



Alberta College Quality Assurance Policy

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How was the Alberta College Quality Assurance Policy created?

At the general meeting of 15 June 2018, the staff, incl. students' representatives, of Alberta College (hereinafter referred to as Alberta College or the College) were informed that the management of Alberta College are planning to develop the new Alberta College development strategy (hereinafter referred to as AKAS 2023) and a quality assurance policy. During discussions at the meeting and individual discussions, several recommendations were received from the staff regarding the improvement of the College functions. Strategic partners were consulted as well.

The Alberta College Quality Assurance Policy was developed in 2019 by the Alberta College Board with the involvement of the College director, heads of study fields and study program directors. The document was discussed at a Board meeting. The Alberta College Quality Assurance Policy was approved by a Board decision of 15 July 2019.

The Alberta College Quality Assurance Policy will be presented at the general meeting of 28 August 2019, and implementation will start from 1 September 2020.

What is the basis of the Alberta College Quality Assurance Policy?

The development of this document and the implementation of a unified quality system used Latvian and international standards and guidelines, laws and regulations and quality management models, such as:

- Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG 2015)
- Latvian Qualification Framework and European Qualification Framework (LQF and EQF)
- Latvian laws and regulations
- Guidelines and methodologies of the Quality Agency for Higher Education and Academic Information Center
- Principles of the UN program Principles of Responsible Management Education (PRME)

What are the core principles of the Alberta College Quality Assurance Policy?

The Alberta College Quality Assurance Policy includes the following core principles:

- **Social and legal responsibility.** The College ensures socially responsible activity with consideration of laws and regulations, national and international standards, and ethics.
- **Leadership and involvement.** The College management provide a united view on the activity and development of the College, forming an organizational culture that includes active involvement of staff, students and partners in decision-making, task fulfillment, showing initiative based on mutual respect and loyalty.

- **Efficiency and goal-orientation.** Focusing on achieving set results and efficient use of available resources, the College management provides a systemic approach to the management of all processes.
- **Regular internal and periodic external assessment.** The College conducts regular internal assessment, analyzing the accumulated data and result trends, and use the obtained conclusions for the improvement of further activity. The College also conducts periodical external assessment pursuant to national and international standards.
- **Continuous improvement towards greatness.** The College continuously improves all functional processes and assesses them in a united system, striving for greatness in action and quality.
- **Communication and notification.** The College is accessible and open to communication, providing students, graduates, staff, partners, and the general public with information on the activity and procedures of the College, study opportunities and results, as well as College news.

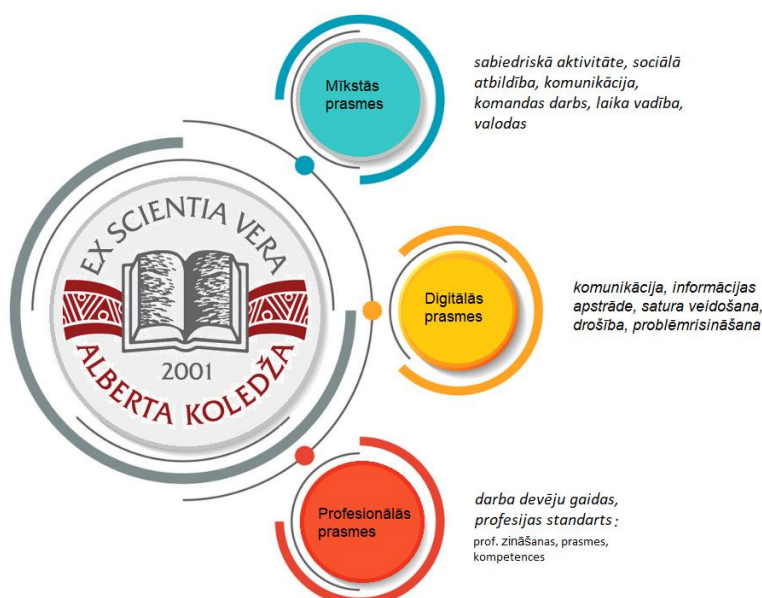
What is the mission and vision of Alberta College and the image of its graduate?

Mission: Alberta College provides the preparation of active and socially responsible specialists by involving field professionals and using modern teaching methods and digital solutions.

Vision: In 2023, we are the most recommended Latvian college according to Latvian employers, we have over 150 graduates per year, who quickly find well-paid jobs in their speciality, and they have the courage to start their own businesses and are oriented towards continuous development.

Motto: We do everything we do in such a way and because we care what Alberta College graduates can do.

The image of an Alberta College graduate:



What are our values?

The management, staff, and students at Alberta College support the following values:

- Honesty and responsibility
- Openness and reliability
- Cooperation and support
- Professionalism and opportunity
- Creativity and innovation
- Charm and enthusiasm

Why is it important for us to implement an improved quality assurance policy?

