



STUDIJŲ KOKYBĖS VERTINIMO CENTRAS

LIETUVOS EDUKOLOGIJOS UNIVERSITETO
**STUDIJŲ PROGRAMOS *Krikščioniškoji antropologinė
pedagogika*(valstybinis kodas – 621V80003)
VERTINIMO IŠVADOS**

EVALUATION REPORT
OF *Christian Anthropological Pedagogy* (state code - 621V80003)
STUDY PROGRAMME
at LITHUANIAN UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATIONAL SCIENCES

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Išvados parengtos anglų kalba
Report language – English

DUOMENYS APIE ĮVERTINTĄ PROGRAMĄ

Studijų programos pavadinimas	<i>Krikščioniškoji antropologinė pedagogika</i>
Valstybinis kodas	621V80003
Studijų sritis	Humanitariniai mokslai
Studijų kryptis	Religijos mokslai
Studijų programos rūšis	Universitetinės studijos
Studijų pakopa	Antroji
Studijų forma (trukmė metais)	Nuolatinės (2); išžestinės (3)
Studijų programos apimtis kreditais	120
Suteikiamas laipsnis ir (ar) profesinė kvalifikacija	Religijos mokslų magistras
Studijų programos įregistravimo data	2005-06-03, Nr. ISAK-1018

INFORMATION ON EVALUATED STUDY PROGRAMME

Title of the study programme	<i>Christian Anthropological Pedagogy</i>
State code	621V80003
Study area	Humanities
Study field	Religious Studies
Type of the study programme	University studies
Study cycle	Second
Study mode (length in years)	Full-time (2); part-time (3)
Volume of the study programme in credits	120
Degree and (or) professional qualifications awarded	Master of Religious Studies
Date of registration of the study programme	03-06-2005, No. ISAK-1018

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CONTENTS

I. INTRODUCTION.....	4
1.1. Background of the evaluation process	4
1.2. General.....	4
1.3. Background of the HEI/Faculty/Study field/ Additional information	4
1.4. The Review Team	5
II. PROGRAMME ANALYSIS	5
2.1. Programme aims and learning outcomes.....	6
2.2. Curriculum design	9
2.3. Teaching staff	12
2.4. Facilities and learning resources	14
2.5. Study process and students' performance assessment.....	15
2.6. Programme management	18
III. RECOMMENDATIONS.....	21
V. GENERAL ASSESSMENT	23

I. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the evaluation process

The evaluation of on-going study programmes is based on the **Methodology for evaluation of Higher Education study programmes**, approved by Order No 1-01-162 of 20 December 2010 of the Director of the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education (hereafter – SKVC).

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

The evaluation process consists of the main following stages: 1) *self-evaluation and self-evaluation report prepared by Higher Education Institution (hereafter – HEI)*; 2) *visit of the review team at the higher education institution*; 3) *production of the evaluation report by the review team and its publication*; 4) *follow-up activities*.

On the basis of external evaluation report of the study programme SKVC takes a decision to accredit study programme either for 6 years or for 3 years. If the programme evaluation is negative such a programme is not accredited.

The programme is **accredited for 6 years** if all evaluation areas are evaluated as “very good” (4 points) or “good” (3 points).

The programme is **accredited for 3 years** if none of the areas was evaluated as “unsatisfactory” (1 point) and at least one evaluation area was evaluated as “satisfactory” (2 points).

The programme is **not accredited** if at least one of evaluation areas was evaluated as "unsatisfactory" (1 point).

1.2. General

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

No.	Name of the document
	Not applicable

1.3. Background of the HEI/Faculty/Study field/ Additional information

As is stated in § 1 of the Self Evaluation Report (SER), the assessed Study Programme Christian Anthropological Pedagogy is a Master (second cycle) programme of university studies, which has been implemented by the Department of Catholic Religion Studies of the Faculty of History

of Lithuanian University of Educational Sciences. Religious education was re-established in Lithuania right after the restoration of independence. At the same time a system for training specialists in Religious Education was set up. In 2008-2009, 1536 teachers of Religion worked in Lithuanian schools teaching the subject to 243,503 schoolchildren. Over the last five years Catholic Religion was chosen as a study subject by more than half of the Lithuanian schoolchildren (53.0% in 2004-2005; 57.1% in 2005-2006; 58.0% in 2006-2007; 57.6% in 2007-2008; 57.7% in 2008-2009). As 79% of Lithuanian inhabitants are Catholic, similar percentages in the choice of the subject of Religion can be expected in the future. Throughout Lithuania, there is a lack of qualified teachers of Christian Pedagogy: according to the data for 2008-2009, 12.4% (191 teachers) of all Religion teachers obtained their qualification in short term courses. There is therefore a big demand for teachers of Religion with a university degree in Theology and Pedagogy. The SER (§ 2.1) claims that the Master in Christian Pedagogy in the frame of Religious Studies programme is the only one of its kind in Lithuania and is mainly oriented towards the further formation of professionals employed in the religious education of adults. The Expert Team notes that Vytautas Magnus University in Kaunas also has a MA programme in religious education, whose aim and design are quite similar to the MA of Christian Anthropological Pedagogy of LUES, but according to the SER and the interview with the management, there hardly seems to be any structural exchanges between these two programmes.

