



STUDIJŲ KOKYBĖS VERTINIMO CENTRAS

LIETUVOS EDUKOLOGIJOS UNIVERSITETO
**STUDIJŲ PROGRAMOS *PASLAUGŲ VERSLO*
*ADMINISTRAVIMAS (612N15001)***
VERTINIMO IŠVADOS

**EVALUATION REPORT
OF STUDY PROGRAMME
*SERVICE BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION (612N15001)***
at LITHUANIAN UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATIONAL
SCIENCES

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Išvados parengtos anglų kalba
Report Language nglish

DUOMENYS APIE ĮVERTINTĄ PROGRAMĄ

Studijų programos pavadinimas	<i>Paslaugų verslo administravimas</i>
Valstybinis kodas	612N15001
Studijų sritis	Socialiniai mokslai
Studijų kryptis	Verslas
Studijų programos rūšis	Universitetinės studijos
Studijų pakopa	Pirmoji
Studijų forma (trukmė metais)	Nuolatinė (4), Iššęstinė (5,5)
Studijų programos apimtis kreditais	222
Suteikiamas laipsnis ir (ar) profesinė kvalifikacija	Paslaugų verslo administravimo bakalauras
Studijų programos įregistravimo data	2011-05-12 , 1-01-57

INFORMATION ON EVALUATED STUDY PROGRAMME

Title of the study programme	<i>Service Business Administration</i>
State code	612N15001
Study area	Social Sciences
Study field	Business
Kind of the study programme	University Studies
Study cycle	First
Study mode (length in years)	Full time (4), Part time (5,5)
Volume of the study programme in credits	222
Degree and (or) professional qualifications awarded	Bachelor of Service Business Administration
Date of registration of the study programme	2011-05-12 , 1-01-57

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I. INTRODUCTION

This report consists of an evaluation of the Bachelor in Service Business Administration programme which is offered under both full-time and part-time study modes by the Lithuanian University of Educational Sciences (LUES). In reviewing the programme, the international expert evaluation panel studied the content of the Self-Assessment Report (SAR) and supporting documentation provided by the University. A site visit to the institution was undertaken on 25 April 2014.

The Resolution of the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania No. 41-2406 of 8 November, 2012 approved the statute of the University, which confirms its mission to be as follows: “to train specialists of highest qualification in education as well as researchers and applied researchers, to educate members of society in accordance with the contemporary education philosophy and most recent scientific knowledge and principles of sustainable development”. The mission and vision of the University encompasses the areas of studies, research and practice across a wide spectrum of academic activity, including the provision of various social educational services. The Service Business Administration degree programme is delivered within the Department of Economics and Entrepreneurship Development, one of three Departments within the Faculty of Social Education. This Faculty currently offers six study programmes at Bachelor degree level and two at Master’s degree level, and has a total overall enrolment of 800 students. The degree under evaluation has 87 registered students (35 full-time and 52 part-time).

The duration of the programme is four years on a full-time basis and five and a half years via the part-time study mode. The study period for part-time students, in particular, requires a commitment which may be difficult to sustain. The implementation of a 'Recognition of Prior Learning' (experiential or otherwise) policy could allow suitably qualified applicants who have already achieved particular learning outcomes related to individual subjects to seek an exemption(s) which would shorten the period of studies, without impacting on the quality of the learning experience.

Prior to the external evaluation, as already mentioned, an internal Self-Assessment Review was carried out within the University in accordance with the Order of the Director of the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education (SKVC) and other methodological guidelines. The SAR confirms that studies are being implemented in accordance with the relevant national legal

acts related to such matters and appropriate key policy documents issued by LUES. The distribution of the overall total of 222 ECTS complies with the requirements of legislation under the various prescribed headings for parts of the study programme, i.e. general education subjects; subjects in the study field; elective/optional subjects; practices; Bachelor's paper; number of study subjects per semester; and proportion of scientists who teach study subjects.

As this degree opportunity was introduced by the University in 2010, a less than complete evaluation of all facets of studies was possible. This was inevitable and meant that final-year theses could not be reviewed, nor was it possible to obtain feedback from or in relation to graduates with the qualification.