In 2019, the AKAS 2023 was approved, combining a streamlined wording for the College mission and vision, and new ambitions, challenges, and goals. To reach them, the management, staff, and students agreed on guidelines and a united view, establishing the following:

- Alberta College is a student-centered institution for vocational higher education.
- Study fields and study programs are being continuously developed.
- The development of study programs actively involves the management, staff, students, graduates, and partners.
- The contents and teaching theories shall be well-considered to both satisfy employers' needs and students' expectations and ensure the compliance of study course contents with educational and professional standards, the image of a College graduate, goals of the study program and expected study outcomes.
- As a result of active collaboration of the methodological commissions of the study fields, interconnectedness and continuity of study courses is ensured.
- The contents and implementation of study programs is practically oriented and include a module for the development of professional competences for entrepreneurship.
- The contents and realization of study programs are based on research activity.
- Appropriate material and technical resources are provided for the realization of study programs and research.
- Highly qualified teachers, partners and graduates participate in the realization of study programs.
- Alberta College supports its staff and students and is a reliable partner to graduates, employers, social organizations, other institutions of education and the general public.

Who is involved in the implementation of the Alberta College Quality Assurance Policy?

The management of Alberta College coordinate the implementation of the Quality Assurance Policy at all levels by actively involving staff, students, graduates, employers, and partners, as well as the Council, Convent of Advisors and the Student Council.

What is the role of the involved persons in the development, implementation, and improvement of the quality policy?

Quality will be ensured if the set goals are met. It is possible if everyone is aware of their role and knows their primary duties.

Board – the highest administrative institution of the College and the decision-making body for strategic, financial, and economic matters:

- determine the key principles of the quality policy,
- coordinate the development and improvement of the quality policy,
- approve the final version of the document and ensure supervision.

Director – is responsible for the activities of the College and carries out the administrative and economic management of the College, and is the official representative of the College in all related matters:

- participates in the development and improvement of the quality policy,
- is responsible for and ensures the implementation and supervision of the quality policy, initiates the improvement of the quality policy in collaboration with the parties involved,
- is responsible for the development, implementation, and maintenance of the Quality Management System.

Deputy Director for the Study Quality Issues – is responsible for ensuring the quality of the study process, for ensuring the implementation of the applied research and creative activities in College, and for international cooperation:

- participates in the development and improvement of the Quality Policy, ensures the implementation of the Quality Policy,
- is responsible for maintaining the documentation of the Quality Management System,
- is responsible for the annual internal assessment of the quality of study courses and study programs,
- is responsible for ensuring the external quality assessment of study fields.

Council – elected at the general meeting, the higher management institution and decision-making body on matters outside the scope of the Board:

- ensure the supervision of the quality policy, initiate its improvement in collaboration with the parties involved,
- approve internal regulations, study field self-assessment reports and study program changes, carry out the assessment of administrative and academic staff,
- provide recommendations for the improvement of the performance of Alberta College.

The Convent of Advisors is a collegial advisory body with the purpose to promote the development of the College in accordance with the requirements of the labor market, and:

- is involved in the implementation of the quality policy, can make proposals for the improvement of the quality policy;
- promotes cooperation with employers, their associations and business incubators;
- provide recommendations for the improvement of the performance of Alberta College.

Student Council – a student-elected institution representing student interests:

- is involved in the development and improvement of the quality policy,
- participate in the College general meetings, the work of the Council methodological commissions and ethical commissions, participate in the development of strategic College documents,
- provide feedback: assess the study process, the work of teachers and the administration, the study environment, program content, develop suggestions for the improvement of Alberta College functions,
- inform students of their rights, collaborate with graduates, student councils of other schools and colleges, incl. representation in the Latvian College Association.

Ethical Commission – a commission created by the Director to review violations of the norms of the Ethical and Academic Integrity Code, prove them, make decisions on applying sanctions:

- get involved in the implementation of the quality policy,
- provide suggestions for the improvement of the Ethical and Academic Integrity Code.

Head of the Career Center – develops the strategy of the Career Development Strategy and plan of action, organizes its implementation:

- gets involved in the development, implementation, and improvement of the quality policy,
- participates in the development of the College Development Strategy and plan of action, implements various projects, and provides suggestions for the promotion of student and staff careers,
- promotes collaboration with employers, business incubators and other educational institutions.

Methodological Commission of the Study Field – a collegiate institution of the study field that assess the study process, study program content and implementation, and provide suggestions for their improvement:

- get involved in the development and improvement of the quality policy,
- provide feedback: assess the study process, the work of the administration, the study environment, study program content, develop recommendations for the improvement of the College functions, material and technical resources and study programs,
- promote cooperation with the Student Council and employers.

Head of the Study Field – responsible for the development of the study field, the qualification improvement of study program directors and academic staff, implementation of study programs in compliance with the requirements of laws and regulations:

- gets involved in the development and improvement of the quality policy, ensures the implementation of the policy,
- participates in the development of the College Development Strategy and plan of action, develops the study field development strategy and action plan, carries out an annual self-assessment of the study field and initiates necessary changes,
- coordinates the assessment of academic staff and organizes annual development interviews, develops recommendations for the improvement of staff functions,
- coordinates research activity, ensuring compliance with the development strategy for scientific activity,
- promotes collaboration with employers, graduates, and other educational institutions,
- coordinates the updating of the material and technical resources according to the needs of the study field in Latvia and abroad.

