study independently, as well as to communicate with each other during various tasks. Teachers are also available for consultations regarding studies or personal issues.

According to the SER, and provided survey data, the results show that the majority of students received academic support from the teaching staff (72%) or the management, such as the head of the study programme, study managers, vice-dean (83%). Additionally, the majority of respondents (83%) claim that they had enough academic support in terms of preparation for exams, consultations, or additional material for studies.

Financial support can be provided through different scholarships. MRU awards incentive scholarships to the students based on their performance. One-time incentive scholarships are

also awarded to students for activities in science, social matters, cultural, or sports activities. During the period of 2019–2021, the students of ESPSFL and ESPKS were awarded 30 incentive scholarships, and 34 one-time incentive scholarships in total.

Social scholarships are also available for students facing financial difficulties. During 2019–2021, there were 4 social scholarships awarded in total to students of ESPSFL, to cover study fees and accommodation costs. The state also offers social scholarships, a few of which were also awarded to students of the programmes, 11 in total, over the period of 2019–2021.

A few more specific scholarships are also available: International Ambassador’s Scholarship, Group Coordinator’s Scholarship (to students who perform group coordinator’s activities), and Patron scholarship (conditions depend on the patron). The information about financial support is available on the MRU website.

In some cases, the tuition fee can also be reduced by up to 50%, or the student may be fully released from paying the fee (outlined in the Administration Procedure of Tuition Fees and Payments at MRU). Students are also informed about state-supported loans for tuition fees or living expenses. The information about financial support is available on the MRU website.

Social support includes accommodation services to all students who come to study outside Vilnius. Additionally, various sports and cultural activities are available to students to engage in after their studies. Psychological student support is provided by the Psychological Service, which provides students and staff with one free consultation. Spiritual guidance is also available at St. Augustine's chapel. The SER also states that students can consult their study manager, the Head of the Programme or the Vice-Dean for Studies on a number of issues, personal or not, and are directed to different specialists if needed.

Finally, for coordination of the support services, and to ensure the wellbeing of the community at MRU, the Community Welfare Center was established in 2021. The information about the centre, its activities, and all the support for students is available on the MRU website.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The students appear to be well taken care of. The academic, social, financial, and personal support is sufficient, and meets the needs of students. A single free psychological consultation might not be enough, but the students did not express too much dissatisfaction with that.

The evaluation visit also revealed that the students are well informed about the types of support available to them, as well as know whom to ask for additional information. The creation of the Community Welfare Center is also commendable, as it allows to overlook the available support and its effectiveness, as well as provides clarity to students seeking for different types of support – everything is in one place.

3.3.5 Evaluation of the sufficiency of study information and student counselling

(1) Factual situation

At the beginning of their studies, the students are introduced to the study process at the University during the Introductory Study Week. The things covered include: MRU and its structure, the bodies providing support to students, the study process at the University, timetables, assessment, exams, choosing the final thesis topics, and similar things that concern the students in their first year. All relevant information is also available on the MRU website. Each student also has their own Study Guide (as a part of E-studies records book), that contains all of the information that students might require: Moodle, examinations, appeals, international mobility, financial aid, accommodation, extracurricular activities, and so on. During the Introductory Study Week students also meet the heads of their study programmes, who introduce the programmes themselves more.

As each course starts, the teachers also introduce the aims and LOs of the course, criteria for assessment. During the studies overall, the teachers also consult students weekly, and the heads of the programmes have monthly meetings with students, the students can reach them by e-mail, on Moodle, or in the office.

The effectiveness of consultations and student counselling is evaluated via student surveys. According to the results, the lecturers are available at the time allocated for consultations, are consulting students by e-mail and on Moodle (76.2% fully agree; 5.3% partially agree). According to SER, the adequacy and effectiveness for such support to students can also be judged positively because of the decreasing dropout rate.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The students receive adequate introduction to their studies at the University, as well as to their study programmes. As the studies progress, the students are able to consult with their teachers and other responsible staff on a variety of issues.

That said, while the study information and student counselling are sufficient, they should be monitored more. The surveys alone might not show certain issues that students face, and the sufficiency cannot be evaluated only by the decreasing number of dropouts (as indicated in the SER). The students might remain in their studies for entirely different reasons and that should be taken into account.

Overall, the students seem to be well guided in the study process, both in the beginning of their studies, as well as further along the way.

Strengths and weaknesses of this evaluation area:

(1) Strengths:

1. The establishment of the Community Welfare Center that gathers the provided support to students and staff in one place, and allows for its growth.