1.4. The Review Team

The review team was completed according *Description of experts' recruitment*, approved by order No. 1-01-151 of Acting Director of the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education. The Review Visit to HEI was conducted by the team on 26/10/2015.

- 1. Prof. Peter Jonkers (team leader)** *Tilburg University, Professor of Department of Systematic Theology and Philosophy, the Netherlands.*
- 2. Assoc. Prof. Olga Schihalejev,** *Tartu University, Associated Professor of the Faculty of Theology, Estonia.*
- 3. Prof. Stanislaw Rabiej,** *University of Opole, Dean of the Faculty of Theology, Poland.*
- 4. Prof. Rev. Vidas Balčius,** *Pontifical Urbaniana University, Associated Professor, Vatican City.*
- 5. Ms Daina Habdankaitė,** *student of Vilnius University of Philosophy master degree study programme, Lithuania.*

2.1. Programme aims and learning outcomes

Statements on evaluation of programme aims and learning outcomes according to the following criteria:

- the programme aims and learning outcomes are well defined, clear and publicly accessible;

The study programme *Christian Anthropological Pedagogy* is a Master (second cycle) programme of university studies, which has been implemented by the Department of Catholic Religion Studies of the Faculty of History of Lithuanian University of Educational Sciences. According to § 2.1 of the SER “The aim of the Study Programme is “to train and educate a highly qualified specialist in Christian anthropology, who possesses fundamental theoretical knowledge of Christian anthropology, skills of systemization and integration of its multifaceted (philosophical, theological, historical and educational) discourse; who is well aware of methodology and able to conduct original research on Christian anthropology as well as to formulate and transfer innovative ideas and solutions grounded on theoretical basis of Christian anthropology to practical activities, and who is able to implement religious education at all levels and possesses skills of self-directed learning to further improve own competences and to proceed to third cycle studies.”

By and large, the learning outcomes of the programme are well defined and phrased in terms of competences (see Table 1). These general learning outcomes are consistent with those of the individual courses (see Annex 1). However, the content of several courses (e.g. *Forms of Spirituality in the History of Christianity*, *Contemporary Philosophy of Religion*) is not well matched to the intended learning outcomes because they are too fragmented and specialized. Furthermore there is a significant lack of practical experience linking theoretical knowledge with practical activities in pedagogical work. In view of the learning outcomes there are several examples where the fundamentals are missing (e.g. ecumenical dimension of *Christian anthropological pedagogy*).

As the SER points out, the knowledge of *Christian anthropology* and *pedagogy* is equally required from all the graduates of this study programme. An interdisciplinary orientation of the study programme is mandatory in order to satisfy the future teachers of *Christian anthropological pedagogy* following the requirements of the national education system. To provide the required competence in the practical field of pedagogy the graduates must have close contact to practical applications based on innovative and creative thinking. The mere transfer of theoretical and practical knowledge based on textbook information is not adequate and hence all teaching activities have to be closely linked to pedagogical work carried out in modern society. While formulating the *Christian anthropological pedagogy* study programme aims and learning

outcomes, the national legislation has been fully observed. It can be stated that *Christian anthropology* study programme is formally well suited for the preparation of the required graduates.

During the site visit, the programme management explained that the original intent of this programme was to train teachers in Christian anthropology; the Lithuanian government decided that practical training in teaching was to be confined to the BA-level. Hence, the management decided to stress the anthropological aspect of this programme more. So, the lack of theoretical knowledge, practical skills, and training in pedagogy is indeed a major problem of this programme. The management suggested that it is preferable to change the title of the programme into Christian anthropology. The first aim of the programme is to educate students in understanding the Christian concept of the person. But all the students are employed as teachers in the highest grades of secondary schools, and for this they need a MA-degree. Besides this formal argument, the graduates of this programme pointed out that pupils regularly raise important questions about the human person, and schools need teachers to answer them. The primary aim of this programme is to deepen the theological and anthropological content; the students already have pedagogical qualifications. Hence, the title of the programme is a bit misleading. However, the Expert Team notes that § 2.5 of the SER does not mention pedagogical qualifications as a formal admission requirement.

During the site visit, the Expert Team was struck by the lack of a clear and cohesive idea about the learning outcomes of this programme. Various key players, such as the Faculty Management, the Programme Management, the representatives of the teachers and the students gave very different answers when asked for the aims of this programme. The answers went from expertise in Christian anthropology in order to answer fundamental questions from (high school) pupils, pedagogical skills and training, to preparation for academic research (see below).

