



STUDIJŲ KOKYBĖS VERTINIMO CENTRAS
CENTRE FOR QUALITY ASSESSMENT IN HIGHER EDUCATION

FOOD TECHNOLOGY FIELD OF STUDY

OVERVIEW REPORT

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I. INTRODUCTION

Overview report is based on the external evaluation of the Food technology field of study in the following Lithuanian Higher Education Institutions (HEIs):

- Kauno kolegija
- Kaunas University of Technology
- Klaipėdos valstybinė kolegija
- Šv. Ignaco Lojolos kolegija
- Utenos kolegija
- Vilniaus kolegija

The external evaluation was organised by the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education (SKVC), Lithuania.

This Overview report focuses on the main findings of the external evaluation of the field of study from a general point of view. External evaluation reports containing more detailed information on the field of study in the relevant HEIs, including evaluation points, commendations, and recommendations, are available on SKVC's website.

Based on the findings of the evaluation, the decision has been made to give a positive evaluation to the following HEIs and cycles:

- Kauno kolegija first-cycle
- Kaunas University of Technology first- & second-cycles
- Klaipėdos valstybinė kolegija first-cycle
- Šv. Ignaco Lojolos kolegija first-cycle
- Utenos kolegija first-cycle
- Vilniaus kolegija first-cycle

Based on the findings of Food technology study evaluation, the expert panel has come to a decision to not to give negative evaluation to any of the six HEIs visited in either first or second study cycles.

Upon receiving a positive evaluation, SKVC decides to either grant full accreditation to the field of study and cycle for a period of 7 years or provide partial accreditation for a period of 3 years. If the field of study and cycle is given negative evaluation, it is not accredited. **Following the external evaluation reports of Food technology field of study, SKVC takes a decision to accredit the study field and cycle for 7 years.**

II. OVERVIEW BY EVALUATION AREAS

This section of the Overview report highlights the overarching observations made by the expert panels regarding the positive aspects of the Food technology field of study in Lithuanian HEIs, as well as areas identified for improvement.

The observations presented below reflect the findings from the Kaunas higher education institutions evaluated by the first expert panel and have been complemented by the findings from the institutions evaluated by the second expert panel, which conducted evaluations at Utenos kolegija, Klaipėdos valstybinė kolegija, and Vilniaus kolegija.

1. STUDY AIMS, LEARNING OUTCOMES AND CURRICULUM

The study aims, learning outcomes and curricula within the Food Technology field at the Kaunas higher education institutions were found to be coherent, transparent and aligned with the respective institutional missions. The evaluated institutions represent different profiles: a university model with strong research integration, a professionally oriented college programme, and a distinctive Culinary Arts programme within the Food Technology field. Despite these differences, the programmes are relevant to labour-market needs and reflect the expectations of the food sector.

Across the evaluated institutions, learning outcomes address the application of food science and technology, technological process analysis, food safety and quality, product development, sustainability, problem-solving and professional responsibility. They reflect the respective study cycles and institutional profiles, from research-oriented competences at university level to applied and practice-based competences in professionally oriented studies.

The curricula provide an appropriate structure for achieving the intended learning outcomes. They combine theoretical knowledge with laboratory work, applied projects, professional practice, final theses and, where relevant, authentic professional learning environments. Cooperation with social partners and employers further strengthens the labour-market relevance of the programmes and supports the continuous updating of study content.

Further enhancement could be achieved by continuing to embed current food legislation and regulatory thinking more systematically into Food Technology education, particularly in relation to food safety and quality, novel foods, sustainability and the farm-to-fork approach. This would strengthen students' ability to apply regulatory frameworks in study materials, applied projects and final theses.

The attractiveness and visibility of Food Technology-related studies should also be continuously strengthened considering broader European demographic trends and changing student expectations. This represents a wider challenge for the field rather than an institution-specific weakness and is important for ensuring the future availability of qualified specialists for the food sector.

Turning to the other higher education institutions evaluated within the same Food Technology field, a broadly comparable picture emerges. At Klaipėdos valstybinė kolegija, Utenos kolegija and Vilniaus kolegija, the study aims, learning outcomes and curricula in the Food Technology field were found to be coherent, transparent and strongly aligned with labour-market needs, regional development priorities and the strategic objectives of each institution. Cooperation with social partners and industry representatives is a shared

strength, particularly through their active involvement in curriculum development, teaching, internships and the supervision and assessment of practice-oriented and industry-based final theses.