(2) Weaknesses:

1. International mobility when it comes to Korean studies, as the students are facing issues, especially financial, when planning their partial studies.

3.4. TEACHING AND LEARNING, STUDENT PERFORMANCE AND GRADUATE EMPLOYMENT

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

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

(1) Factual situation

The teaching in the study field of Philology (English Language) at MRU is “organised with respect to the humanistic approach to studies, the development of critical thinking, fostering metacognition as well as learner’s autonomy, where a student is empowered and given responsibility for LOs” (SER p. 73).

Modern digital studying approaches have been introduced everywhere: Moodle is used as a general learning platform, TEAMS is the platform used for interaction, cloud-based software or current reference systems are included in the MRU Library trainings.

During the pandemic, all teaching was online and students did not have too many problems with this, as the normal ESPSFL and ESPKS programme includes 63% independent work and students are familiar with online activities. Despite emergency measures, the needs of MRU students were taken into account and successful learning was achieved.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The SER includes all modern teaching and learning concepts that take into account individual and different student needs and enable them to achieve the intended learning outcomes – this also prepares them for modern communicative professional life after their studies.

During the site visit, the critical thinking of students became visible in the discussion of teaching methods, where Asian, more authoritative teaching methods were criticised politely. Although not all grievances seem to be dealt with, students know the respective mechanisms and have used them successfully.

The panel was pleased to note that previous expert recommendations had been followed: “Students have been involved in data-driven learning processes which encompass independent (individual or team) data collection, management and analysis activities, e.g., performing corpus-driven multilingual lexis analyses, development of a terminographic project and a multilingual termbase, etc.” (SER p. 100).

The students present during the site visit demonstrated that their practical language skills were excellent. They confirmed the good results reported in the SER.

The allocation of independent work (63% of hours) allows students to study at their own pace

and time. Internships are well integrated in the work plan and allow students to acquire the necessary professional practice – and over half the students were employed already when graduating (see below).

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

(1) Factual situation

The SER states explicitly and in detail that “MRU ensures that studies are accessible and adapted to the special needs of students” (SER p. 79). Customised study opportunities for all groups are established in the programme.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The MRU provides the necessary support for students with special needs. The reduction of the drop-out rate is objective evidence, the statements of the students provided enough subjective evidence. The students confirmed everything during the site visit.

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

(1) Factual situation

The SER includes positive figures of students’ employment (Sodra) and explains the detailed work of the Career Management Information System (SER p. 85). The long list of competences gained includes not only language skills, but also ESP, information management, autonomous learning and research, social-communicative and cultural skills (SER p. 90).

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The expert panel noticed the detailed work of the Career Management Information System. The detailed list of competences gained was confirmed by the students interviewed during the site visit, who gave clear evidence that the monitoring and student development are successful. However, students reported difficulties with study progress in Korean classes, where they have difficulties catching up with requirements.

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

(1) Factual situation

MRU participates in Karjera.lt. A component of this system, the Career Management Information System (CMIS), accessible to MRU Career Centre, Study programme managers and other administrative staff, allows monitoring graduates' career and seeing how they succeed in establishing themselves in the Lithuanian labour market (SER, p. 29). Data on employability of graduates 6 months and 3 years after graduation is monitored by the MRU. According to the statistics of the State Social Insurance Fund Board of 2018, MRU graduates ranked first among Lithuanian HEIs in terms of the percentage in employment 6 months after graduation (77.6%).

In 2019, the employability of graduates 6 months after graduation accounted for 73.1%, and in 2020 for 75.1 % respectively. In addition, the Career Centre conducts subjective career monitoring of graduates via CMIS. Graduates are surveyed 6 months, 12 months, or 3 years after graduation on issues of the study programme quality and satisfaction with studies, including their impact on graduate employability. Unfortunately, CMIS does not include data on self-employed persons, or those working abroad. Because of low graduate response rate, graduate career tracking is constantly performed by SPC, who use such instruments to monitor professional activities of the graduates as data in Karjera.lt website, graduate surveys, direct communication with graduates via email, social media, telephone, video calls, etc.

In January 2022, an anonymous survey was conducted to assess employability of the graduates of 2019-2021, which was supplemented by email and social networks in March and April 2022. The surveys showed that the employability of graduates 6 months after graduation accounted for 83% (SER, p. 29). Most of the graduates (57%) were employed under an employment agreement in the private sector.