- *the programme aims and learning outcomes are based on the academic and/or professional requirements, public needs and the needs of the labour market;*

The SER does not provide an analysis of the public needs for a programme in the field of Christian anthropology, nor of the labour market demand for such a degree.

The aims and learning outcomes combine a theoretical knowledge and research skills in the field of Christian anthropology and the application of these insights in practical activities, especially in the field of religious education, using information and communication technologies (see Table 1 of the SER). However, the study programme only comprises predominantly theoretical (mainly historical) courses in Christian anthropology, but does not familiarize the student with more recent theories and insights in Christian anthropology and the role of Christian

faith for today's humans, nor with current theories in education and pedagogy. Furthermore, no internships in schools or other educational settings are comprised in the programme. Hence, the programme does not fully fulfil an essential academic and professional requirement.

- *the programme aims and learning outcomes are consistent with the type and level of studies and the level of qualifications offered;*

The focus of this study programme is not sufficiently well defined as it aims to cover everything in *Christian anthropological pedagogy*. The arguments for offering an integrated degree in Christian Anthropology and Pedagogy are clear and reasonable. But in this case the clear aim of the programme has to be clarified (to prepare for 3rd study cycle and researchers, or to prepare for pedagogical competencies, ect.) and communicated to all stakeholders. The faculty Administration staff underlines the research aspect of the MA programme, but the majority of students are currently teachers of religion aiming at deepening and broadening their knowledge of the subject. Since the BA programme of religious education in LUES with which, according to the Administration, the MA programme was logically connected, does no longer exist, the very aim and the need of the MA programme should be revised. It seems that the vision of its aims is not clear neither for the administration, nor for study programme organizers or teachers. It is necessary to find a better approach and the concentration on several well selected practical aspects of *Christian anthropological pedagogy*. It is stated in the self-evaluation report that "The title of the Study Programme, the learning outcomes and qualification granted are compatible" but the programme does not provide any pedagogical qualification. So this statement might be misleading for the students. In terms of curriculum design and learning aims and outcomes, the compatibility with the title some serious doubts. The programme is dominated by the content from *Christian anthropology*, but is missing a study subject module or a pedagogical specialization module, which would justify the pedagogical dimension of studies. The discrepancy between the title of the programme and content should be repaired. In the SER (p. 9), the Analysis of Strengths, Weaknesses, and Opportunities (SWOT) indicates the same issue which shows that programme management is aware of this problem.

The program aims and learning outcomes are consistent with the level, but not with the content of what is offered (see previous points).

- *the name of the programme, its learning outcomes, content and the qualifications offered are compatible with each other.*

The program trains and educates students to become specialists in Christian anthropology, but not in the knowledge and skills that are needed to implement this theoretical knowledge in religious education. The SER admits that the title Christian Anthropological Pedagogy is

problematic, but argues that “teachers of religion and other people related to religious education in one or another way make up the absolute majority of the students in the Study Programme.” However, since a BA degree in (religious) education is no formal admission requirement for the programme, this argument does not hold. Hence, the name of the programme, its learning outcomes, content and the qualifications offered are not fully compatible with each other. The programme’s unilateral focus on questions in Christian anthropology is confirmed by the subjects of the theses (see Annex 3).

2.2. Curriculum design

The curriculum design shall be evaluated according to the following criteria:

- *the curriculum design meets legal requirements;*

The Programme is in compliance with legal acts both in length and volume of the studies. The Master studies programme is defined as a second cycle course designed to develop professional and research qualification. Master studies are oriented towards an analytic and applied activity and developing professional qualification.

According to SER the curriculum design, the learning outcomes and the content of study subjects have been regularly revised and improved taking into account the remarks of the experts in 2005, recommendations from social partners, the problems and request of students, which were revealed during discussions with the latter as well as the turnover of the teachers in the Department of Catholic Religion Education.

The volume of studies in the Master in *Christian Anthropological Pedagogy* is 120 ECTS; the duration is 2 years for full-time studies and 3 years for part-time studies. This is in compliance with the requirements of legal acts. The Study Programme consists of the group of study subjects of theoretical studies, which comprises compulsory and optional study subjects in the study field as well as a part of scientific research, which embraces Methodology of Religious Science Research, Educational Research Practice and Preparation and Defence of Master Thesis. A total of 66 ECTS is allocated for compulsory and 18 for optional study field courses, 36 ECTS is allocated to the final thesis and its preparation, as it is required in legal acts. Also the volume of courses unit is between 4-6 ECTS, as required; and no more than 5 courses is required in a semester.

- *study subjects and / or modules are spread evenly, their themes are not repetitive;*

The Table 2 and Annex 5 in SER indicates even workload for every semester. The workload of contact work for students of the Programme during the entire period of studies is 628 teaching

hours for full-time-studies and 460 hours for part-time studies, more during the first semesters and less during the last one, when more individual work is planned.