II. PROGRAMME ANALYSIS

1. Programme aims and learning outcomes

The stated aim of the Bachelor in Service Business Administration study programme is “to train highly qualified specialists with University higher education, who are able to carry out administrative functions in private service business companies and to successfully apply the acquired knowledge and abilities for administration of public services”. Additionally, the objective is to produce graduates “who will be able to actively engage in the development of the service sector employing the EU Service Directive and in the implementation of strategic goals of economic development”. It is understood that holders of this qualification will be eligible for employment and future careers in both the small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and wider business sectors.

While overall aims and subject learning outcomes are coordinated and in harmony, the following suggestions are intended to reinforce strengths and overcome deficits in this key area:

- The programme title requires further discussion and analysis within the University. The broad nature of the curriculum, together with perceptions regarding its focus which were communicated to the panel by stakeholders, suggests that the student is being prepared for a wider range of employment possibilities and career opportunities than the existing title would suggest. For example, it was stated to the panel that the holder of the qualification would be eligible for middle-management positions across a variety of sectors within the economy, including the possibility of employment within

manufacturing industry. While this report does not wish to be prescriptive, an alternative and more representative title, such as 'Business Administration and Services Management', or 'Business and Services Administration', or 'Business and Services Management' might be included amongst those to be considered for adoption as part of an internal consultative and review process.

- A factor which arose during the site visit was the emphasis placed on entrepreneurship in the context of programme aims and learning outcomes. It is expected that the graduate will possess the knowledge, skills and other attributes necessary to establish his/her own business. The time allocated to this aspiration within curriculum delivery does not fully reflect such an intention, and the subject content also requires further strengthening to make it a reality (please see related references later in this document). The panel fully supports the concept of enterprise development, and requests that consideration be given to providing the programme with a stronger entrepreneurial focus in terms of aims, objectives and the provision of a more integrated subject content, with associated learning outcomes. An enhanced entrepreneurial impetus may also have implications in terms of any decision to revise the programme title.

The intended learning outcomes comply with the kind, field, and cycle of studies, and are in accordance with both the European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning (EQF) and the Lithuanian Qualifications Framework. The domains of knowledge application, research skills, special skills, social skills and personal skills all form part of the approach adopted in the design of learning outcomes. However, an even stronger commitment to the development of students' analytical, evaluative, problem-solving and decision-making skills is recommended throughout the period of studies.

While there is an avenue for graduate progression to a Master's degree in the Management and Administration of Educational Institutions at LUES (and to some alternative postgraduate opportunities), it is essential that students realise their full potential within the confines of this Bachelor degree. To achieve this ambition, the aims, objectives and learning outcomes for the entire programme and its constituent parts should be framed in a manner which is consistently challenging and extends, where necessary, beyond some current requirements, as stated, in terms of 'to know' and 'to be aware' in relation to knowledge acquisition and skills development. By way of contrast, certain learning outcomes for particular subjects are somewhat more ambitious

than might be expected at this level of studies. The following examples are indicative in this respect:

Subject-Advanced Mathematics (first semester): Learning Outcome---"A student is able to develop mathematical models describing the regularities of processes, as well as find and interpret their solutions".

Subject-Psychology (second semester): Learning Outcome---"A student is able to analyse and summarize texts on Psychology".

Subject-State Finance (fifth semester): Learning Outcome---"A student is able to objectively evaluate the changes of the world and state economy".

Additionally, the learning outcome as presented for the Commercial Law subject do not appear to be specifically related to the syllabus.

As a general conclusion, the panel suggests that the number of learning outcomes determined within this programme is excessive and should be streamlined. Where a multitude of learning outcomes (and related extensive subject content) exists, it becomes more difficult for both the student and teacher to concentrate on the development of deeper thinking and learning skills, and easier to adopt a more mechanistic and superficial approach to certain topics.

2. Curriculum design

The direct relevance of some of the 44 curriculum subjects, such as Politology, Business and Property Evaluation, and Labour Market Economics should be reviewed in the context of the overall aims and objectives of this degree. The evaluation panel has also concluded that opportunities exist for an expansion in the mandatory subjects component (at the expense of subject material deemed to be superfluous). An increase in the range of elective subjects on offer, and the rationalisation/amalgamation of syllabi is also proposed. As an indication regarding where streamlining might occur, mention can be made of the syllabi currently designed for subjects such as Fundamentals of Business, Fundamentals of Management and, in particular, the excessive Economics and Mathematics-related content offered to students.