The curricula provide a well-structured basis for achieving the intended learning outcomes, combining theoretical knowledge with laboratory work, applied projects, professional placements and final theses. All three institutions demonstrate responsiveness to socio-economic developments and to the expectations of the regional food sector.

Further enhancement could be achieved by expanding opportunities for study personalisation through a broader range of food technology-related elective and alternative subjects, so that students can develop discipline-specific expertise aligned with their professional interests. Institutions are also encouraged to strengthen curriculum development through systematic benchmarking with comparable European Food Technology programmes, wider involvement of international academic and industry partners, and clearer articulation of each programme's distinctive features relative to other Food Technology programmes offered in Lithuania.

2. LINKS BETWEEN SCIENTIFIC (OR ARTISTIC) RESEARCH AND HIGHER EDUCATION

At the Kaunas higher education institutions, links between research, applied research and higher education in the Food Technology field are present, although their nature differs according to the missions and profiles of the evaluated institutions. In the university context, research is strongly embedded in the study field and supports research-based teaching, technological development and international academic visibility. In professionally oriented college studies, the expectation is not to reproduce a university research model, but to ensure that applied research, professional practice and cooperation with external partners are sufficiently systematic, visible and clearly connected with student learning.

The evaluations showed that current developments in food science, food technology, sustainability, product development and innovation are reflected in the study process at a level broadly appropriate to the respective institutional profiles and study cycles. Research-related and applied innovation activities contribute to the development of students' practical, analytical and professional competences, enabling them to engage with real technological and organisational challenges in the food sector.

In professionally oriented institutions, close cooperation with industry, gastronomy, catering and other external partners provides an important basis for further strengthening applied research and innovation outcomes. Such activities may include product development, process optimisation, prototypes, applied projects, professional problem-solving, dissemination of results and, where appropriate, intellectual property or other innovation-related outputs. Their value lies not only in practical relevance or scientific output, but also in supporting students' analytical thinking, independent learning and readiness for further studies, including progression to second-cycle education.

Further development should therefore focus on making applied research and research-related activities more systematic, better documented and more visible. Clearer applied research priorities, stronger dissemination of results, wider student involvement and closer links with stakeholders would help ensure that professionally oriented studies maintain an appropriate and meaningful connection between higher education, practice, innovation and further academic progression.

A comparable pattern can be observed at the other evaluated higher education institutions. At Klaipėdos valstybinė kolegija, Utenos kolegija and Vilniaus kolegija, applied research is effectively integrated into the study process, ensuring that current developments in food science, technology, sustainability and innovation are reflected in teaching and learning. Students are actively involved in applied research through laboratory work, practice-oriented projects, professional placements, scientific-practical conferences and final theses addressing real challenges of the food industry, with evidence at some institutions of student co-authorship in scientific dissemination.

Well-established cooperation with regional food-industry partners underpins applied research activities and practical training, and the applied research priorities are well aligned with regional economic needs, sustainability objectives and the professional profile of the field.

Further development should focus on strengthening the international dimension of applied research: increasing participation in international research and innovation projects, scientific networks and collaborative high-impact publications; expanding research mobility for staff and students; and reinforcing interdisciplinary cooperation in areas such as sustainable food systems, digitalisation of food technologies and functional food innovation. More systematic monitoring of student participation in applied research, including quantitative indicators, would help demonstrate the impact of research integration into the study process.

3. STUDENT ADMISSION AND SUPPORT

At the Kaunas higher education institutions, student admission procedures in the Food Technology field are transparent, clearly defined and aligned with national requirements. Recognition procedures for prior learning, foreign qualifications and study periods are in place and support flexible learning pathways.

Student support systems are generally effective and adapted to the profiles of the evaluated institutions. They include academic and personal support, mentoring or direct access to teaching staff, flexible study arrangements and, where relevant, financial, social and psychological support. These mechanisms contribute to a supportive learning environment, particularly for students combining studies with employment.

Further attention should be given to supporting stable student intake, retention and mobility. While admission procedures are adequate, the institutions should continue their efforts to communicate the value of Food Technology studies, support students in the early stages of their studies and encourage participation in available mobility opportunities.