Study Program Director – responsible for the development of the study program, updating study program content and implementation of the study program according to the requirements of laws and regulations, promotes collaboration with employers, graduates, and other educational institutions:

- gets involved in the development, implementation, and improvement of the quality policy,
- participates in the development of the College Development Strategy and plan of action, as well as the development of the study field development strategy and action plan, carries out the self-assessment of the study field, implements necessary changes for the improvement of the quality of the study program, provides recommendations for the improvement of the College functions,
- coordinates research activity within the study program,
- provides recommendations for the expansion and updating of material and technical resources according to the needs of the study program,
- promotes collaboration with employers, graduates, and other educational institutions in Latvia and abroad.

Internship Supervisor – ensures the implementation of study program internships according to the requirements of internal and external regulations:

- cooperates with the academic staff of the College and employers in improving the quality of the study program, participates in the preparation of the study program self-assessment, provides recommendations for the improvement of the College functions.

Academic staff:

- get involved in the development, implementation, and improvement of the quality policy,

- attend general meetings, participate in the Council, participate in the work of methodological commissions, improvement of study programs, development of strategic College documents and new study programs,
- observe a student-centered approach to the study process,
- raise their qualification, carry out scientific and research activities, actively involve College students, participate in staff assessment at the end of each study year,
- evaluate the content of the study program and study courses, the study process, the work of the administration, the College environment, share their opinions in surveys, personally address the administration with complaints and suggestions, participate in the preparation of the study program self-assessment report.

Students:

- get involved in the improvement of the quality policy,
- attend general meetings, participate in the Council, methodological commissions, the Student Council,
- provide feedback: assess the study process and study course contents, the study process, the work of academic and administration staff, the College environment, share their opinions in surveys, personally address the administration with complaints and suggestions.

Educational Methodologist and Study Program Secretaries – organize the planning of the class schedule, examination period and consultations, organize records, provide information to prospective students, students, graduates, and staff, reply e-mail queries:

- get involved in the development, implementation, and improvement of the quality policy,
- attends general meetings, participates in the Council,
- assesses College processes, the work of administration staff, the College environment, shares their opinions in surveys, personally addresses the administration with complaints and suggestions for the improvement of the College functions.

E-Coordinator – carries out internal administrative coordination for organizing, improving, developing and proper function of the e-environment:

- get involved in the development, implementation, and improvement of the quality policy,
- attends general meetings, participates in the Council,
- manages online systems (incl. Nexus, E-Nexus, business calendar, Moodle with integrated Big Blue Button, Main Folder, website, etc.), the principles of their organization and maintenance, continuously learning the possibilities and news on the usage of these systems, providing recommendations to the management regarding opportunities for improvement and development,
- develops various templates, audits Moodle e-courses, controls the observance of e-course development standards and principles, their quality and compliance with deadlines,
- gives reports to the management on progress and development opportunities, prepares various reports, etc., collects, prepares, analyzes, and submits statistical and other current data,

- develops and improves written and video instructions for staff and students, prepares infographics, develops manuals, templates, participates in the development of regulations,
- participates in the implementation of new processes related to the e-environment, controls the implementation and maintenance of a quality assessment system.

Erasmus Coordinator – prepares funding applications and reports for student and teacher mobility, promotes involvement in mobility programs, provides informational support, involves foreign partners:

- is involved in the development, implementation, and improvement of the quality policy,
- provides reports to the management regarding progress and opportunities for development, prepares various reports,
- assesses College processes, the work of administration staff, the College environment, shares their opinions in surveys, personally addresses the administration with complaints and suggestions for the improvement of the College functions.

Librarian – informs students and academic staff on news, provides consultations on using the library and searching for resources in the libraries of Alberta College, EKA University of Applied Sciences, and others:

- is involved in the development, implementation, and improvement of the quality policy,
- participate in general meetings, assesses College processes, the work of administration staff, the College environment, share their opinions in surveys, personally address the administration with complaints and suggestions for the improvement of the College functions.

Head of Communication Projects – informs the parties involved, ensures the preparation of current information and posting on the College website and social media:

- get involved in the development, implementation, and improvement of the quality policy,
- participate in general meetings, assesses College processes, the work of administration staff, the College environment, share their opinions in surveys, personally address the administration with complaints and suggestions for the improvement of the College functions.

Financial Department – ensure accounting in compliance with the requirements of laws and regulations, control and predict financial resources of the College, participate in developing the budget of the College, provide recommendations for the optimization of financial resources and availability of development investments:

- get involved in the development, implementation, and improvement of the quality policy,
- participate in general meetings, assesses College processes, the work of administration staff, the College environment, share their opinions in surveys, personally address the administration with complaints and suggestions for the improvement of the College functions.

IT Department – ensure the functioning, security and updating of the information and communication systems and technologies:

- get involved in the development, implementation, and improvement of the quality policy,
- participate in general meetings, assesses College processes, the work of administration staff, the College environment, share their opinions in surveys, personally address the administration with complaints and suggestions for the improvement of the College functions.