Subject material to be considered for compulsory status within the curriculum should include areas such as Business Strategy/Strategic Management, Change Management, E-Business, Logistics and Supply Chain Management, International Management, Management across

Cultures, and a Learning to Learn module in the first semester. Learning to Learn is becoming more accepted as a specific subject in the field of higher education due to its importance in helping students to make the transition to higher studies. Normally, the topics covered in the syllabus include learning styles, study and research techniques, time management, examination preparation, and stress management. The reference above to Strategy/Strategic Management and Change Management has taken into account the fact that students are already taught "how to introduce innovations into companies and manage the overall change process", and that there is a "strategic planning and management component" within the Business Economics syllabus. However, the time allocated to the coverage of such topics is extremely limited at present.

The analysis of the curriculum highlights the expansive nature of syllabi and the limited time available for presenting such a wide variety of topics. Examples of this dilemma abound, including the following: Subject - European Economic Integration where one hour is allocated to 'The Council, The Parliament, The Commission, The European Court of Justice etc.'; Service Quality Management where one hour is devoted to teaching 'The development and maintaining of a quality management system'; and the Business Philosophy syllabus which refers to the work of ten named philosophers whose theories are to be covered in sixteen hours of lectures. A similar comment can be made in relation to the expansive Commercial Law subject. The learning process would be enhanced and enriched if fewer topics were to be presented, each at a deeper level. This limitation of the programme might be considered a priority by management in the planning and implementation of future strategy for this degree.

As suggested above, there is a certain imbalance in content across the curriculum. By way of example, mention has been made of the over-emphasis on subject areas such as Economics and Mathematics. When the aims and objectives of the degree are taken into account, the allocation of so many ECTS credits to subjects coming under the umbrella of both of these study areas is open to adjustment. In contrast, the comparatively lesser credit weighting assigned to other subjects, such as Fundamentals of Business, Fundamentals of Management, International Business and Finance Management, serves to reinforce the perceived anomaly. Incidentally, the use of the word 'Higher' in the title of the Mathematics subject in the first semester does not appear justified, and could result in a distorted understanding of the nature and focus of the subject and the entire degree. Also with regard to subject titles, Service Management might be more appropriately named Services Management, while the Management of Investment Projects heading is somewhat misleading, as the content relates to the more relevant and appropriate domain of Project Management. The Bachelor's Paper is understood to be a capstone component

of the curriculum. However, the title may not readily convey that message to anyone who is unfamiliar with the process.

The sequencing of subjects could be revised somewhat to ensure that the students' learning experience is developed in the most logical and methodical manner. For example, the teaching of the subjects Public Services Management and the Services Marketing prior to the student being introduced to the Service Business Management syllabus might be reconsidered. Also in terms of sequencing, it would be desirable in the first semester to include an increased number of subjects directly related to the theme of the programme. Currently, Theory of Services is the only first semester subject which might be said to have a direct relation to the programme title. While the panel welcomes the inclusion of the Business Ethics module (and also the reference to ethical issues elsewhere in the curriculum), it is recommended that this subject might be delivered earlier than the eighth semester in order to improve students' understanding of its importance and help inform their decision making, particularly in preparation for and during the internship.

The SAR refers to the necessity for the University to prepare specialists with entrepreneurial skills, in line with the strategic provisions of the Lithuanian Educational Plan 2013-2022. In this context, and as already alluded to, a stronger, more focused and integrated emphasis on all facets of entrepreneurship, including social entrepreneurship, is required within the curriculum (currently, the teaching of entrepreneurship and enterprise development is dispersed over a number of subjects). Such a revision should be reflected in the teaching time allocation, as well as in the assignment of appropriate ECTS credits to the integrated subject content. Currently, Socially Responsible Business is an elective, on the stated basis that it is not a classical subject. In conjunction with any expansion in the range of elective subjects, it is recommended that this syllabus should become compulsory for both full-time and part-time students. Discussions with academic staff during the visit to the University reassured the panel that potential overlap in content across distinct subjects (for example, as between similar-type topics within the Personnel Management and the HR element of Service Business Management syllabi) can be explained in terms of teachers presenting the related material from different angles.