A similar overall picture emerges at the other evaluated institutions, although some differences can be observed in the organisation of student support and approaches to international mobility. At Klaipėdos valstybinė kolegija, Utenos kolegija and Vilniaus kolegija, admission procedures are transparent, well structured and based on national requirements, with competitive scoring and, in some cases, additional points for applicants with relevant professional experience. Student support systems are effective and increasingly personalised, adapted to a diverse and often working-adult student population; group curator systems, formalised first-year adaptation programmes and freshman surveys support student integration and retention.

Institutions demonstrate a genuine commitment to internationalisation within the constraints of their student cohorts, notably through the active and effective use of Erasmus+ Blended Intensive Programmes

that offer meaningful short-term international experience to students who cannot commit to a full semester abroad, alongside a high volume of incoming international participants.

The most consistent area for improvement across these institutions concerns long-term outgoing student mobility, which remains limited. Institutions are encouraged to set realistic mobility targets backed by dedicated Erasmus+ budget, earlier and more systematic communication with students, flexible or shorter full-credit formats, and closer engagement with partner institutions to identify placements compatible with students' work and family commitments. Formalising dropout-prevention through defined early-warning indicators, clear role assignments and documented interventions would further strengthen retention, particularly for first-year students. Offering at least a partial English-language track was also recommended to improve accessibility for international students.

4. TEACHING AND LEARNING, STUDENT ASSESSMENT, AND GRADUATE EMPLOYMENT

At the Kaunas higher education institutions, teaching and learning in the Food Technology field are well aligned with the respective programme aims, learning outcomes and institutional profiles. The study process combines theoretical knowledge with practical application through laboratory work, project-based and problem-based learning, practical assignments, internships, professional training and final theses. These approaches support students in developing both disciplinary knowledge and competences required for independent professional activity in the food sector.

Student assessment systems are transparent, outcome-oriented and based on established institutional procedures. A range of assessment methods is used to evaluate students' knowledge, practical skills, analytical abilities and professional competences. Monitoring of student progress, feedback mechanisms and consultations support students' learning development and contribute to the coherence of the teaching and learning process.

Graduate employment outcomes confirm the relevance of Food Technology-related studies to labour-market needs. Cooperation with employers and social partners, internships, career-related activities and final projects linked to real professional contexts support students' transition to employment. Feedback from employers and graduates indicates that graduates are well prepared for professional roles in food production, quality and safety management, gastronomy, catering, research and related sectors.

Further enhancement of this area could be supported by continuing to use feedback from students, graduates and employers to improve teaching, assessment and competence development. Continued attention should also be given to ensuring that graduates' knowledge and skills remain aligned with the changing technological, regulatory and professional needs of the food sector.

Comparable findings were observed at the other evaluated institutions. At Klaipėdos valstybinė kolegija, Utenos kolegija and Vilniaus kolegija, teaching and learning are well aligned with programme aims, learning outcomes and institutional profiles, combining theoretical knowledge with laboratory work, project- and problem-based learning, practical assignments, internships, professional training and final theses. A notable shared strength is the institutions' capacity to adapt to the increasingly diverse profiles of their students, with particular attention to personalised support and to the needs of working professionals, supported by continuous curriculum enhancement.

Student assessment is transparent and outcome-oriented, and graduate employment outcomes confirm the relevance of the studies to the labour market, supported by close cooperation with employers and social partners.

Further enhancement could be achieved by developing more structured and systematic approaches to graduate career tracking and to collecting and using feedback from students, graduates and employers, including clear performance indicators and documented monitoring. Establishing structured student and alumni networks, using professional social networks such as LinkedIn, building alumni databases linked to employers, and expanding professional networks beyond a single region would support long-term engagement, employability tracking and evidence-based programme improvement.

5. TEACHING STAFF

At the Kaunas higher education institutions, teaching staff involved in the Food Technology field are appropriately qualified and competent to ensure the achievement of the intended learning outcomes. Their academic, didactic and professional profiles reflect the missions of the evaluated institutions, combining research-based expertise, technological competence and practice-oriented professional experience.

A key strength of this area is the strong engagement of teaching staff in the study process and their accessibility to students. In the university context, staff qualifications are supported by active research, participation in scientific projects and cooperation with external partners. In professionally oriented studies, the professional experience of teaching staff and their close links with industry, gastronomy and catering practice contribute directly to the applied relevance of teaching and student preparedness for professional activity.

