



The Investors in Excellence Standard

Feedback Report

Focusing on What Matters Most to your organisation

Candidate: COLLEGE OF LAW

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Moderator: Investors in Excellence Limited

Date: December 2020

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Introduction

The assessment of your organisation against the Investors in Excellence Standard has now been completed. This Feedback Report represents the conclusion of that process, and documents the Assessor's findings from their review and verification of your organisation's application. The Report has been written to give your organisation an understanding of its strengths and areas for improvement against the Standard's Indicators, which can be used to inform future improvement activity.

Overview and recommendation

1. The assessment of the College of Law (further on – CoL or the College) against the Investors in Excellence Standard was conducted through a structured and comprehensive process, consisting of a review of core documentation and scheduled online interviews.
2. In general, a discovery-based assessment was conducted in December 2020 utilising the Investors in Excellence Standard. Online interviews were undertaken on December 2 and 3, 2020. A scheduled programme is at Appendix A, which provided the Assessor with the opportunity to discuss key aspects of organisational operations with the director, senior leaders, managers, and staff members. Several key documents were provided in advance of the assessment and are to be found in Appendix B in the 'Assessment Details' section of this report.
3. The diagnostic review was primarily conducted through a series of structured one-to-one interviews in Zoom, along with group interviews of staff across the organisation. The reviews were conducted over two days and comprised of interviews with the director, senior leaders and managers and staff representatives of service areas.
4. Furthermore, the Assessor provided opportunities for staff members to speak directly and to email responses separately.
5. Before the assessment review, the following activities were conducted to collect information for the site visit schedule:
 - A full and thorough review of all submitted documentation.
 - What Matters Most to the College was confirmed to the Assessor by the meeting dated 02.12.2020 during an online interview with the director of the College.
6. Feedback from the full assessment review is presented against the Principles of Excellence, What Matters Most and the four elements of the Investors in Excellence Standard, namely Leading, Resourcing, Delivering, and Achieving.

7. The College is an outstanding organisation, one of the leading, self - financing colleges in Latvia. From a legal point of view, the College is a derived public person. The College has been granted its autonomous competence by the law which also includes establishment and approval of its budget. Thus, the College may have its property. The College was founded back in 2000 and **is the first college in Latvia to be internationally accredited**. Graduates from a two-year study programme are recognised to have obtained first-level higher education; these programmes are known in Europe as short-cycle education, whereas in the USA and Canada and elsewhere they are described as community college education leading to an associate degree. The graduates of the College receive a specialised professional qualification recognised in the national labour market. This organisation is constantly developing organisation demonstrating a well-managed approach towards their core business ensuring both implementations of clients` needs and delivering good quality services. Meanwhile, the College has also proved its capacity and unique skills to manage changes.

8. The College is an excellent organisation in the several fields demonstrating an efficient and effective approach to the core business. The inherited approach of the College is based upon the implementation of clients` needs and delivering high-quality services. The College has highly qualified staff both academic and administrative performing as a highly effective and empowered team. The College also has faced challenges related to the decrease of population in Latvia affecting the total number of people in the status of students. In addition, the College also face COVID-19 restrictions requesting it immediate decisions to adjust to the new normality. Despite challenges expected the College`s approach to the core business is primarily based on anticipated changes.

9. The organisational vision is to be one of the leading law schools in Latvia and the reliable partner in the international arena. To achieve this, the College has designed a new strategy by 2025 with KPIs. In addition, the College designed its strategic planning and risk management toolkit based on the balanced score card approach recently. All this demonstrates both: intentions and contious work performed by the staff of the College towards sustainable excellence. Against these criteria, the organisation has been reviewed and is appraised, measured and reported by the Assessor using a mature, progressive model for organisational development, performance improvement, and sustainable growth.

10. This assessment report evaluates how the organisational strategy has been aligned and deployed to maximise outcomes. This is based on the evidence produced by the director, vice directors, managers and individual staff members; a very broad and representative sample of the wider workforce and triangulated against the liE Standard and the Assessment process. The current version of the Strategy is designed by 2025 and it ensures continuity of the previous Strategy. Both strategies reflect the continuity and sustainability of action to maximise outcomes and benefits.