The well working curriculum should be designed in way that several courses are built up on the skills learned in earlier courses. During the meeting with teaching staff they reported that they discuss regularly about the content of various courses and how they relate to one another and that they refer in their classes to other courses. Though, the description of the study subjects (SER, Annex 1) does not reflect this aspect and thus it is not guaranteed that these interrelations are addressed systematically. There is a clearer link between theological and philosophical subjects, but pedagogical subjects seem to be less interlinked with other subjects.

- *the content of the subjects and / or modules is consistent with the type and level of the studies;and scope;*

The contents of the subject are diverse and cover a broad range of issues, including in addition to Theology also Cultural studies, Psychology and some Pedagogy.

When talking about the sufficiency of the curriculum to achieve learning aims and outcomes, it appears that the scope of the Programme does not sufficiently ensure the achievement of learning outcomes. The number and variety of pedagogical subjects is hardly enough to reach the learning outcome that is stated as “to apply contemporary teaching/learning methods and to develop possibilities of distance learning, to improve understanding and evaluation of learning and its outcomes, to improve content of religious education (to choose teaching goals, content and teaching methods and to conduct their evaluation), to formulate goals and objectives developing and implementing curricular as well as projects of individual pedagogical activities, to investigate learning needs, possibilities and quality of their satisfaction, to convey knowledge of faith to learners”. The Programme equips students with theological knowledge and general analytical skills, but to a lesser extent with pedagogical ones. Modelling Religious Education is the only compulsory subject falling into category of “Pedagogical subjects” and could hardly equip the students without prior pedagogical training with skills needed for their educational activities. Even though there are some subjects that help to acquire pedagogical competencies, the programme would gain from a greater emphasis on pedagogical theories what help students to develop their professional analytical skills. Also, the Programme would benefit from the strengthening of ecumenical and even interreligious dimension in relation to contemporary multicultural society and to be meaningful in it. During the meeting with students and graduates the need to cope with the more complex questions of senior students in schools was expressed. Also, more stress on moral theology would add more value to the Programme. It should be noted

that more stress on pedagogical theories and methods could also contribute to achieving the learning outcome related to pedagogical skills.

- *the content and methods of the subjects / modules are appropriate for the achievement of the intended learning outcomes;*

According to Appendix 1 in SER the employed study methods should allow to attain the learning outcomes of the Study Programme and be oriented towards the specific learning outcomes of study subjects. The Study Programme suggested that self-dependent learning of students should get more attention in the course of studies as without it the very idea of deepening studies may be distorted. This process is impeded by the fact that the numbers of study and literature resources of Christian anthropology in Lithuanian language are limited and the students are not very well prepared to use the ones in English, German, French, Italian and Polish languages. This type of assumption is a compromise that should not take place at this level, a master's degree. A solution self-evaluation team considers is introducing a prerequisite of knowing a foreign language as it has been already done at other MA programmes, for instance, programme of Local History.

- *the content of the programme reflects the latest achievements in science, art and technologies.*

The SER report (par. 2.2) states: Anthropological issues started getting a particularly significant attention after Vatican Council II, when a new light in theology was shed the problem of a person. Christian anthropology found its place and significance in the science and studies of theology and was (re)discovered as a sphere, where of development may directly and comprehensively serve the society. The implementation of the Study Programme on *Christian anthropological pedagogy* should be consistently inspired by a new trend of research in Christian anthropology and in the development of science of pedagogy in Europe. The studies reveal that this interdisciplinary education, which is presupposed by the field of Christian anthropology, is inevitable and necessary, particularly having in mind granting higher qualification to specialists working in the spheres of religious pedagogy and/or education.

It is difficult to decide how well the Programme reflects the latest achievements in science, since very few theories or researches are named in the documents provided. Two main indicators were used by the reviewers to assess this component, namely interviews with teachers and the list of required textbooks and articles for the students.

Most of the courses fulfill the requirement, but some should update the textbooks used – both to cover more up-to date research and approaches as well as to add a diversity of approaches. For example, philosophical studies, supposed to interpret current culture, are outdated. The following

courses have a slightly out-dated literature: Foundations and Problems of Person's Identity, Christian Anthropological Pedagogy.

2.3. Teaching staff

- *the study programme is provided by the staff meeting legal requirements;*

In regard to the requirement that the study programme is provided by the staff meeting legal requirements, page 18 and Table 5 in the SER addresses this issue, noting compliance to LUES requirements for teaching staff approved by the Rector of LUES. To improve, the expert team strongly recommends to enlarge the part of study subjects in the study field taught by professors (with professors pedagogical title). During the Site Visit this issue was raised and self-assessment team explained that two full professors from Philosophy Department are foreseen to join the Programme upcoming semester.

- *the qualifications of the teaching staff are adequate to ensure learning outcomes;*

According the SER 8 teachers are actually involved in implementation of the Programme: 2 teachers in the position of professors and with professor's pedagogical title, 3 teachers take positions of associate professor (1 of them has the pedagogical title of associate professor), 3 lecturers. All the members of teaching staff are doctor's degree holders (100%). Qualification of the academic staff corresponds to the General Requirements for Study Programmes.