The evaluated institutions provide opportunities for staff development, mobility and continuous professional learning. Feedback mechanisms involving students and, where relevant, social partners support the monitoring of teaching quality and help maintain a responsive academic environment.

Further enhancement of this area could be supported by more systematic planning of staff continuity, particularly in relation to the future replacement of key competences and teaching responsibilities. Appropriate involvement of academic staff in recruitment and competence planning, together with continued recognition of high-quality teaching, would help maintain the strong teaching profile of the Food Technology programmes.

A similarly strong profile is evident at the other evaluated institutions. At Klaipėdos valstybinė kolegija, Utenos kolegija and Vilniaus kolegija, teaching staff are appropriately qualified and competent, combining academic expertise with substantial professional experience and strong links to the food industry, which ensures that teaching remains current and professionally relevant. Favourable student-to-teacher ratios support individualised teaching and close academic supervision, and institutions provide well-structured opportunities for staff development, academic mobility and competence enhancement, including in digital education and practice-oriented teaching.

Consistent with the first panel's observations, the principal area for further development concerns staff continuity and succession planning, including the recruitment and development of early-career academics and industry professionals to ensure generational renewal. Institutions are also encouraged to expand participation of academic staff in international research networks, joint and externally funded research

projects, and international teaching and cooperation activities, and to enhance the documentation and visibility of periodic staff evaluation based on student feedback and peer review.

6. LEARNING FACILITIES AND RESOURCES

At the Kaunas higher education institutions, learning facilities and resources in the Food Technology field are sufficient to support the achievement of intended learning outcomes and reflect the different profiles of the evaluated institutions. The available infrastructure includes lecture rooms, laboratories, practical training facilities, digital learning environments, library resources and, where relevant, specialised professional environments.

The strongest examples of infrastructure are linked to modern laboratory and technological facilities, pilot-scale or semi-industrial learning environments, and practice-based settings that allow students to connect theoretical knowledge with practical application. These resources support laboratory work, product development, technological process analysis, internships, final theses and research-related or applied activities.

Resource planning and renewal are addressed through institutional procedures and, in some cases, supported by research projects, cooperation with social partners or access to external facilities. Such cooperation is particularly important for strengthening practical training and ensuring that students work with equipment and environments relevant to current food-sector practice.

Further development of this area should focus on the continued modernisation of laboratory and practical training facilities, systematic updating of learning and information resources, and effective use of available innovative equipment in teaching, student projects and final theses. Continued attention to food safety-related resources and up-to-date regulatory materials would further support the quality and relevance of Food Technology education.

The other evaluated institutions also demonstrate an appropriate level of learning facilities and resources, with particular strengths arising from cooperation with social partners. At Klaipėdos valstybinė kolegija, Utenos kolegija and Vilniaus kolegija, learning facilities and resources are sufficient to support the achievement of intended learning outcomes and reflect the different institutional profiles. Strong partnerships with social partners and vocational education institutions give students access to industrial settings, practical placements and specialised technological resources, and institutions demonstrate continuous efforts to maintain and gradually improve laboratories and digital learning resources despite demographic and financial challenges. The availability of pilot-scale technological equipment at some institutions provides valuable opportunities to develop practical skills relevant to contemporary food-industry operations, while library and study facilities were noted as being of a high standard.

Further development should focus on continuing the modernisation of laboratory premises, particularly chemistry and food technology laboratories, expanding access to pilot-scale and specialised equipment relevant to current industry practice, and deepening cooperation with vocational education institutions and industry partners to maximise student access to technological facilities as enrolment grows.

7. QUALITY ASSURANCE AND PUBLIC INFORMATION

At the Kaunas higher education institutions, internal quality assurance systems in the Food Technology field are established, functional and support the continuous monitoring and improvement of study programmes.

Quality assurance processes include the review of programme content, learning outcomes, teaching methods, assessment procedures, student progress, graduate outcomes and stakeholder feedback.

Stakeholder involvement is an important strength of this area. Students, teaching staff, graduates, employers and social partners contribute to programme evaluation and development through feedback mechanisms, institutional bodies, consultations and cooperation in study-related activities. This supports the relevance of the programmes and helps maintain their alignment with labour-market and professional expectations.