The survey data show that the professional activity areas of ESPSFL graduates are diverse, but include all communication and foreign language competences. The survey outcomes confirmed that all graduates use English in their daily work, whereas a significant number also use their second foreign language. Skills of specialised English (legal/business/finance) appear to be very helpful at work.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The programme offers strong specialised English language and communication skills. Students acquire sufficient second language (Korean, Norwegian, Spanish) skills and develop foreign language learning abilities, including autonomous learning skills and cultural competence. In combination with strong specialised English language skills, the graduates' ability to speak yet another foreign language on a sufficient level make their employability rather strong on the whole. This was confirmed by alumni, who happily shared that it did not take them long to find employment at all, and that knowing an exotic foreign language in addition to their strong English language skills served as an attractive advantage in the eyes of the employers.

It was clear from the site visit meetings with alumni, employers, social partners and students that the programme offers significant potential for students to succeed in the professional environment after graduation and ability to learn additional foreign languages easily (e.g. Swedish) on the job. Graduate employability is tracked both centrally and on the programme level. Information on the opinion of the graduates on their professional training and the competences acquired following the studies is collected and provided.

There is no official data regarding the employers' opinion on the training of graduates or the acquired competences. However, during the site visit meeting the SER group confirmed that Chinese was included as one of the languages offered within the framework of the curriculum as a result of discussions with social partners. This clearly shows that the employers and social partners have a say on the competences of the future graduates of the programme.

The SER (p. 30) indicates that translation competences are seen among the most useful competences by 54% of graduates in their professional activities. The onsite meeting with alumni and students also confirmed their wish to have more practical training in translation. The employers that came for the onsite meeting with the external evaluation experts also confirmed that the translation skills of the graduates are rather basic, which prevents them from following a professional career in the field of translation. Thus, it would be worthwhile designing a way to strengthen the practical component of the study programme devoted to building the students' translation skills, including the application of online resources and (open) software.

Yet another positive development would be to involve the MRU Career Centre more in assisting students with finding their career path. The meeting with the students during the site visit showed that the Career Centre seems to be dealing with data collection and management mainly, and that the students would be more than happy to receive much more proactive assistance from the Career Centre in discovering their personal career path nearing the end of their studies or upon graduation.

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

(1) Factual situation

Appeal regulations are clearly formulated in the SER and made known to students. The document "Procedure for the Assessment of LOs at Mykolas Romeris University" (from 01.02.2021) is provided.

The SER mentions only one case of violation of academic integrity during the report period, which was detected through anti-plagiarism tools, and the student was expelled.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

MRU takes all ethics and values issues seriously and reacts appropriately.

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

(1) Factual situation

Appeal regulations are clearly formulated in the SER and made known to students.

During the site visit, students mentioned that they had criticised some intransparent and inappropriate teaching methods.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

Although not all teaching problems reported by students seem to have been solved, students

know the respective mechanisms and have used them relatively successfully.

Strengths and weaknesses of this evaluation area:

(1) Strengths:

1. A wide spectrum of student-centred teaching, learning and assessment methods that develops linguistic, communicative and socio-cultural skills in specific areas and general knowledge of philology.
2. Great resilience to pandemic learning disturbance through satisfactory digitalisation.
3. Customised study opportunities for socially vulnerable groups and students with special needs.
4. Systemic and effective monitoring procedures of academic progress of ESPSFL and ESPKS students.
5. Successful integration of graduates into the labour market.

(2) Weaknesses:

1. MRU's follow-up of students' contributions on teaching improvements.
2. Insufficient focus on building reliable modern translations skills among the students to choose translation as an option in their career path.

3.5. TEACHING STAFF

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

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

(1) Factual situation

The teaching staff working in the study field of *Philology (English Language)* at Mykolas Romeris University (MRU) fulfils the legal requirements. The teaching staff with a scientific degree is 62% overall or even 84% of permanent staff; the number of PhD holders increased from 13 to 16 during the period reported in the SER (p. 111). All is well above the legal requirement of 50% for BA and 80% for MA programmes. The competence in scientific, didactic and professional aspects is amply documented in the detailed sections of the SER.