In the SER it is stated that the average experience in research and pedagogical activities of teachers is 18 years (ranges from 11 to 36 years). Thus all Programme's teachers have the necessary practical experience, i.e. significantly higher than three years of teaching experience requested. The data of the analysis leads to the conclusion that the study subjects in the study field are taught by scientists-researchers, who have accumulated extensive practice in pedagogical work.

During the on-site visit one important fact has been highlighted: the teachers know each other's fields of specialisation and interest, participate in the courses of their colleagues, if their specific competence is needed, and also interact on the level of professional and academic conferences.

- *the number of the teaching staff is adequate to ensure learning outcomes;*

To run the Study Programme within the Faculty are foreseen only 3,5 Full-time teachers positions. 3 members of academic staff work as timeworkers or visiting professors because of the necessity of their competences for implementation of the named Programme. The lack of full-timers in the Programme was confirmed also, as a consequence of student-based funding.

From the mentioned points of view, the number and qualification of the teaching staff is not completely satisfying for a proper implementation of the Programme and requires urgently being supported in its composition. The lack of scholars from another Christian confessions is also observed.

The other assessed areas listed below, linked with teaching staff qualifications, are sufficient for the satisfactory implementation of the Programme.

- *teaching staff turnover is able to ensure an adequate provision of the programme;*

The data on teachers' turnover reveal that in the period of five years (from 2009 to 2014) four teachers changed in the Study Programme. The changes occurred have had the following implications: from one side, the average age of the staff decreased; from another side, at least temporarily, weakened (three associated professors were replaced by one with the equal pedagogical degree; another new entrances are Lecturers). The running of the Programme was sustained by one new Visiting Professor (Full Professor in another HEI). For the successful future implementation of the Program, a precise strategy aimed at the proper completion of the academic team, would be required.

- *the teaching staff of the programme is involved in research (art) directly related to the study programme being reviewed.*

All the members of teaching staff (100%) are engaged in research in the same area of their subject taught. To be emphasized the participation of the teaching staff in research activities (projects) and the significant scientific production. During the period of assessment have been published 3 monographs, 64 articles, 7 scientific sources (in Lithuanian and foreign scientific periodical publications). In the same period the academic staff took part in national (45), international scientific conferences (37) and research projects (4 teachers are involved in 10 projects).

Further, the mentioned activities are also the main modes for the professional development of teaching staff. Surely this area too requires major attention for future enhancement, especially by the Faculty authorities.

As noted in the SER, the main focus for teachers development over the period of 2009 – 2014 was on teachers' pedagogical and scientific qualifications.

The real workload of a teacher is high enough and consists of four interrelated parts: 1) pedagogical work; 2) research and/or artistic work; 3) activities of university publicity; 4) organizational work and qualification development.

2.4. Facilities and learning resources

- *the premises, the teaching and learning equipment for studies are adequate both in their size and quality;*

The SER provides detailed information about the premises. The number of available classrooms are adequate in size and quality with respect to the actual number of students. There are 2 amphitheatre classrooms, 9 classrooms are used for work in academic groups. The computer classroom is equipped with 12 computers and workplaces. All the classrooms are equipped with multimedia. The academic groups of students in Master study programmes are not big, therefore, probably smaller classrooms are more frequently used.

- *the higher education institution has adequate arrangements for students' practice;*

In the curriculum there is no separate study subject for students practice. As addressed in the SER, during their Master studies students have only scientific research practice, which is oriented towards creation and presentation of public religious discourse on the themes of Christian anthropology. Students have the possibility to choose among institutions and organizations suggested for Bachelor students where the Department of Christian Religion Education has agreements for practical placement: Lithuanian Catechetical Center and Catechetical Center of the Vilnius Archdiocese, in organisation involved with youth and adult catechesis in the parishes of Vilnius dioceses.

- *teaching materials (textbooks, books, periodical publications, databases) are adequate and accessible.*

Teaching materials (textbooks, books, periodical publications, databases) are adequate and accessible. The library is well equipped with the necessary text books for the different lectures. Access to other textbooks is guaranteed. There are 8 computerised workplaces in the Library and 3 computers are used for search of information. Students may work on their portable computers in the Library, where wireless internet is available.

According to the SER, for convenience of readers, the Library is divided into 7 zones: catalogues, loan department, self-dependent work, periodicals, silence zone, group work zone and exhibition zone. There are about 80 workplaces in total in the Library of Humanities. Moreover, students are provided with additional services of document copying, scanning and printing. The working hours of the Library are reasonable: Monday-Thursday: 8 am –6 p.m., Fridays: 8 am–5 pm. Due to well-developed computer network, the electronic catalogue of the Library of Humanities is accessible from all the workplaces in the University as well from any other internet access points.