The internationalisation of the curriculum could also be expanded and extended. Specifically, the teaching of subjects through the medium of English is strongly encouraged in order to enrich the students' learning experience and prepare them more effectively for the challenges and opportunities likely to be encountered upon graduation. In general terms, it is also advisable that the following topics be given greater attention within subject content: selling; sales management;

consumer psychology and customer care; accounting and finance principles and practices (including the costing of services); web design and corporate identity; public relations; tourism and hospitality studies; and sustainability and environmental protection. A stronger emphasis on the use of technology in E-commerce/E-business is also suggested. As a minor comment, the title of the subject Personnel Management might be revised to read Human Resource(s) Management, assuming that such an amendment does not conflict with general understanding and terminology usage in Lithuania.

3. Teaching staff

The programme is delivered by highly qualified, experienced and enthusiastic academic staff. The commitment of teachers towards ensuring a high-quality learning opportunity for the student is apparent. Well-developed, positive relationships, based on mutual trust and respect, exist between students and staff. It is understood that "different moral and financial incentives" are applied by the University for the purpose of promoting staff development.

However, as in all fields of education and training, there is potential for further enhancement in this area, in accordance with the following suggested guidelines:

- The training of staff (and students) in the use of the Moodle virtual learning environment is regarded by the panel as a prerequisite for enhancing the quality of studies.
- A strengthening of formal communication between members of the academic team, involving the introduction of appropriate channels for this purpose, is also recommended. This will result in a more unified approach to curriculum delivery, and help towards the introduction of an increased number of integrated projects/assignments as part of the assessment process.
- While members of the academic staff are engaged in national and international projects, additional potential exists for teachers to complete doctoral studies. The involvement of some academic staff members in international exchanges is commendable, and such possibilities for should be exploited further in the future. Participation in national and international conferences, and the presentation of scientific papers at such events, warrants continuing involvement from teachers and support from the University.

- A greater involvement of national and international guest lecturers (from both academic institutions and the world of business/commerce) in subject delivery would widen horizons and help strengthen links between theory and practice for the students.
- Ongoing attention should be paid towards ensuring that all staff members associated with the design, development, delivery and review of this degree readily understand the concept of learning outcomes and how these inform the entire student experience. There is a certain inconsistency in the manner in which subject learning outcomes are currently presented. This is reflected by discrepancies in the number of learning outcomes designated for particular subjects and also by the variation in the level and wording of descriptors. A collegiate approach towards the design, development and adoption of learning outcomes is warranted. The role and functions of learning outcomes should also be strengthened in the context of informing and becoming clearly identifiable in respect of the assessment strategy being implemented.

4. Facilities and learning resources

The premises within which the programme is delivered was renovated in 2011. The lecture rooms and venues for practical classes are fit for purpose. The LUES library is a member of the Consortium of Lithuanian Academic Libraries, and library staff conduct readers' needs analyses to help determine opening hours for study purposes. In terms of access, students have the opportunity to use a range of databases, and this resource helps to compensate for a limited availability of both scientific literature and the most up-to-date textbooks across subject areas. The University acknowledges that there are "insufficient numbers of methodological publications written following the aims and learning outcomes of the study programme", and also that "the thematic scope of information sources is too narrow".

The introduction of a virtual learning environment, such as Moodle, would have particular relevance for students, bearing in mind the limited hours available for the direct teaching of subject material. Also of special significance would be the provision of a business simulation centre, incorporating software and other materials to replicate real business and commercial transactions under environmental conditions influenced by economic, social, political and technological considerations. Such a facility would reinforce efforts already in place to provide students with practical, real-life examples of business situations, involving planning, team working, management, marketing, problem solving and decision making. The additional 'hands-

on' experience would allow for student participation in the development, implementation and management of strategies within a simulated company experiencing the dynamics of competition and cooperation in the marketplace. The teaching of Accounting and Finance should be expanded within the programme. The quality and effectiveness of lecturing in this subject area would be complemented by the use of the latest industry-wide software packages, in line with those which graduates are likely to encounter in subsequent employment.