During the site visit, teachers emphasised their successful efforts of expanding their cooperation with local schools and businesses (especially because of their special option Norwegian) as well as international organisations (like the European Council and European Commission). Depending on the language specialisation, other partnerships were established or expanded (e.g. the Royal Norwegian Embassy, because this specialisation is well established). The number of outgoing teachers and the number of partner universities visited is impressive and was not as much disturbed by the pandemic as the number of incoming teachers. The modernisation of teaching and integration of technology is also supported by the teacher competence improvement system, which is oriented towards innovative pedagogical methods (SER p. 116), which may be a good basis to strengthen the general teaching resilience.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

MRU teachers successfully implemented the principle of multilingual education by offering six second foreign languages (French, Spanish, Norwegian, German, Korean, Chinese), which is a useful specialisation for their graduates (in addition to English) as well as a good basis to ensure a wide and sufficient number of publications and conferences (Appendix 7).

The large number of teachers also guarantees an excellent staff-student ratio, which ensures good training in theory and practice.

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

(1) Factual situation

MRU staff are encouraged to use the existing opportunities by their Administration and good partners. Conditions and systemic nature of staff development were confirmed.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The conditions are excellent, as teachers are involved in international partnerships and have used opportunities well to build up reliable cooperation opportunities now and in future. Formal arrangements, including funding, are implemented well and teachers have no problems making use of the opportunities offered.

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

(1) Factual situation

Central Administration provides opportunities and encourages teachers to improve their competences or adapt them to changing conditions in digitalisation trends (or the pandemic).

The staff have also developed some expertise in COST Action meetings, which is always a good basis for internationalisation. The staff commitment on terminology and translation deserves a special mention as well as the awareness of and even contribution to CLARIN (SER p. 117).

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The good student–faculty ratio and the multilingual education in French, Spanish, Norwegian, German, Korean, and Chinese allow teachers to specialise and combine research and teaching exchange.

Strengths and weaknesses of this evaluation area:

(1) Strengths:

1. Engagement of native speakers to teach foreign-language classes.
2. The MRU staff are committed to teaching and research in international contexts, especially in terminology and the cooperation with EU institutions.
3. The MRU is aware that its focus on Korean Studies (ESPKS) is a unique selling point.

(2) Weaknesses:

1. Participation of incoming teaching staff is still disappointing.
2. Participation in (small) international teaching and research projects can be expanded.

3.6. LEARNING FACILITIES AND RESOURCES

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

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

(1) Factual situation

MRU's premises are spread around several modern and well-renovated older buildings that meet hygiene and safety at work requirements. All rooms are equipped with multimedia tools. In addition, large auditoriums are provided with the necessary sound equipment and have an electronic card access system that allows tracking their usage. There is a wireless computer network that covers the whole campus and the Student House. MRU has numerous stationary and mobile workstations with printers and scanners available for students and staff onsite. The IT network and infrastructure are well-developed. All MRU classrooms are equipped with computerised lecturers' workstations for lecturers to present material, broadcast and record lectures. Each classroom used for instruction of ESPSFL and ESPKS students, is equipped with sufficient numbers of computers and there is a possibility for students to connect and use their own laptops if need or wish be. Rooms for teaching foreign languages are adequate in size and numbers. (SER, p. 38)

MRU has tools to develop the language skills of the ESPSFL and ESPKS students, including Trados which is meant to build the students' translation skills. In addition, MRU provides open access (on campus or from home) to some other software (e.g. Sketch Engine, AntConc, AntPConc, Terminologue, Cmap tools, Memsource, Wordfast Classic, etc.) that can be used for lexicology, terminology, translation studies, etc. (SER, p. 38).

Students and staff can use the resources of the MRU Library, including its reading rooms, which are equipped with computers. The library subscribes to a number of databases and provides access to its electronic resources through LAN or EzProxy connection, and has a self-service equipment onsite to facilitate the busy moments throughout the academic year. The library sees the acquisition of electronic sources as its priority. For example, in 2022 it subscribed to 42 international and national databases. Moreover, MRU community has access to hundreds of thousands of e-books (e.g. eBooks on EBSCOhost), scientific journals (e.g. Taylor & Francis Online, etc.) and other periodicals (SER, p. 39).

Efforts are made to create equal opportunities for people with special mobility and visual needs. There are lifts, stair climbers, and special sanitary facilities on campus. Moreover, there are spots in the library provided with specialised software and other equipment for vision and motor impaired users (e.g. JAWS 14 for Windows; Win Taker Voice 1.6; SuperNova Magnifier;

Braille printer, alternative mouse for motor impaired users, etc.), including ergonomic furniture (SER, p 38-39).