It was stressed by the self-evaluation group that there are teachers who work on adapting the subject material for their students by writing their own articles and publishing translations of relevant texts. Students also have pointed out the problem of language proficiency but at the same time it was noted that knowing Russian or Polish was enough to succeed with their research. On the other hand, having in mind that, as stated in self-evaluation report, one of the main sources of literature for the programme students is held to be Library of Vilnius St. Joseph Seminary where up to 60% books are in foreign languages, there are serious doubts whether the majority of students is capable of accessing to the mentioned literary sources if their language proficiency is not sufficiently good.

Students also have conditions to use the databases subscribed by the LEU Library, which also contain theoretical and practical study literature necessary for studies in Christian anthropology. Access to material necessary for studies is expanded by the funds of other libraries in Vilnius. Most frequently students use Lithuanian National M. Mažvydas Library and the funds Library of Vilnius St. Joseph Seminary in particular.

2.5. Study process and students' performance assessment

- *the admission requirements are well-founded;*

The admission procedure to the study programme is organized by the Association of Lithuanian Higher Education Institutions for common admission organization and well-founded with some possible improvements. The most important student admission criterion is the scores he has achieved in high school. The holders of higher education qualification are admitted to the second cycle study programme in accordance with the procedure established by the higher education institutions, which is prescribed by the Council of the Faculty and approved by the Senate of LEU. During the period of 2009–2014, the general requirements for admission to the second cycle studies did not undergo any changes. In 2013 the admission point for the graduates from the first cycle study programme of Catholic Religion Education consisted of the weighted average of the marks of the following study subjects: Dogmatic Theology and Theology of the Morale. The competitive point for graduates from other universities or from non-theological or religious studies included evaluations of the 4 study subjects in the study field chosen by the student, which covered or revealed fundamentals of Christian doctrines or Christian anthropology.

It would be reasonable to include foreign language competence in admission process as self-assessment team noted that students are not ready to use sources of the studied field in foreign languages which is required for MA level studies. Also experts team would advise to consider

the formal requirement for pedagogical background from BA-curriculum to make MA studies more efficient.

- *the organisation of the study process ensures an adequate provision of the programme and the achievement of the learning outcomes;*

It was noted by the students that the way programme is organized and led is convenient for those who want to combine work with studies. There is a possibility to take study part-time, plus the students expressed their contentment with the overall positive atmosphere and good communication with the teachers via email and personal consultations. In the SER it is noted, that students who are unable to attend lectures according the timetable have the possibility to arrange their studies according individual schedule, which also allows to have their examination session earlier or later. There are also bridging studies offered.

- *students have opportunities to participate in student mobility programmes;*

There is no international mobility documented in the LUES with respect to the students. This may be due to the fact that most students are working and hence have no chance for a semester abroad. Concerning the incoming another students considerable efforts have to be undertaken in order to start an international exchange programme for students.

- *the higher education institution ensures an adequate level of academic and social support;*

Scholarships are available for some students although the number of scholarships has dropped in the last few years. With regards to academic support the teaching staff is available for consultations and there are also individual hours allocated to individual student work. Each week each teacher has his consultation hours in the Department that are announced in advance.

- *the assessment system of students' performance is clear, adequate and publicly available;*

In the SER, page 26, paragraph *Principles of system of student's assessment* details the student's performance assessment system, firstly stating the principles of learning outcomes assessment described in *The Description of Assessment and Acknowledgement of Learning Outcomes of Studies at Lithuanian University of Educational Science's*: validity, objectivity, clarity, usefulness, reliability. In Annex 1 (*Descriptions of Study Subjects*), the methods of assessing student's learning outcomes, and the various components of course grading and evaluation are detailed for each course. Study Subject Descriptions explains the meaning of the grades for a numeric as well as a narrative grading scale. Finally, as stated in SER, *The Description of Assessment and Acknowledgement of Learning Outcomes of Studies at Lithuanian University of Educational Science's* has a separate part that addresses the prevention of unfair

studying. All these elements of the assessment system are communicated to the students through course syllabi. It is also explained students get individual assignments and final thesis-related tasks which are carefully supervised by teachers. Therefore there are hardly any possibilities to unfair studying. In sum, the team of experts concludes that the Programme complies with the criteria of clarity, adequacy, and public availability of the student's performance assessment system.

After reviewing the MA thesis several improvement areas were identified. Weak methodology part in the thesis was observed, sometimes poor academic writing. Also in some cases discrepancies between the chosen method and pretended outcomes were observed. Most theses are at the interface between Christian anthropology and social sciences. All this would lead to more careful supervision of preparation of MA thesis.

The practical aspect of the research is clearly expressed in the majority of MA theses most of which comprise both the element of Christian Anthropology and the educational element. While clarifying the focus of the Programme the fact that pedagogical aspect is evident in MA thesis also supports the suggestion mentioned above: the block of pedagogical study subjects should be strengthened.