The recommended reading lists should be reviewed, as appropriate, to guarantee that there are not too many or too few reference sources for student attention. Equally, it is essential to ensure an adequate supply of the most up-to-date reading material in order to supplement the methodological publications provided by academic staff members involved in teaching the curriculum. The panel understands that University students "are involved in scientific societies, scientific conferences, thematic events and the implementation of projects" and encourages sustained efforts to ensure that participants in this study programme are proportionately represented in such endeavours, as part of the overall study process which is discussed next.

5. Study process and students' performance assessment

The University uses a range of internal indicators to assess study quality across all areas of programme delivery. Such criteria include:

- percentage of graduates of the study programme listed on the labour exchange
- number of under-performing students
- number of academic products (publications)
- attendance at qualification- improvement events by teachers
- information obtained from student surveys.

Despite ongoing work by the University to maintain and develop programme quality, and taking into account the current expansion of the services sector within Lithuania, it is disappointing to note the recorded decline in student enrolment (1st year intake) in recent years. The implementation of plans to market and promote the programme more intensively may improve this situation. In a similar context, extra research should help to establish more fully the reasons behind student drop-out.

In a programme of this nature, it is essential to strike the appropriate balance between theory and practice. Social partner representatives indicated to the panel that a stronger concentration on practice would be their preference. Still on the theme of the study process, it is readily apparent that part-time students receive significantly less direct teaching hours than their full-time counterparts. It would appear that part-time students are not involved in practical classes in subjects such as Econometrics and European Economic Integration, while they do not participate either in workshops associated with the delivery of the Finance Accounting subject. Additionally, those who opt for the part-time study mode are expected to undertake an impractical and unrealistic quantity of self-study hours (perhaps dictated by the demands of ECTS norms). While consultation time with teachers is made available for all students in part compensation for the deficit in teaching hours, programme management is strongly advised to review the current study process, in line with suggestions and recommendations contained in this report.

The many assessment tests of different types which students are required to undertake should be examined further, with a view to reducing their number and achieving greater consistency in the relative weighting assigned to each within different subjects. Fewer assessments, including more of an integrated nature involving at least two subject areas, should be considered. A clearly understood direct correlation between each assessment instrument and the specific learning outcomes which it has been designed to measure would be highly desirable

The panel wishes to express some reservations regarding the role of objective testing in achieving learning outcomes, particularly for study programmes at this level, and also suggests that individual contributions to group project work be recognised as an alternative to assigning an identical score to each member of the group. A review of the sample of student work on display indicates that more research and greater analytical rigour is needed on the part of some students when completing such projects/assignments, particularly in the context of justifying the high marks allocated in certain cases. While (of necessity) there was no opportunity to assess theses, it is strongly advisable that the descriptive content in these student productions be kept to a minimum. The inclusion of a section within the thesis to allow the student to reflect on the procedures adopted, as well as the quality of the learning experience associated with this major assignment, should be considered (if not already an integral part of the process). The allocation of the entire 100 marks to the defence of the thesis might also be reviewed, in order to allow for an appropriate distribution of a relative weighting of marks to the constituent elements and the attainment of their respective learning outcomes.

Academic integrity and honest behaviour during studies and throughout the assessment process is a focal dimension of University policy. The prevention of cheating in higher education relies upon the maintenance of an anti-plagiarism policy which is comprehensive, clearly understood and implemented fairly. In this regard, and the remark is not intended specifically for LUES, merely allowing the student who has cheated to re-sit the examination or repeat the assignment is not recommendable as an adequate deterrent. Equally, decisions on cases of alleged dishonest behaviour should not be the responsibility or at the sole discretion of an individual teacher or other staff member.

6. Programme management

At Faculty level, the management of the programme is based upon different assigned authority, including decisions made within the Department, the resolutions of both the Study Programme Committee and the Council of the Faculty, and the role of the Dean who is directly responsible for the implementation of the study process. There is also some student representation in the programme management process.