Lawyer – develops internal regulations, informs on the amendments to external laws and regulations, prepares legal documents, participates in the improvement and maintenance of the personal data protection system for physical persons:

- get involved in the development, implementation, and improvement of the quality policy,
- participate in general meetings, assesses College processes, the work of administration staff, the College environment, share their opinions in surveys, personally address the administration with complaints and suggestions for the improvement of the College functions.

Technical Department – ensure facility adequacy for the study process in compliance with sanitary and health and safety requirements, provide necessary resources for the work of the staff:

- get involved in the implementation and improvement of the quality policy,
- participate in general meetings, assesses College processes, the work of administration staff, the College environment, share their opinions in surveys, personally address the administration with complaints and suggestions for the improvement of the College functions.

Employers, industry associations, graduates, partners:

- get involved in the development and improvement of the quality policy,
- participate in the development, assessment, updating and improvement of strategic College documents,
- provide support in determining research directions, participate in applied research,
- assess study program and study course content, share their opinions in surveys, participate in focus groups, give individual suggestions, provide expert opinions,
- provide social support by ensuring guest lectures, hosting students at their organizations within teaching trips and internships, get involved in the work of defense commissions, participate in the Business Incubator as mentors, participate in the Business Forum of the College, co-fund the purchase of necessary hardware, software, etc., offer study stipends and grants.

Where are sample processes, procedure descriptions and necessary documents found?

A detailed description of all processes and persons in charge are established in the following College documents or systems:

Alberta College Regulations
Quality Manual of Alberta College
The statutes, internal regulations, rules, instructions
Digital quality management system “Business Calendar”
Development Strategy and plans of action
Development strategies of Study fields
Strategy for the Development of Research and Creative Activities
Academic Staff Development Plan
the Ethical and Academic Integrity Code
etc.

The documents, form templates and samples are available:

- Alberta College website, on Moodle under “AC Administration”, “AC Council”, etc.,
- Internal databases Main Folder (MF), Nexus, E-Nexus,
- The digital quality management system “Business Calendar”,
- etc.

Why and how do we motivate prospective students to enroll?

It is important for Alberta College, that prospective students make informed, substantiated decisions when choosing their school and their future occupation or assessing opportunities for raising their qualification or re-qualification, as it is an important step that influences each person’s life and future.

To help prospective students to choose their profession and school as well as encourage them to start, resume or continue their studies, Alberta College carries out several support projects and activities, such as:

organizing informative events and training for high-school management, teachers, students, and their parents about subjects like the Latvian educational system, assessment (accreditation) of institutions of higher education and study programs and objective and subjective criteria for a successful choice of a school,
organizing seminars and training for planning their lives and career,
offering creative workshops, introductory lectures, various tests for a more successful choice of profession,

publishing informative pamphlets, a magazine on the essence, advantages, and disadvantages of various professions with involvement from popular personalities representing such occupations,
getting actively involved in organizing a Shadow Day at the College, participating in career days and education expos in various regions of Latvia and schools, organizing individual consultations with study program directors,
consulting, incl. answering questions via e-mail, in the e-environment, online video conferences, etc.,
conducting research on the demand of specific specialists, necessary competences according to employers, etc., informing the public about the results,
acknowledging and considering previous education and experience for resuming studies, promotion of re-qualification or raising qualification, creating individual study plans and payment schedules,
providing financial support, e.g., by applying study fee discounts to participants of Shadow Days, employees of partners, persons with higher education, students exmatriculated from Alberta College without a diploma and resuming their studies within a year,
implementing a social support program in which three free positions are granted to newly enrolled students,
organizing “days of following a student”, information days on site and in the e-environment, organizing free preparation courses for applicants who have decided to begin their studies after a longer break.

Why are how do we accomplish a student-centered approach in the study process?

In 2004, Alberta College established the motto “We care what our graduates will know.” Over time, the message was transformed, shifting the focus from “knowledge” to “skills” because the College offers short-cycle vocational higher education oriented towards the quick preparation of specialists for the job market by:

- integrating practically oriented tasks, training, and practice into the study process,
- providing students with opportunities to participate in discussions, attend seminars, guest lectures and creative workshops, work individually and in groups, participate in applied research and creative work by preparing scientific articles and presenting them at conferences, participating in project development and implementation as well as participating in creative activities,
- organizing meetings with experienced professionals sharing their experience, inspiring self-improvement and success during guest lectures, creative workshops, seminars, teaching trips, and the Business Forum,
- promoting the accessibility of education and study personalization by integrating modern teaching methods, actively digitizing the study process, providing informational support to the students,
- creating study courses with a focus on achieving the expected study results on the study course, study program, professional standard, educational standard level, as well as the level of the European and Latvian Qualification Framework (EQF/LQF),

- ensuring the availability of information, incl. by posting internal regulatory documents on the website and study course descriptions and teaching materials on the Moodle system,
- providing studies in various forms for all study programs: full and part-time studies, on site in auditoriums and in the e-environment, preparing individual study plans and providing advisory support,
- ensuring the acknowledgment and consideration of previous education and practical experience,
- allowing the acquisition of individual study courses from other study programs at Alberta College, study and internship mobility opportunities in Latvia and abroad, as well as taking care of possibilities for continuing studies,
- involving students into the work of institutions of all levels, thus providing real opportunities to participate in decision-making.