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The premises used for studies are perfectly adequate in terms of size and quality. The older buildings are adapted to suit the needs of teaching and learning. Premises are suitable both for traditional lectures and seminars, and also for practical classes. However, what concerns self-study and student leisure, the student community would definitely benefit from more spaces for self-study. They could be equipped in the spacious corridors which are currently not used for anything else but several vending machines, stands, and sofas. There are several self-study spaces and rooms for group work in the library, but since the library is situated in the basement, WiFi connection is rather poor there, which definitely hinders the learning and self-study process. This has also been noted by students during the site visit.

The teaching and learning facilities meet the needs of the study field's programmes, including those of students and teachers, and are suitable for achieving the intended learning outcomes. There is a sufficient number of lecture rooms and computers available for the training of language specialists.

The equipment and resources for teaching is adequate in terms of numbers and quantity, but would clearly benefit from some modernisation and updating. Some modern online language learning tools like Duolingo, Mondly language learning app and the like could come in handy.

The learning resources, e.g. desktop computers, software, library resources, are sufficient in numbers, but would benefit from some updating. Even though, the SER (p. 39) says that the resources are constantly updated and meet ESPSFL and ESPKS teachers and students' needs, the site visit showed that the majority of student books used to learn languages and available at the library are often 15 or even 20 years old, with some exceptions (the newest student books used for language training date back to 2014 (e.g. English for Law Enforcement). According to the graduates' survey (SER, Annex 11), literature recommended by lecturers is easily available in the library (reading rooms) (totally agree and more agree than disagree – 76% of surveyed students). However, the meeting with students during the site visit showed that students have complaints about the need to learn languages from photocopied pages of books mainly, which causes major inconveniences for the learners. Thus, both students and teachers would clearly benefit from a major update of the library resources necessary to teach the foreign languages in the study field, especially student books and exercise books.

Despite the fact that Trados was mentioned in the SER as a CAT tool available at MRU for translator training (SER, p. 38), none of the students mentioned ever having used Trados when learning translation at MRU, nor have the alumni. The visit to the library showed that there are not many titles on translation there either. To provide greater opportunities for students to hone their translation skills, it would be beneficial to introduce them to such popular translation tools as memoQ, Wordfast, Phrase etc. including some free tools such as MateCat or OmegaT.

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

(1) Factual situation

The university has a budget for the infrastructure improvement and energy sustainability plan approved for 2021-2025. Annual public procurement plans are developed by departments responsible for teaching and learning resources. They collect and analyse respective qualitative and quantitative data and are responsible for updating and supplementing resources. At the beginning of each calendar year the library defines its needs for printed books and electronic databases. The teaching staff of the study field decide which publications to purchase.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

There is evidence in the SER of a strategic forward planning and upgrading of resources in general, including those needed to carry out the field studies. For example, the SER says (p. 40) that the planned expenditure for 2022 was EUR 20 000 for printed sources and 65 000 for subscriptions to databases. The SER refers to a planned budget for the improvement of infrastructure over the period of 2021-2025. When asked to expand on the plan, MRU presented an additional breakdown of information on a total of EUR 96 400 to be spent on resources, including other expenditure which was financially viable. The university has an overall goal of upgrading ICT and software regularly, but would definitely benefit from reflecting the changing student needs better in terms of teaching and learning resources (e.g. student books, language learning and translation software, etc.).

Strengths and weaknesses of this evaluation area:

(1) Strengths:

1. The teaching and learning premises are modern and well-renovated, meet the needs of the study field's programmes, students and teachers and are suitable for achieving the intended learning outcomes.
2. Efforts are made to create equal study opportunities for people with special needs.
3. Planning and upgrading of resources are well managed.

(2) Weaknesses:

1. Teaching and learning resources used for the purpose of the study field's programmes need quite a bit of updating, especially student books, language learning and translation tools, etc.
2. Spaces for student self-study and leisure with a reliable WiFi are clearly lacking.

3.7. STUDY QUALITY MANAGEMENT AND PUBLIC INFORMATION

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

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

(1) Factual situation

Quality assurance procedures and policies at Mykolas Romeris University are informed by MRU Statute, the Quality Policy for studies and research and provisions of the Internal Quality Assurance System of studies, which complies with “The Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area” (ESG, 2015), Regulations for Study Programme Committees, Procedure for Organizing Feedback on Studies at MRU, and Procedure for the preparation and improvement of study programmes (SER, p. 40). MRU’s institutional policies and commitments cover a wide range of quality assurance procedures, including programme accreditation and improvement, solicitation of student and stakeholder opinion, hiring and promotion decisions related to teaching staff, and academic integrity policies.