Information on study programmes, admission, learning outcomes, evaluation processes and quality assurance activities is collected, analysed and made publicly available through institutional communication channels. This supports transparency and enables prospective students, current students and external stakeholders to make informed decisions.

Further enhancement of this area could be achieved by strengthening the visibility of quality assurance processes and by more clearly communicating how feedback and evaluation results are translated into follow-up actions. This would further support transparency, stakeholder engagement and the continuous improvement of Food Technology studies.

A similar overall situation is evident at the other evaluated institutions. At Klaipėdos valstybinė kolegija, Utenos kolegija and Vilniaus kolegija, internal quality assurance systems are established and functional, supported by good operational management and by highly committed and responsive teams. There is a strong collective commitment to providing high-quality programmes and pursuing continuous improvement, and the main stakeholder groups, students, staff, graduates, employers and social partners, are actively involved in quality assurance processes, with discussions during the evaluation indicating overall satisfaction with the relevance and quality of the study programmes.

Further enhancement could be achieved by making the outcomes of quality assurance more visible and actionable, for example, by establishing dashboards to track improvement initiatives together with the stakeholders driving and targeted by them, by simplifying procedures to focus more on objectives and expected outcomes so as to increase stakeholders' ownership of the system, and by considering a dual risks/opportunities approach as part of the discussion on the attractiveness of the study programmes.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE FOOD TECHNOLOGY FIELD OF STUDY

The recommendations below are based on the positive overall findings of the external evaluation. The evaluated institutions demonstrate well-functioning study provision in the Food Technology field, with clear strengths reflecting their respective missions and profiles. Therefore, the recommendations are intended to support further development, strategic strengthening and continuous quality enhancement, rather than to address fundamental deficiencies.

Strategic recommendations at an institutional level (for HEIs):

1. Build on existing strengths to further increase the attractiveness and visibility of Food Technology studies

Higher education institutions are encouraged to continue strengthening the visibility and attractiveness of Food Technology studies, building on the already evident relevance of the evaluated programmes to the food sector. The field should be communicated not only as a traditional technological discipline, but also as an area directly linked to food safety, sustainability, innovation, digitalisation, nutrition, product development and the future of food systems.

2. Continue updating study content in response to current food-sector developments

The evaluated institutions already demonstrate responsiveness to labour-market and sectoral needs. This could be further strengthened by continuing to integrate current food legislation, food safety requirements, sustainability policies, novel food developments, digitalisation, artificial intelligence and emerging technologies into study content, practical projects and final theses.

3. Further strengthen applied research, innovation and stakeholder-based projects

Higher education institutions, particularly professionally oriented colleges, are encouraged to build on their existing cooperation with employers and social partners by making applied research and innovation-related activities more systematic, visible and clearly connected with student learning. This would support product development, process optimisation, professional problem-solving, dissemination of results and, where appropriate, innovation-related outcomes.

4. Sustain teaching quality through staff development and continuity planning

The evaluated institutions benefit from committed and competent teaching staff. Further development could be supported by continued investment in pedagogical development, international mobility, digital competences, language preparedness where relevant, and systematic planning of staff continuity. Recognition of high-quality teaching, alongside research and professional achievements, would help sustain the quality of Food Technology education in the long term.

5. Strengthen the international dimension of applied research and student learning

Building on well-integrated applied research and strong industry cooperation, the colleges are encouraged to increase participation in international research and innovation projects, scientific networks and collaborative high-impact publications, and to expand research mobility for staff and students. Systematic monitoring of student involvement in applied research, including quantitative indicators, would help demonstrate its impact on the study process.

6. Increase long-term outgoing student mobility

While short-term formats such as Erasmus+ Blended Intensive Programmes are used effectively and incoming mobility is strong, long-term outgoing mobility remains limited across the three institutions. Realistic mobility targets supported by dedicated budget, earlier and more systematic promotion, flexible or shorter full-credit formats, and closer cooperation with partner institutions would help more students

benefit from international experience while preserving the programmes' strong practice orientation. Offering at least a partial English-language track would further support internationalisation.

7. Formalise monitoring of graduates, retention and quality processes

Graduate career tracking, alumni engagement, dropout prevention and quality monitoring function well in practice, largely thanks to committed staff. Introducing more structured tools, clearly defined indicators, early-warning retention mechanisms, structured alumni networks (for example via professional networks such as LinkedIn) and documented follow-up, would provide stronger evidence for strategic decision-making and continuous improvement.