11. Sustainable development and growth of the College are streamlined with activities performed by the team of the college, namely:

- a) Basic documents at the strategic level have been developed and are in place.
- b) Strategic goals have been widely discussed in the organisation thus achieving a consensus and understanding among staff.
- c) Open communication is an integrated part of the organisational culture.

d) Resource management is based on both efficiency and effectiveness criteria. This allows the College to continuously develop IT and facility management approaches based on careful planning of resources available.

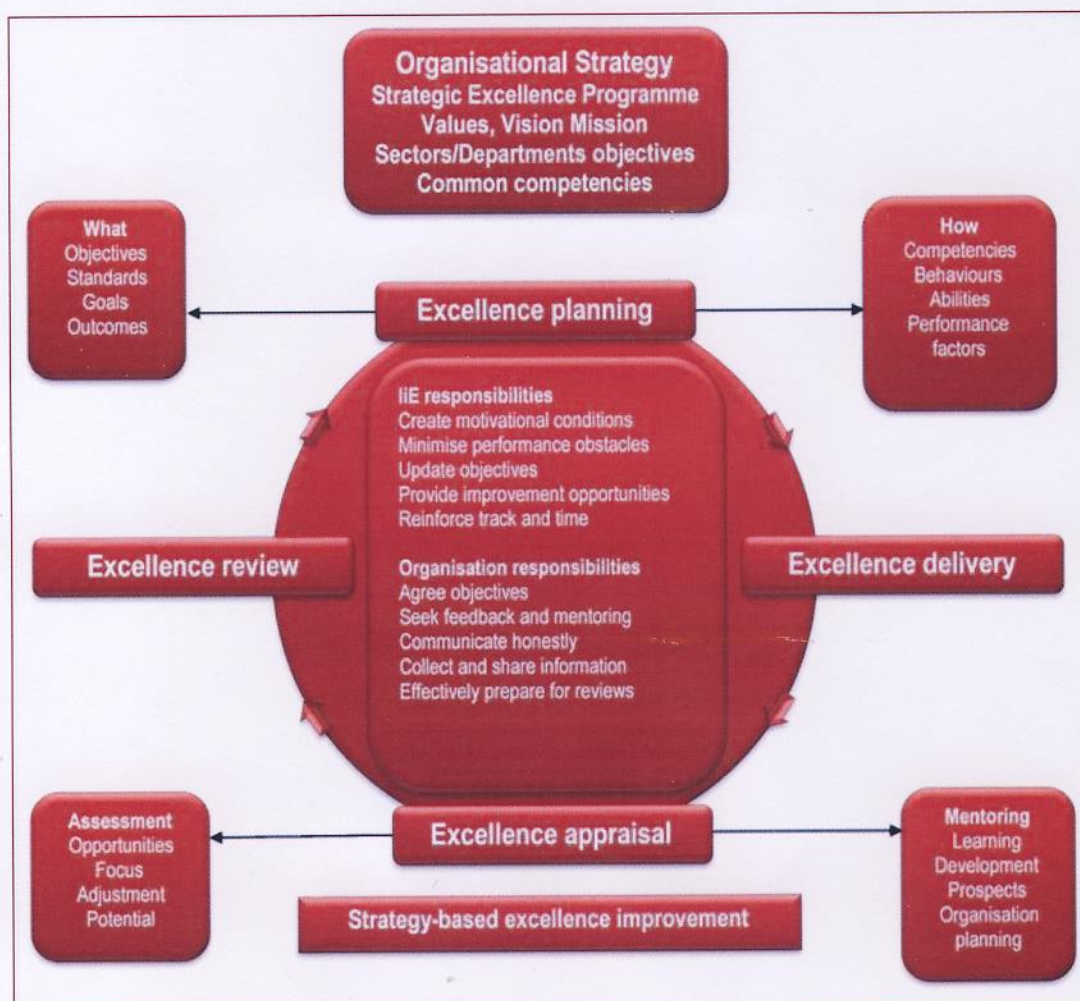
e) Staff is motivated and ready to take up responsibility for implementation of the projects and change management in the field of their responsibility.

