

Decision Regarding the Assessment of the Informatics and Information Technology Study Programme Group Tallinn University

05/02/2014

The Quality Assessment Council of the Estonian Higher Education Quality Agency decided to approve the assessment report by the Assessment Committee and to conduct the next quality assessment of the Informatics and Information Technology study programme group in the first and second cycles of higher education at Tallinn University in seven years.

Assessment Committee

Ernst Wilhelm Mayr – Chair	Technical University of Munich, Professor (Germany)
Liz Bacon (Elisabeth Kabler)	The University of Greenwich, Professor (UK)
Stephen Anthony Brewster	University of Glasgow, Professor (UK)
Andres Kütt	Nordea Bank, BCIO Baltic Countries (Estonia)
Aleksandr Požidajev	Tallinn University of Technology, student (Estonia)
Albert Sangrá	Open University of Catalonia, eLearn Center, Professor (Spain)
Tanel Tammet	Tallinn University of Technology, Professor (Estonia)

The Committee's observations on the study programme group level

Strengths:

- *The general quality of the learning environment and the teaching staff is high. Student access to IT technology is very good; the study rooms, equipment and library are of high quality.*

- *Both students and employees of Tallinn University Institute of Informatics are highly motivated. The students feel good about their studies and perceive the university as receptive to their needs.*
- *Regarding the master's degree programmes, the teaching methods are highly innovative. The teaching staff are clearly focused on methodological innovations; for example, accepting home assignments via blogs, where they will receive an immediate response from both teaching staff and other students. This innovation is in line with research, which is focused on educational technologies and on human-computer interaction.*
- *The aforementioned research areas are in perfect agreement with the general focus and trends of Tallinn University and have a great potential for supporting innovation in all of the University study programs as well as in other educational institutions.*
- *The master's degree programmes are well suited to the continuation of studies commenced in other disciplines because they do not require that the applicants have an IT background. The goal of master's degree programmes is to teach students to use information technology tools for the humanities-oriented application areas.*
- *Prospective employers clearly appreciate the knowledge and training of the students, and the employment prospects of graduates are very good. There is clearly a strong need for professionals with the competence obtained from the studies under these study programmes.*

Areas for improvement and recommendations:

- *There is virtually no coherence between bachelor's degree and master's degree programmes. Although the master's degree programmes are suitable for graduates from other disciplines, they are not necessarily attractive to students with IT-related bachelor's degrees.*
- *It is necessary to strengthen cooperation among the teaching staff within the Institute of Informatics and improve their workload distribution by involving more lecturers of master degree studies in bachelor degree studies as their workload is lower, their academic freedom higher and their teaching methods more innovative. Altogether, it is advisable to better unify requirements for the teaching staffs of bachelor and master degree studies.*
- *To raise the level of quality of the graduates and increase the attractiveness of study programmes to individuals with some IT background, it is necessary to increase the complexity of work required in master degree studies.*
- *The results of research in educational technology and human-computer interaction should be more frequently applied and promoted in Tallinn University as a whole, as well as in other universities.*
- *Students need some training in group dynamics in order to learn how to better balance individual participants' contributions to team work.*

- *In order to better prepare students for the expectations of the labour market, they must be trained to adhere strictly to deadlines in all study areas, and only those with a genuine need should be allowed extensions.*
- *Greater international mobility within the study programme group should continue to be pursued for both students and teaching staff.*
- *It is necessary to standardise the quality of wording for learning outcomes and develop a specific procedure for that as needed.*

Further information:

[Assessment Report](#)