8. Expand study personalisation through a wider range of field-specific electives

The colleges are encouraged to broaden the range of Food Technology-specific elective and alternative subjects beyond the current limited choice, enabling students to develop discipline-specific expertise aligned with their professional interests, and to strengthen curriculum development through benchmarking with comparable European programmes.

Strategic recommendations at the national level (for the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport):

1. Strengthen the national visibility of Food Technology as a strategically important field

The evaluated institutions demonstrate that Food Technology studies in Lithuania are well established and provide valuable education for the food sector. At the national level, the field could be further promoted as strategically important for food safety, sustainability, innovation, public health, bioeconomy and the competitiveness of the food industry. Greater national visibility would help communicate the value of Food Technology studies to school pupils, prospective students, teachers, employers and society, and support the long-term availability of qualified specialists.

2. Support cooperation between higher education institutions and the food sector

The Ministry is encouraged to continue supporting mechanisms that strengthen cooperation between higher education institutions, food-sector companies, public institutions and research organisations. The evaluated institutions already demonstrate valuable links with employers and social partners, particularly through internships, final theses, applied projects and professional training. Further national support for such cooperation would help expand good practices, strengthen innovation capacity and provide students with meaningful opportunities to connect academic learning with real professional contexts.

3. Facilitate the continuous updating of Food Technology education

Food Technology is a dynamically developing field, shaped by changes in food legislation, food safety requirements, sustainability policies, novel foods, digitalisation and emerging technologies. National-level support could help institutions continue updating study content and learning resources in response to these developments. This may include access to current regulatory resources, expert training, national guidelines or platforms for sharing good practices across institutions.

4. Support staff development and the recognition of high-quality teaching

The Ministry is encouraged to support national approaches that recognise high-quality teaching, pedagogical innovation and curriculum leadership alongside research and professional achievements. The evaluated institutions benefit from committed and competent teaching staff, and further support for staff development, mobility, digital competences and language preparedness would help sustain the quality of Food Technology education in the long term.

5. Strengthening Food Technology Capacity and Regional Development

Klaipėdos and Utenos higher education institutions as the only providers of Food Technology higher education in their respective regions, which underlines the strategic value of the field for balanced regional development, food-sector innovation and the availability of qualified specialists across Lithuania. National-level support for internationalisation (research collaboration and student mobility), for

cooperation between colleges and the food sector, and for the continuous updating of laboratory infrastructure, including pilot-scale processing equipment, would be particularly beneficial for professionally oriented institutions.

Recommendations on the evaluation process for Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education (SKVC):

1. Maintain clear coordination and constructive communication throughout the evaluation process

The evaluation process was well organised and supported by clear, professional and responsive communication between SKVC, the expert panel and the evaluated institutions. The role of the SKVC coordinator was particularly important in ensuring the smooth organisation of the process, timely exchange of information, clarification of procedural issues and constructive cooperation among all participants. This effective coordination was highly valued by both experts and institutions and contributed significantly to a positive evaluation experience. This good practice should be maintained in future external evaluations.

2. Continue supporting a shared understanding of evaluation criteria within international expert panels

The involvement of international experts is a valuable element of the evaluation process, as it brings different academic traditions, professional experiences and comparative perspectives. At the same time, such panels may face challenges related to different interpretations of institutional profiles, study cycles, professional orientation and research expectations. Therefore, continued attention should be given to developing a shared understanding of the evaluation criteria at the early stages of the process, including how these criteria apply in different higher education contexts. This is particularly important in relation to professionally oriented colleges, where the link between higher education and research may be expressed through applied research, stakeholder cooperation, product development and student projects. Such a shared understanding supports consistency, fairness and balanced interpretation throughout the evaluation process.

3. Further support contextual interpretation of evaluation criteria

In the Food Technology field, institutions may differ considerably in mission, level, profile and connection with research or professional practice. The evaluation process should continue to ensure that common quality standards are applied in a way that respects these differences. This is particularly important when assessing professionally oriented studies, where links between higher education and research may be expressed through applied research, stakeholder cooperation, product development, professional problem-solving and student projects rather than through a university research model. Continued attention to this contextual interpretation supports consistent, fair and balanced evaluation across institutions with different missions and profiles.