f) Structured partnership with partners plays a vital role in developing the new products required by external circumstances.

g) Continuous improvements of the products on the core business (i.e., study programmes) are ensured by a regular self-assessment and data analysis.

h) Data collection, data analysis arranges a basis for planning, implementation, and review at the strategic and operational level.

13. This report therefore offers a greater focus on identifying the key areas for objective-based performance improvement. It proposes and recommends a strategic excellence framework, including Excellence Objectives to deliver exceptional outcomes and ultimately for the College to become a **great and learning organisation**. The following cyclical Strategic Excellence Programme is proposed:



13. Summary of the essential elements:

14. There are sound and clear evidences in all criteria of Investors in Excellence expressing the mode of achievements so far. **“What matters most”** is fully implemented with sound evidences characterising changes of the College. The College has designed its development strategy by 2025, strategic planning and risk management toolkit. The strategy is comprehensive in its content and includes relevant issues related to staff, finances and internal processes. Measurements of achievements are collected on regular bases. In this path, the organisational quality management policy is at great help. The main products, core processes, organisational values, innovations are designed, implemented and improved in a structured way.

“Leading” is implemented at a good level. The goals and the main measures have been defined. The results related to the core business, particularly to study process, has been collected, analysed and applied for improvement actions on a regular basis. The general approach for monitoring of data is in place. e.g., data regarding students and financial data are monitored monthly. Selection of students are monitored and reviewed twice a year when the recruitment process is over and the new public relation campaigns for attracting future students are planned. Student and staff satisfaction measures are among those which are collected on long-term basis providing information of on key issues in CoL.

Principles of **“Resourcing”** are executed via personnel, financial and facility management. Human resources are well managed and backed by the several systems like performance appraisal system and remuneration system. Evidence shows that this approach already pays off as the College has been capable to keep its achievement in the study programmes.

It has accumulated considerable experience regarding **“Delivering”** its main products. Adjustment of the study programmes and the courses to the turbulent environment is a proof of capacity and structured planning. The College is very good knowing its customers (students) and understanding their needs and expectations. In order to address customer’s needs, the College is implementing a set of activities – regular customer satisfaction surveys, regular communication with representatives of the industry (employers and associations) as well as annual self-evaluation of the study programmes.

“Achieving” requires further streamline of efforts to maintain data collection at the high level to improve results toward anticipating changes. As it was said the core elements for the approach “targets-measures-trends” are in place and the College is capable to trace its progress. Collected data are enough in terms of scope and volume to identify the link among causes and direct effects.

Finally, the College is to be recognized as a unique public organisation which already has achieved good results despite serious external factors hindering its growth like complicated and rather unpredictable policy towards higher education, limited government support for research and development as well as decreasing number of students for higher education sector in Latvia in general.

15. Therefore, a mature and progressive modelling is proposed to capitalise on the capabilities of the College over the next two years of development and performance improvement. This is professionally captured as Principles-Led, Evidence-Based, Outcomes-Driven and Research-

informed, and will inform the Excellence Strategy, Excellence Objectives and subsequently the agreed Action Plan.

16. Through documentary evidence and information shared in preparatory appraisal, interviews and directly with the Assessor, the College has provided sufficient evidence to meet the requirements of the Investors in Excellence Standard. This achievement is a compliment of the organisation's resourcefulness, resilience and capability, and a definite testimony to the commitment of continuous improvement displayed across the organisation during a time of efficiency related, COVID related and lockdown related measures.

17. The College is therefore recognised as an Investor in Excellence for a period of two years to 2020 - 2022, and sincere congratulations are conveyed to all staff for their hard work, commitment, and achievements in earning a strong, positive assessment outcome.