The panel understands that the management structure and processes have undergone change recently and that such developments are ongoing. In this respect, it is essential that specific attention is paid to the role and more frequent functioning of the Study Programme Committee. This committee consists of three teachers from the Department, two students, and two representatives from social partners. The added presence of a member of academic management within the group is regarded by the panel as essential towards ensuring and maintaining quality. Significant goodwill towards this degree, and the University in general, exists amongst all stakeholders, including social partners. The involvement of social partner representatives in programme management and development needs to be strengthened, perhaps through the establishment of more formal relationships. It is understood that social partners participated at the initial phase of programme development, but that their involvement has been more limited subsequently. The plan to expand the functions of the Study Programme Committee “in the sphere of study quality assurance, observing, analysing the study process and providing recommendations in the sphere of content quality improvement” deserves strong encouragement, as does the stated intention to reduce “the big number of hierarchical levels of decision making” associated with programme management.

At this point, the panel wishes to reiterate the view that the Faculty and the Department should review the title and focus of the degree as part of the overall management process. The accepted definitions of the terms 'management' and 'administration' in Lithuania will obviously be relevant in any discussion on this fundamental issue. It is our understanding that the curriculum content is leaning more towards management than administration, and, as stated earlier, that the curriculum content covers a wider spectrum than just the services sector. However, it is readily acknowledged that the student, without substantial additional practical work experience gained outside the confines of degree studies, is unlikely to assume a senior management role immediately upon graduation.

As this degree opportunity is linked to the EU Service Directive there is, by implication, an international dimension to the programme. The internationalisation of studies, to which management is committed, is expected to be developed further in the future. In this respect, an expansion in the use of foreign languages, especially English, is necessary, as indicated already. It would appear that members of the teaching staff are enthusiastic about improving their competence in the English language. The involvement of staff and students in exchange schemes, such as Erasmus, should also help to facilitate the process, as would the participation of visiting University lecturers from abroad. While it is understood that "no analogous or similar studies have been implemented in Lithuania", benchmarking of a programme of this type against other study opportunities, both nationally and internationally, would serve to inform both current practice and future plans.

The implementation of a strengthened marketing policy towards the promotion of this qualification to potential students, together with the utilisation of a recognition of prior learning (RPL) policy, and the possible introduction of single subject certification for students unable or unwilling to undertake the complete curriculum, might also be considered. The latter proposal would facilitate potential students who are in employment and wish to enhance their knowledge and update their skills in particular subject areas, without the commitment involved in gaining the full qualification. Any efforts by management to reduce the requirement that students must gain the maximum score (10) before becoming eligible for financial support towards their studies would have the support of the evaluation panel.

There are approximately 500,000 people employed within the expanding Lithuanian services sector, which is responsible for 65% of GDP. This indicates the potential relevance of the qualification. The implementation of the recommendations contained in this external evaluation

report is expected to strengthen further the profile of the programme, to improve its quality, and to help the students achieve their goals as they prepare for the anticipated successful and rewarding careers. The University is to be commended for the foresight shown in introducing an innovative study programme of this nature.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

The following summary of suggestions and recommendations is based upon the general thrust and content of this report, which should be regarded as a unified document.

1. The title and focus of the programme should be reviewed in order to reflect a revised curriculum, along the lines referred to above. Stated aims, objectives and learning outcomes will require some adjustment, especially to accord with any amendments made to the title, curriculum and individual subject content. Benchmarking against related degrees, both nationally and internationally, would be a valuable aid towards informing this process.
2. The number of learning outcomes presented for particular subjects such as Service Quality Management (14), and Business Philosophy (10) should be reduced. A stronger emphasis on the development of the students' higher-level thinking and analytical skills would enrich the learning experience.
3. The curriculum warrants some revision, based on proposals and suggestions contained in this report. Examples include, a reduction in the emphasis on mathematical and economics content, the introduction of new subject material in combination with the rationalisation of subjects and syllabus content, an expansion in the range of electives (with perhaps the opportunity for the student to specialise in areas such as public service administration), a strengthening of the international dimension of the programme, and a review of the status of certain subjects which are currently categorised as electives rather than mandatory.
4. An ongoing emphasis on the development of academic staff is essential for the maintenance of programme quality. This should include the establishment of individualised personal development plans, based on a training needs analysis. While the strengths of the teaching staff are apparent, there is potential for further development, as indicated above. Formal communication on a regular basis between teachers involved in curriculum delivery is also recommended.
5. The facilities and learning resources are open to further enhancement. In this respect, the introduction of a business simulation system to replicate real-life business and commercial experiences is strongly advisable. The use of Moodle (or similar) as a virtual learning environment to supplement learning and teaching is considered to be essential by the panel. The learning process could also be suitably enriched if employers were invited to submit into the classroom practical projects involving aspects of their business.