We have clearly defined the image of an Alberta College graduate and are organizing the study process and work in such a way that our graduates obtain and develop necessary competences. See Annex 1.

Why do we implement a study process based on applied research and creative work?

By the Regulation of Alberta College, conducting research in accordance with the study profile and promoting students' scientific research works is defined as one of the tasks of the College. The College mainly focuses on applied research and creative work, and its main goal is to promote the competitiveness of the College and its study programs by achieving the goals set by the study programs in relation to research and creative work, promoting the implementation of research-based studies, developing the research competencies of academic staff and students, promoting achievement of good results in research, especially in the field of applied research and creative work, developing cooperation with employers and other interested parties, taking into account their needs and interest, contributing to the development of the national economy and public administration and increasing the common good of society. To publish the results of scientific research and creative work, the College, in cooperation with EKA University of Applied Sciences, organizes the annual international scientific conference "etECH – Emerging Trends in Economics, Culture and Humanities" and the annual student international scientific-practical conference "Student Research Activity: Theory and Practice".

Why is it important for us, that students gain international experience during their studies?

It is important to Alberta College, that during their studies students acquire the widest possible range of knowledge, skills, and competencies, including gaining international experience. For this purpose, the College offers its students the opportunity to learn two foreign languages during their studies, opportunities are being evaluated in cooperation with foreign lecturers and cooperation universities to provide students with separate study courses in English, including to promote incoming mobility

of students. Within the framework of the Erasmus+ program, the exchange of students' practice, the teaching or learning mobility of lecturers, the annual international staff training week and the annual international week are implemented every year, during which students have the opportunity to attend lectures and master classes provided by foreign guest lecturers both at the Alberta College and EKA University of Applied Sciences, which provides component of international experience to lecturers and students as part of their studies. This broadens the students' horizons and may encourage them to consider the possibility of continuing their studies not only in Latvia, but in some foreign universities after graduating from Albert College.

How do we develop new study programs?

It is important for Alberta College that opening new study fields, developing and improving study programs complies with the College development strategy, considering global development and job market trends, national and European Union priorities, requirements of external and internal regulations and the availability of Alberta College resources for the implementation of new study fields and programs, therefore:

- opening a study field is only possible after surveying and coordinating the opinions of the Board, College Director, Board Members; the decision to open a new study field or closing one is made by the Board after coordinating with the College Council,
- the College Director forms a work group for developing a study program, consisting of the director of the study program to be developed as the leader of the work group, as well as field professionals and employers, teachers and, if possible, students and College graduates,
- during the development of a new study program, the goals, tasks, expected study outcomes, target audiences of the study program and the image of its graduate are clearly defined,
- the definition of the goals, expected outcomes and tasks of a study program, the goals and expected outcomes of the study field are considered as well as the expected study outcomes mentioned in the description of the obtained qualification according to the national qualification framework, European higher education qualification framework, requirements of the educational and professional standards, and the general image of an Alberta College graduate,
- the goals, expected study outcomes, tasks and teaching methods of each study course are related to the goals, tasks and expected study outcomes of the study programs, and a description of the achievable study outcome evaluation is included,
- during the development of a new study program, the work group prepares a licensing application and self-assessment report according to the requirements of laws and regulations and the methodology and/or guidelines from the assessing agency,
- the work group submits the developed study program and prepared application, self-assessment report for review to the College Council; if a new study program is developed within an existing study field, the prepared application and self-assessment report is reviewed at a meeting of the methodological commission of the study field, after which the work group decides on forwarding the prepared documents for review by the College Council,

- the College Council reviews the submitted documents and decides on approval and further submission to institutions in charge of licensing study field and study programs; the College Council may request the work group to add information or clarify/improve the documents,
- the College Council is entitled to justifiably decline the approval of the prepared documents regarding the new study field and/or study program based on the requirements of laws and regulations and the College strategy,
- the work group has the right to supplement and amend the documents and re-submit them for the review of the College Council,
- the implementation of a study program is regulated by the Description of the Study Contents and Implementation prepared by the study program director pursuant to the provisions of the respective Regulations,
- the director of the study program is entitled to alter the study program after discussions at a meeting of the methodological commission; changes to the contents of a study program that do not exceed 20% of the licensed or accredited version of the study program are submitted to the College Council for approval,
- significant changes to the study program contents must be approved in compliance with laws and regulations along with conducting an external assessment.

How do we conduct regular monitoring for the improvement of study program contents and the study process?

It is important for Alberta College to ensure a study process of constant high quality as well as the improvement thereof and the study programs, therefore a regular systemic internal monitoring is conducted at the College level, study field and study program level, as well as within each study course.