On the institutional level, the documentation and monitoring of ongoing study programmes is ensured by the MRU Academic Affairs Centre. On the programme level, much of the quality assurance work is undertaken by the relevant Study Programme Committee (SPC) that consists of academic staff teaching on the programmes, social partners, and student representatives (SER, p. 34). Since members of SPCs have programme-specific experience and knowledge, this constitutes an appropriate delegation of authority.

The SPCs of ESPSFL and ESPKS are responsible for the supervision of the quality of the curriculum and course structure with the aim to identify strengths, weaknesses and opportunities. The SPCs ensure a feedback system that covers students, graduates and other stakeholders to, and adjust the LOs, student workload, and assessment criteria. They engage in an annual revision of study plans, subject, topics, teaching, learning, and assessment methods, including resources, etc. Examples of course modifications based on these functions performed by SPC are provided in the SER (SER, p. 41).

One of the methods of quality assurance is the annual discussions held at MRU on LOs, study plans and student and stakeholder feedback, including graduate employability data and opinion of the alumni. Related QA outcomes are used to improve the ESPSFL and ESPKS programmes based on feedback from students, graduates, alumni, teaching staff, social partners and other stakeholders (SER, p. 41 and Annex 5).

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The QA policies and procedures for these study programmes are all in place and generally seem to be providing effective quality maintenance for the study programmes subjected to this evaluation on all levels. The programmes examined here are subjected to regular QA on the institutional and programme level. MRU clearly demonstrates willingness to examine their weaknesses and address them, including opportunities for improvement. There were no expert recommendations from the previous external evaluation report to act on in the field of QA. The SER reports that the quality assurance and quality maintenance mechanisms are appropriate and meet the requirements of the programmes.

However, the site visit meetings with students and alumni confirmed that there is room for improvement in terms of taking the opinion of the students, alumni and stakeholders onboard more actively and effectively.

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

(1) Factual situation

As mentioned before in this report, students and other stakeholders, such as social partners, are represented on SPCs of the programmes under evaluation. The SER refers to meetings with students, and says that teachers stay regularly in contact with the European Council and the European Commission, including local stakeholders, and discuss relevant topics for bachelor theses. Moreover, MRU has plans to expand cooperation with external stakeholders as it seems to help achieve significant improvements in the study process and QA (SER, p. 42).

According to the SER, students suggest improvements regularly and each semester have meetings with the Dean's Office where they voice their opinion, wishes and suggestions regarding the improvements that would benefit the programmes. Student feedback is analysed each semester with the aim to improve the quality of studies (SER, p. 42 and Annex 12).

The SER shows a number of areas of student involvement in QA, such as regular student opinion surveys, including online surveys, questionnaires to collect student feedback, etc. (SER, p. 42). Alumni are also asked for their feedback in the form of questionnaires and individual contacts by teachers with the aim to evaluate if the programmes offered by MRU develop the skills needed on the labour market and whether they are in line with the latest trends. These mechanisms of inclusion provide sufficient evidence of the seriousness with which MRU seeks to involve students and alumni in QA.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

MRU makes an effort to involve students, alumni and social partners in internal quality assurance. They are all represented in SPCs and are given opportunities to express their opinions and suggestions. The site visit also confirmed that some suggestions made by the students (e.g. regarding the Introduction into Studies course), the teachers and the stakeholders (e.g. regarding the introduction of the Chinese language) have been incorporated by MRU in its study programmes.

Still, the programmes would highly benefit from taking into account the student opinion on quality assurance in teaching. The site visit meeting with students showed that quite a number of students feel their opinion about teaching and practice-theory balance does not matter despite the fact that they are asked to share it. In a number of cases nothing changes as a result of students voicing their opinion and teachers keep working the way they used to without changing their teaching for the better. Some minor changes to the way the programmes are taught have been confirmed by some students. However, in many cases when students asked for a more interactive classroom teaching, nothing has changed.

During the meeting with experts, students suggested that it would be better to have opinion surveys on the work of a particular teacher rather than a particular course unit to enable them to assess the way a particular teacher contributes to the quality of the programme delivery.

The meeting with alumni and employers confirmed their involvement in SPCs and participation in opinion surveys. Still, employers and alumni expressed a clear wish for a more proactive approach on the part of MRU. Both employers and alumni shared their strong willingness to contribute to the quality of programme delivery, clearly expressed their openness to suggestions and invitations on the part of MRU to make the stakeholder-MRU cooperation more intense and fruitful. The experts are also of the opinion that the programmes would definitely benefit from a much more active involvement of employers and alumni, which needs to be proactively facilitated by MRU.