- *students are encouraged to participate in research, artistic and applied research activities;*

The absence of students in the scientific events and research can be noted. According to the students they are not encouraged to participate in applied research activities. According to self-evaluation group, not all of the students are qualified enough to lead a research on a higher scientific level. The poor number of students who are active in scientific research is due not to the fact that there is no place or possibility to get involved into the academic research. On the contrary, on the faculty and university level there are student scientific conferences organized as well as the scientific society of students is active. The majority of research done by programme students is directed towards practical aspect of the subject. As it was noted by self-evaluation group, students are encouraged to introduce the outcome of their research to the social partners, the majority of which are educational institutions and centers of catechetical. In the SER, Table 10 shows that over the year 2009 – 2013 students produces 3 applied works, participated twice in conferences, participated twice in TV and radio programs and produced one article in press.

- *professional activities of the majority of graduates meets the programme providers' expectations.*

In the meeting with graduates and the employers they stated that the professional activities of the majority of graduates meet the programme providers' expectations. The Study Programme itself (content, teachers' competencies, facilities and administration) is evaluated

higher than “good“ by the graduates. All of the graduates are teachers of religion in various kinds of schools. All of them confirm that this programme gives them more background to answer religious questions of children and youth. The strengths of the programme as pointed by graduates is a broad explanation and deep understanding of the concept of the person from a Christian perspective, and its relevance for educational questions. After completion of studies graduates feel more confident about their functioning in a practical context. As pointed out by social partners the graduates are an important reinforcement for catechetical work. It is good that they have a lot of practical experience. The pedagogical and didactical aspect could be strengthened. During the visit it was reflected that some students indeed lack some pedagogical and didactical skills, but it is no general problem.

Moreover, there should be an encouragement to students to participate in this programme through active information dissemination by students and administrative staff. Through these activities the internationality of the study programme can be improved.

2.6. Programme management

- *responsibilities for decisions and monitoring of the implementation of the programme are clearly allocated;*

The assurance of quality of implementation of the Study Programme is carried out at several levels. SPC is in charge of the content of the Study Programme, constant quality of content and attainment of goals of the Study Programme. The Department of Catholic Religion Education and its head are directly responsible for the content of scientific and pedagogical activities (i. e. quality).

Although on paper, the responsibilities of the management of this programme are well defined, during the site visit the team of experts was struck by the grave lack of commitment from various persons in charge, as well as by the absence of a shared view on the general aims and outcomes of the programme. During the meeting with the team of experts, the faculty management showed an attitude of complete disinterest in this programme and showed even a certain reluctance to answer the questions of the team of experts. When the team of experts asked questions about crucial aspects of the programme, the answers given by the team of teachers diverged considerably from those given by the programme management. In fact, the members of the programme management were the only ones who really cared about the orientation, the aims, the learning outcomes etc. of the programme as a whole. The team of experts deems this as a grave deficiency of the programme, which should be addressed as soon as possible.

- *information and data on the implementation of the programme are regularly collected and analysed;*

On university level, there is a clear and well-organized system of internal study programme evaluation in terms of what concerns student feedback. As explained by self-evaluation group, there are three levels of surveys on the faculty level: 1) internet surveys on each subject's content, teaching methods, etc. once a semester initiated by student society; 2) surveys for graduates, employers and social partners initiated by Study Programme Committee until 2014; 3) eye-to-eye meetings with administration and teachers. It must be noted that the student feedback to teachers about their subject should be made more regular and systematic, since personal feedback is not always effective or even achieved, as noted by self-evaluation group.

- *the outcomes of internal and external evaluations of the programme are used for the improvement of the programme;*

The results of observations are discussed individually. Also the Dean of the Faculty of History is in charge of quality of administration of the Study Programme. According to SER, the results of self-assessment are analysed and discussed in SPC, the Dean's Office, The Department, the Council of the Faculty. They are announced to the community during the General Meeting of the Faculty together with the Annual report of the Dean. The social partners are also invited to such meetings. The analysed results of (self-)assessment are implemented continuously improving the study process, its administration and monitoring. The information in the quality of studies is received from a number of sources: evaluation of the experts of the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education; 2) opinion surveys of students, teachers, graduates and their employers as well as social partners.

- *the evaluation and improvement processes involve stakeholders;*

According to the interview with the stakeholders, the graduates are an important reinforcement for catechetical work. It is good that they have a lot of practical experience. Students from this programme have a lot of methodological expertise to convey theological knowledge to pupils. The pedagogical and didactical aspect could be strengthened. In this programme the students have more freedom to choose the subject of their practical training. In order to be employed, graduates need a canonical mission. Some students indeed lack some pedagogical and didactical skills, but it is no general problem. The problem is the worst for students who did not have a pedagogical training in their BA-curriculum. There is a real need for experts in Christian anthropology, especially in the context of non-formal education (parishes etc.).