The evaluation of the College and study programs is done as follows:

- at the end of each study year, the College director prepares a Yearbook of Alberta College,
- at the end of each study year, heads of study fields and study program directors prepare a self-assessment report of the study field and study programs, collect data and analyze trends, prepare reports on the improvement of study field functions,
- the self-assessment process involves teachers, students, graduates, and employers by organizing meetings and conducting surveys about the contents of study programs, teaching methods applied, the quality of teachers' work, the organization of the study process and extracurricular activities, the study environment and the e-environment,
- study program directors continuously follow industry trends and consult representatives and experts of the respective industries regarding the compliance of study program contents with the job market and the possibilities for its improvement,
- in order to collect the opinions of involved parties, several surveys are organized, the results of which are discussed with the administration, study program directors, methodological commissions of the study fields, the Council and staff during various meetings, and feedback is promoted by informing the involved parties of survey results and planned measures:

- a student survey with the purpose of learning their opinion on the quality of the study process, the work of teachers and the administration, satisfaction with the chosen study program,
- a staff survey with the purpose of learning their satisfaction with working at the College and their opinion on the work of the administration, available resources, and the students' evaluation,
- a graduate survey after graduating the College to learn their opinion on the contents and implementation of the study program, its influence on the growth of the graduate and continuation of their studies, and once in three years to follow the educational and career growth of the graduate,
- an employer survey: as an interview and in writing (the written survey is conducted at the end of an internship by filling in internship position company or organization feedback on the student's preparedness for the job market in the specific speciality; the interview is conducted by the study program director, consulting on industry trends and the contents of the study program).

The following core actions are taken for controlling the study outcomes of a study program and the achievement of study course outcomes:

- the study program director attends teachers' classes,
- the study program director reviews the contents of the study course description, methods and whether they are up to date, as well as study outcomes to be achieved and their compliance with the study program outcomes, the currency of the literature and sources used,
- the e-coordinator reviews the placement of information necessary for acquiring the course in the e-environment and its compliance with Alberta College standards (the E-course template),
- the head of the direction and study program director analyze the results of the student survey regarding the organization of the study process and prepare recommendations for the director of Alberta College; the director assesses the recommendations and, after coordinating them with the Board and College Council, includes the actions necessary for the improvement of the organization of the study process in the yearly activity plan, providing for necessary funding in the College budget; the head of communication projects publishes a letter on survey results and planned actions for the elimination of detected shortcomings and improvement on the intranet,
- the head of the study field and study program director analyze the results of the student survey regarding the work of teachers and inform the director of Alberta College thereof; the study program director discusses the results at a meeting of the methodological commission as well as individually with each teacher (development interviews), focusing on possibilities for eliminating shortcomings and determining possible learning needs; the head of communication projects publishes a letter on survey results and planned actions for the elimination of detected shortcomings and improvement on the intranet,
- the director of Alberta College analyzes the results of the staff survey; the survey results are discussed at an administration meeting, study program directors' meeting and staff general meeting; if needed, individual meetings are organized with employees (development

interviews) to discuss the factors favoring and preventing the actions of teachers and administrative employees,

- the head of the study field and study program director analyze the results of employer and graduate surveys to evaluate the level of achieving study program outcomes; survey results are used for the improvement of study program contents and the organization of studies.

How do we make sure that the teachers' qualification is raised?

- It is important for Alberta College to attract qualified and growth-oriented teachers, therefore clearly defined requirements are established for teacher selection, introductory training is organized prior to starting work, annual teacher evaluation is done and development interviews are organized, and regular discussions and training are organized, informational and material support for raising qualification is given, the candidate selection process accounts for education and qualification, its compliance with the topical area of the study program, the candidate's compliance with the requirements of internal and external laws and regulations, work experience in the industry, academic and scientific work,
- motivating teachers to raise their qualification and do scientific and/or creative work,
- encouraging the preparation of e-courses in the College's e-environment by providing methodological, advisory and technical support for the preparation of e-courses,
- encouraging the participation in mobility projects in Latvian and foreign schools,
- providing opportunities for raising teachers' qualification by organizing internal training or co-funding qualification-raising activities, especially supporting competences related to the taught course, foreign language skills, pedagogical and research competences, using digital tools in everyday work and within the study and research processes,
- informing teachers about opportunities for raising their qualification by posting information on Moodle under "AC Administration",
- inviting teachers to update data on their achievements in academic in scientific work at least once a year in the staff database E-Nexus,
- regularly evaluating teachers' work quality: evaluated by students during surveys each semester, the head of the study field and study program director based on the results of the student survey (if needed, also conversation with the group), information received from E-Nexus and during the development interview,
- collecting evaluation results and trend analysis, organizing individual development interviews and informing teachers of the evaluation results by sending e-mails and posting evaluation results in the database.

How do we support our students?