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

(1) Factual situation

On the whole, study programme-related information is publicly available. Information on the provision of study programmes, admission requirements, LOs, etc. is published on MRU website. Students verified that their opinion is formally and informally surveyed. The teaching staff also verified that they receive student survey results and are involved in programme revision and other programme improvement-related matters. Employers and alumni attested to being asked for their opinion during informal meetings and in the form of surveys.

Study programme-related external assessment and accreditation outcomes, including student opinions and information on graduate career, is made public on MRU website. No social partner, teacher or student mentioned being inadequately informed about programme data.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

MRU appears to be generally open in the distribution and consideration of regular student surveys and external assessment and accreditation outcomes. Students and alumni seem to be well informed about the overall structure and delivery of the programmes. Data on graduate employment is collected and analysed.

Examples are provided on how the information collected on the delivery and evaluation of studies is used to improve the field studies.

Therefore, it can be concluded that the collection, use and publication of information on the studies meets the expected standards and is appropriate to the study programmes.

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

(1) Factual situation

There is regular student representation in the relevant SPCs where students can raise issues and concerns, including opportunities, with the aim to improve the study programmes.

There are clear mechanisms to elicit and analyse student opinion by way of formal and informal opinion surveys. Students have opportunities for formal and informal discussions with the administration and their teachers.

Alumni surveys are performed. They provide valuable insights and opportunities for programme graduates to contribute to the improvement of the study programmes.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

There is a commitment on the part of MRU and the study programmes to elicit student opinions, comments and concerns.

As mentioned before, there may be room for improvement in more proactively addressing student concerns about teaching. This would be of great benefit, because despite all the opinion surveys and informal discussions, students often feel that they are not listened to due to repeated cases of failure, in the students' eyes, on the part of MRU to act on their opinion regarding teaching and practice-theory balance, etc.

Nonetheless, the general mechanisms employed in evaluating the opinion of the field students about the quality of studies seem to be largely sufficient and understood.

Strengths and weaknesses of this evaluation area:

(1) Strengths:

1. There are effective QA mechanisms in place including institutional level QA initiatives and the SPCs.
2. There is a strong commitment to surveying students and alumni.
3. Stakeholders (employers and alumni) demonstrate strong willingness to be actively involved in the delivery and QA of the study programme.

(2) Weaknesses:

1. There is some evidence that reasonable student concerns about the course delivery and teaching are not acted upon.
2. Despite the strong willingness on the part of the employers and alumni to contribute, they are not proactively approached and involved by MRU in the improvement and delivery of the study programmes, thus there is a lot of room for improvement here.

IV. EXAMPLES OF EXCELLENCE

1. Networking, research, publication and student engagement efforts in the field of terminology work can be singled out as an example of excellence.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS

Evaluation Area	Recommendations for the Evaluation Area (study cycle)
<p>Intended and achieved learning outcomes and curriculum</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make sure that courses providing core competencies at the programme level are part of the obligatory curriculum and not just electives (translation). • Provide more flexibility for students to design the course load according to their preferences by giving electives more weight in your programme. If possible, allow students to take more electives from other related programmes you offer at your institution, like the one in Translation and Editing. • Re-examine the inherited practices of assigning the same workload to all courses. This will create more room for electives and offer more flexibility. • Ensure that graduates also develop high language competence in Lithuanian – this should not be taken as a given. • Ensure that graduates achieve the advertised level of competence in all foreign languages by adjusting teaching methods. • Follow up on student complaints concerning progression through studies and achievement of learning outcomes more thoroughly and provide feedback on actions taken to students. • Advertise the programme more in the community and among stakeholders to increase your visibility and engagement, and maximise the involvement of alumni and partners in both teaching and outreach activities. • Create equal conditions for studies and mobility for all students. Offer them more encouragement and concrete support for realising complex mobilities, especially to students going to Korea. • Strengthen the practical component of the study programme devoted to building students’ translation skills.
<p>Links between science (art) and studies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make more effort to participate in more ambitious international projects. • Continue widening the international reach for publications and research dissemination. • Further encourage participation in projects in collaboration with the community and civil society organisations. • Increase student involvement in research projects. • Consider introducing an award system for outstanding research and teaching.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support lecturers who pursue PhD studies more as this may additionally increase the research profile of the institution. • Make more fine-grained monitoring and assessment of research output, with benchmarks and measurable indicators at the study field level. • Increase networking efforts to establish links with Korean universities and the Korean Embassy once it opens in Lithuania.
Student admission and support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate the conditions of mobility for students to make sure they meet the students' needs. • Provide more information and clarity regarding the financial responsibilities, especially for the mobility of students in Korean studies.
Teaching and learning, student performance and graduate employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assure vertical student mobility by providing MA programmes where students can continue their education. • Involve the MRU Career Centre much more in assisting students with finding their career path.
Teaching staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage teachers even more systematically to take part in international exchange in teaching and research. • Encourage teachers to discuss intercultural differences in methodologies to provide necessary background information and critical self-reflection for student discussions or complaints. • Based on student feedback, provide training for the teaching staff to monitor student progression and adjust the teaching methodology to assure the achievement of learning outcomes.
Learning facilities and resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make an effort to become an RWS Academic Partner to ensure students have free access to the industry-standard CAT tool and related solutions for both translation and terminology work (licences for Trados Studio 2022, Language Cloud, Passolo and Multiterm). • Try out modern online language learning tools (e.g. Mondly language learning app, Duolingo, etc.) • Update the library resources used to learn the variety of languages offered to make them up to date and sufficient in numbers to avoid making copies for student use. • Introduce students to modern translation tools (e.g. MemoQ, Wordfast, MateCat, etc.). • Provide more spaces for student self-study with a reliable WiFi (which can be equipped, e.g. in the spacious corridors of MRU).
Study quality management and public information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make an effort to take the opinion of and suggestions made by students, alumni and stakeholders onboard more actively and effectively, especially that of students on QA in teaching. • Replace student opinion surveys on the level of a course unit with those on the level of a teacher to clearly see the