- *the internal quality assurance measures are effective and efficient.*

The programme management area calls for improvement. There is the absence of systematic collection of information and its analysis over the last years and insufficient attention of LUES to

quality assurance of content of studies and maintenance of contact with social stakeholders. Formal quality assurance procedures as described in SER seem to be in place, though during the meetings with teachers, administration staff and students rather different perceptions and understanding of the aim of the Programme were observed. This leads the experts' team to the view that programme management needs close attention from the Study Programme Committee as well as Administration. Internal collaboration procedures have to be reviewed and actions to solve mentioned discrepancy need to be taken. This also would include a deeper examination of students' expectations when entering the Programme.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The programme is dominated by content from a range of disciplines in *Christian anthropology*. Missing a study subject module or a pedagogical specialisation module, which would justify the pedagogical dimension of studies. The programme pretends to be a Christian anthropology, there are too few ecumenical viewpoints in this regard. The learning outcomes of all the study subjects should fully integrate and complement each other. In the light of the above suggestions, the Study Programme should be revised in the spirit of pedagogical and ecumenical dimension. Also the block of optional study subjects should be strengthened.
2. The general purpose of the programme should be clarified. If it is aimed at preparing students for research in Christian anthropology, as the teachers say, then more training in research skills and proficiency in foreign languages should be included in the programme. If it prepares students for teaching positions in high schools, as the students and the programme management state, then more attention should be given to pedagogical training, or pedagogical skills should be a formal admission criterion. If the students are prepared for teaching in non-formal teaching in parishes, as some of the stakeholders state, then specific courses on parish-catechesis should be included in the programme.
3. To clarify the focus of the Programme and repair the discrepancy between the title of the Programme and its content.
4. The implementation of the Study Programme on *Christian anthropological pedagogy* should be consistently inspired a new trend of research in Christian anthropology and in the development of science of pedagogy in Europe. The block of pedagogical study subjects should be strengthened.
5. The expert team strongly recommends to enlarge the part of study subjects in the study field taught by professors (with professors pedagogical title). There are not many teachers from another confessions of Christianity. For the successful future implementation of the Programme, a precise strategy aimed at the proper completion of the academic team, would be required.
6. To strengthen the methodological requirements for MA thesis and supervision of thesis preparation process.
7. Concerning the incoming foreign students considerable efforts have to be undertaken in order to start an international exchange programme for students. Students should be supported and encouraged to participate in applied research activities.

8. The systematic collection of information (from students, social partners, teachers) and its analysis about implementation of the Programme should be improved. The greater attention of SPC must be given to quality assurance of content of studies and maintenance of contact with social stakeholders.

IV. SUMMARY

This study programme in *Christian anthropological pedagogy* is a significant contribution to the growing need for practical education in actual society. The study programme is not adequate to the main title, nor does it have a clear vision of its general purpose, so improvements in various respects are necessary. The cooperation with the foreign scientific institutions and research centers is very important and much attention must be given to strengthening this cooperation. The study facilities are adequate and there are good future prospects. There is not a clear vision for the growth in this study field in Lithuania. LUES foresees that this programme will be equally chosen by future students. The teachers have some international relations concerning the teaching process. It would be suitable good collaboration with the social stakeholders in the teaching programme. The quality assurance programme should be based on regular meetings including teachers, students, graduates and employers. The quality of the final thesis is rather poor. Some topics of them are more broadly formulated than the content of work. The declaration of originality in each final thesis is important to fight plagiarism efficiently.

The actual form of the study programme should follow the potential for improvements. The quality of the submitted self- assessment report is not adequate and lacks coherence in view of a final and complete evaluation of this study programme. The programme aims and indented learning outcomes are not sufficiently focused on the requirements of a professional MA in *Christian anthropological pedagogy*. Basic courses are overloaded with information and lack coherence with pedagogical topics. Several topics are not yet adequately covered. The programme does not provide any pedagogical qualification which might be misleading for the students. In terms of curriculum design and learning aims and outcomes, the compatibility with the title causes some serious doubts. The students do not sufficiently participate in applied research. There is a strong lack of male students; no strategy is given how to improve this situation. Since the self- assessment report is rather contradictive with respect to the number and qualification of the actual teaching staff there are severe doubt whether the available teachers will manage to simultaneously offer a part-time and a full-time study programme without being heavily overloaded.

V. GENERAL ASSESSMENT

The study programme Christian Anthropological Pedagogy (state code – 621V80003) at Lithuanian University of Educational Sciences is given **positive** evaluation.

Study programme assessment in points by evaluation areas.

No.	Evaluation Area	Evaluation of an area in points*
1.	Programme aims and learning outcomes	2
2.	Curriculum design	2
3.	Teaching staff	2
4.	Facilities and learning resources	3
5.	Study process and students' performance assessment	2
6.	Programme management	2
	Total:	13

*1 (unsatisfactory) - there are essential shortcomings that must be eliminated;

2 (satisfactory) - meets the established minimum requirements, needs improvement;

3 (good) - the field develops systematically, has distinctive features;

4 (very good) - the field is exceptionally good.

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