In order to promote the successful integration of students into the study process, efficient studies, successful achievement of study program and study course outcomes, students' satisfaction and growth, as well as to reduce the number of students ceasing their studies, Alberta College provides students with informational, advisory, methodological and material support:

- organizing introductory meetings for 1st year students on site and in the e-environment, informing them of the study process, College structure and scopes of staff responsibilities, student rights and safety, and posting a video of the meeting on the intranet,
- integrating the study course “Introduction to studies” or “Introduction to the speciality” into the study program contents so as to provide maximum information about the contents of the study program, organization of the study process, research and the essence and industry trends of the chosen speciality at the beginning of studies,
- organizing meetings, providing group meetings and individual consultations with the study program director and head of the study field,
- providing free consultations for all study courses, organizing meetings before the development of study papers, starting internships, development of the qualification paper and the final state examination,
- organizing informational events, seminars, trainings for growth and career support,
- organizing informational events for the promotion of study and internship mobility opportunities,
- organizing trainings and informational seminars for the College staff,
- encouraging diversity of communication tools, ensuring the provision of information and consultations on site, via phone, e-mail, e-environment, promptly responding within 1-3 business days,
- ensuring the necessary material and technical resources for successfully acquiring the study program, regularly improving it, incl. based on suggestions from students, teachers and study program directors,
- regularly supplementing the library, ensuring the availability of the library catalog as well as the best study papers, internship reports and qualification papers in the library and on the website (with indication of the author’s permission),
- including the literature and sources available in the Alberta College library into study course descriptions,
- developing e-courses in all study courses, incl. for the development of study papers, internship reports and qualification papers, which offers necessary information for acquiring the study course, ensuring the possibility to submit papers remotely, discussion forums for prompt exchange of information between students and teachers,
- ensuring the availability of lecture, consultation and examination schedule on the website,
- sending out SMS for prompt notification of students on changes in the lecture and examination schedule, and in case of postponing notified consultations,
- ensuring the possibility to ask to prepare an individual payment schedule, delay payments, providing informational support about crediting opportunities for studies and students,
- ensuring the opportunity to receive study fee discounts for active work in the Student Council and participation in events representing the College, for social reasons, as well as co-funding various creative and research projects, industry activities, as well as involving sponsors for scholarships and study and research grants for distinguished students, providing social support.

How do we support our graduates?

In order to encourage the continuation of studies if Alberta College graduates, their life-long education and connection to the College, a special support program is developed for Alberta College graduates, and a strategic cooperation agreement is signed with the University College of Economics and Culture and cooperation agreements with other schools:

- providing discounts for the acquisition of various study courses for non-collegiate attendants or acquisition of a new study program at the College or school,
- ensuring a more efficient diploma recognition,
- informing of industry activities, inviting to guest lectures, conferences, Business Forums as attendees, leaders and speakers,
- inviting them to become mentors at the Business Incubator,
- organizing graduates' meetings.

How do we organize the collection of information and its use for the implementation of efficient function and process improvement?

For the purpose of exchange of information, Alberta College organizes regular meetings, sends out informational e-mails and posts new information on the website and in the e-environment. For the purpose of accumulating information and forwarding it with varying urgency, Alberta College uses the following tools:

- the Business Calendar (BC): an Alberta College software where all administration tasks are entered along with deadlines and persons in charge.
- the Main Folder: all documentation of the College (regulations, samples and blanks of documents used in ensuring the daily work and study process, signed documents, e-documents, e-registers, methodical materials, etc.).
- Nexus – student database (including personal data, education, study plan, results, director's orders, study fees, library card data, etc.).
- E-Nexus – personnel database, which collects information about lecturers' professional experience in academic and scientific work, as well as the results of annual personnel evaluation.
- E-environment – learning environment Moodle and video conference system Big Blue Button (BBB).
- Electronic catalogs – book catalog and Student works catalog.
- The website of the international scientific conference, which is used together with the strategic cooperation partner, the EKA University of Applied Sciences: <http://etech.eka.edu.lv/>.
- Alberta College website: public and closed sections.
- Social Networking Profiles: sites where Alberta College events and news are stored.

How do we ensure the availability of information?

The communication of Alberta College is aimed towards informing the public, thus providing all involved parties with information on the activity of the College, offered study programs, study opportunities and significant news. The communication of the College is created according to the values defined in AKAS 2023 and the ESG 2015 standards and guidelines.

Alberta College implements internal and external communication by regularly publishing accurate information, presenting it to relevant target groups in a clear and easily accessible manner:

- The following methods and tools are used for the provision of internal communication according to internal target groups and current issues:
 - regular meetings are organized, e.g., board meeting, administration meeting, academic staff general meeting, meeting of heads of study fields and study program directors, meeting of the methodological commission, general meeting of 1st year students, Council meeting, etc.
 - individual meetings, discussions, annual evaluation interviews, report meetings are organized according to the matter discussed,
 - e-mail is used for delivering, transferring information, exchange of opinions, questions and answers, delivering assignments, receiving reports, etc.,
 - the phone is used for solving urgent issues, sometimes sending informational SMS messages,
 - static important information and one-off notifications are placed on a noticeboard in the teachers' room,
 - important information for students about various events, internship positions, projects, competitions, job advertisements are posted on notice walls in the halls of the College,
 - a digital screen in the 2nd floor lobby duplicated schedule information from the College website,
 - the E-Nexus staff database is used for accumulating information about the teachers' professional, scientific and creative achievements and activities,
 - the Nexus system accumulates and regularly updates information about students, their grades, study fees and study plan, as well as information about the staff, thus ensuring their access to the e-environment,
 - the College website uses a closed section available to students and staff to find out individual information (e.g., lecture schedule, financial data) and internal news,
 - the Moodle learning environment features various study courses for transfer of information to students (study program forums) and staff (topical courses, e.g., for the work of Council, information for academic staff, matters of accreditation),
 - the Big Blue Button (BBB) video lecture system is periodically used for organizing meetings, hosting training seminars, etc.
- The following methods and tools are used for the provision of external communication according to external target groups and current topics:
 - the website is used as the main source of information about the College, its activities, study programs, opportunities of studies, news, etc.,
 - e-mail is used as a communication tool with private and legal entities for receiving and sending information, asking questions and providing answers,