	<p>way a particular teacher contributes to the quality of the programme delivery.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Be much more proactive in approaching and involving the employers and alumni in the improvement and delivery of the study programme.
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VI. SUMMARY

The Expert Panel has prepared the External Evaluation Report based on the detailed SER prepared by MRU, the very extensive supporting documentation provided as evidence in support of claims made in the SER and the engaging and informative discussions during the site visit, for which we thank everybody involved.

The study field of English Philology and programme in English for Specific Purposes and the Second Foreign Language, with the added specialisation in Korean, is a distinctive and innovative niche programme that aims to meet a real global need of the multilingual economy for linguistically competent intercultural communicators in different languages, with added skills in Korean, who can ensure smooth business communication on the global market.

Having analysed the different aspects of the programme implementation and outcomes, the panel has identified a number of positive aspects and strengths including the uniqueness of the specialisation in Korean as a means to increase enrolment but also ensure added skills to distinguish graduates on the labour market; the involvement of external stakeholders in thesis committees; increased internationalisation efforts as a follow-up from the previous evaluation, resulting in increased incoming and outgoing mobility; high success rate of project applications, increased number of publications in international journals in the assessed period, the existence of institutional requirements on top of national requirements for appointments and promotions to academic ranks; strong networking, research and publication efforts in the field of terminology; successful integration of graduates into the labour market; efforts to create equal study opportunities for people with special needs; well-managed planning and upgrading of premises; effective QA mechanisms; and strong commitment to surveying students and alumni.

However, there are some areas that require reconsideration and improvement, most notably ensuring the vertical mobility and progression of students through the higher education system, second cycle study programme to assure the continuation of studies; ensuring that all programme learning outcomes are achieved at the level defined in the programme description; increasing the share of electives vs. core courses in the programme structure to ensure real personalization of the study; creating equal conditions for studies and mobility for all students; increasing student involvement in the research at the institution; strengthening research efforts across all sub-disciplines and making them more market-relevant; targeting more ambitious international projects; greater focus on building reliable translation skills among the students who choose translation as an option; updating the teaching and learning resources, especially student books, language learning and translation tools; equipping spaces for student self-study and leisure with a reliable WiFi; acting upon reasonable student concerns about the course delivery and teaching; approaching and involving stakeholders (employers and alumni) much more proactively in the delivery and QA of the study programme.

The Expert Panel has made specific recommendations on how to address the identified weaknesses and urges the HEI to adopt a clear and feasible action plan to eliminate the shortcomings and further improve the quality of studies and research.

Overall, the Expert Panel believes that the programme in English for Specific Purposes and the Second Foreign Language, with the added specialisation in Korean, at MRU is a distinctive niche programme in ESP that the institution is committed to, and that, with some fine-tuning, has the capacity to produce graduates skilled at multilingual communication, mediation and terminology work.

Expert panel chairperson signature:

Prof. dr. Marija Omazić