The students, under the supervision of teaching staff, could then undertake research and aim to solve such problems, thereby strengthening their understanding of the association between theory and practice. While an impressive range of databases is available for student use, there is scope for an increase and some updating of the library stock related to the curriculum.

6. The study process and student assessment procedures require refinement. A greater involvement of visiting lecturers from academia and the employment sector, an increased emphasis on student research, and the avoidance of too much descriptive content in student projects/assignments represent examples of matters requiring ongoing attention. A reduction in the number of student assignments might be considered, and there should be more assessment tests of an integrated nature. The correlation between each assessment instrument and the learning outcomes which it proposes to measure should be established and readily understood by both students and academic staff members. Also in this context, the lack of consistency in the variety of approaches being used for assessment purposes is worthy of analysis.
7. The constitution and working of the Study Programme Committee, in conjunction with the role of the newly appointed programme coordinator, is understood to be currently under review. The panel welcomes this, and envisages an outcome which will build upon the progress already made to establish a reputation which this degree opportunity requires and deserves in order to attract an increasing number of students and gain the attention of potential employers in what, admittedly, is a relatively new field of academic endeavour.
8. Programme management is strongly advised to consider the implementation of suggestions and recommendations presented in this report. For their part, the panel members wish to commend all concerned with the internal self-assessment process, which was comprehensive and clear in its exposition of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats associated with the degree offering. It is understood that this SWOT analysis will form the basis for action plans designed to overcome weaknesses, reinforce strengths, exploit opportunities and minimise threats related to the programme, which the panel hopes will have a promising future as it becomes better known and the capabilities of the graduates are readily apparent in the labour market. This conclusion is reinforced by the views of social partners, as expressed during the site visit, and by their appreciation of the qualities displayed by students on internships within the programme.

IV. SUMMARY

This study programme is regarded by the external evaluation panel as having significant potential and relevance in terms of the career prospects for graduates and the contribution which they can make to the services sector and other areas within the Lithuanian economy.

It is anticipated by the University that the demand for the degree will increase in the future, as the nature of the qualification and the relevance of the curriculum become better known and more fully understood. The University readily accepts the importance of engaging in a proactive marketing campaign to ensure a greater awareness amongst both employers and prospective students of the focus and strengths of the programme, and of the anticipated currency of the qualification in the labour market. Social partners can be called upon to participate to a fuller extent in programme implementation and management, including the promotion of its relevance to the widest possible audience.

Throughout this external review process, the panel has attempted to present suggestions and offer recommendations designed to reinforce strengths and help eliminate perceived deficits. While a specific Section in this report is headed 'Recommendations', it is important that the document be read in its entirety. The intention is to add value to what is already a worthy programme, albeit existing in a highly competitive Lithuanian higher-education environment which is currently experiencing negative social-demographic trends that are impacting, to a greater or lesser extent, on student numbers within Universities and Colleges.

As members of the external evaluation panel, we wish to thank all concerned for the welcoming manner in which we were received by the University. We are also grateful for the positive and participative approach adopted by stakeholders in the various discussions conducted on the occasion of the site visit.

V. GENERAL ASSESSMENT

The study programme *Service Business Administration* (state code – 612N15001) at Lithuanian University of Educational Sciences is given **positive** evaluation.

Study programme assessment in points by evaluation areas.

No.	Evaluation Area	Evaluation Area in Points*
1.	Programme aims and learning outcomes	2
2.	Curriculum design	2
3.	Teaching staff	3
4.	Facilities and learning resources	2
5.	Study process and students' performance assessment (student admission, study process student support, achievement assessment)	3
6.	Programme management (programme administration, internal quality assurance)	2
	Total:	14

*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.

Grupės vadovas:

John Cusack

Team leader:

Grupės nariai:

John Davis

Team members:

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