- the phone is used as a communication tool with private and legal entities,
- profiles are maintained on the most popular social networks with regular reviews of key events at the College,
- official letters, statements and other written documents are prepared as necessary as send via mail or e-mail with a digital signature,
- meetings, discussions, etc. are organized as necessary,
- participation in expos and career events takes place regularly with assessment of necessity of participation,
- participation in public events and events representing the College is planned according to the urgency of the event,
- educational and informational events (seminars, courses, guest lectures, creative workshops, information days, Shadow Day, preparation courses, etc.) are organized for attracting prospective students, educating various target audiences, promoting the recognizability of the College,
- information for the media is prepared and sent in the event of especially significant events, thus promoting the wide-spread publicity of the College,
- ad campaigns are implemented for attracting students and promoting the recognizability of the College.

Why do we conduct external assessment?

Alberta College is a small private institution for vocational higher education, where an efficient use of resources and organization of processes is a crucial matter of competitiveness. External assessment is an impartial view. External assessment motivates to regularly review internal processes in more detail, self-assess in a more critical way while receiving expert recommendations, the implementation of which may promote growth, show new opportunities and perspectives.

The vision of Alberta College inspires to be among the top three colleges in Latvia. External assessment allows to receive an approval of the quality of the College activity for themselves, their students, graduates, partners, and the public.

**Examples of Alberta College (AC) processes and procedures
for the preparation of graduates in compliance with the image of a graduate**

Image of an AC graduate		AC processes and procedures	Activities, methods, etc.
Soft skills	1.1. social activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Participation in the work of AC institutions, involvement in decision-making ✓ An active Student Council ✓ Participation in the final meeting 	Participation in informal Study Council events, i.e., in honor of Lāčplēsis day, Independence Day
	1.2. social responsibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Taking the student survey ✓ Implementation of PRME in AC processes and study program tasks ✓ Academic Integrity Code ✓ Anti-plagiarism measures ✓ Free positions and social support programs – purposeful granting of study fee discounts 	Participation in the annual charity project “Let’s gift emotions to underprivileged children in Baldone”
	1.3. communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ A democratic management style, open door policy ✓ Academic Integrity Code ✓ Participation in student conferences 	Business games Encouraging discussions during lectures, seminars, tests/exams
	1.4. teamwork	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Active, comprehensive filling of surveys ✓ Maintaining and encouragement of positive communication on all levels 	Integrating teamwork into several study courses. Integrated exams and development of integrated qualification papers.
	1.5. time management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Encouraging timely completion and submission of homework ✓ Rigid deadline structure and encouragement of observation for study papers, internship reports, qualification papers 	Guest lectures, creative workshops, teaching trips, etc.
	1.6. languages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Including foreign literature in study course descriptions ✓ Availability of teaching materials in foreign languages in e-courses ✓ The Erasmus+ program ✓ Organizing the international week ✓ Foreign students’ section during students’ conferences 	Guest lectures, creative workshops, etc., in a foreign language

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Admission requirement – knowledge of a foreign language 	
Digital skills	2.1. communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Staff training on e-communication ✓ Moodle forums ✓ Active communication with staff and students via website, social networks, Moodle, and other online tools ✓ Consulting via BBB, e-mail, Moodle forums, etc. ✓ Active usage and promotion of the e-signature 	Guest lectures, creative workshops, etc., in the e-environment
	2.2. information processing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Digital development and submission of several individual assignments, presentations, video presentations, study papers, internship reports, qualification papers 	Development of digital individual assignments, e.g., video presentations, infographics, audio materials, etc.
	2.3. content creation		
	2.4. security		
	2.5. troubleshooting		
Professional skills	3.1. employers' expectations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Forming strategic partnerships: collaboration agreements and fulfillment ✓ Study fee discounts for partners' employees and their children ✓ Active cooperation with employers in the creation and updating of study program contents ✓ Involvement of employers in the work of the AC Council, methodological commissions of study fields, the work of internship and qualification paper defense commissions ✓ Commissioned applied research ✓ Teaching trips ✓ Creative projects ✓ Organizing business forums ✓ Organizing regular surveys, forming focus groups ✓ Participation in professional organizations, industry associations 	
	3.2. professional standard	100% compliance with the professional standard in creating study program contents and the selected study methods	