STUDIJŲ KOKYBĖS VERTINIMO CENTRAS

Vilniaus universiteto
KOKYBĖS VADYBOS (621N20004) PROGRAMOS VERTINIMO IŠVADOS

EVALUATION REPORT
OF *QUALITY MANAGEMENT* (621N20004)
STUDY PROGRAM
at Vilnius University

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DUOMENYS APIE ĮVERTINTĄ PROGRAMĄ

Studijų programos pavadinimas	***Kokybės vadyba***
Valstybinis kodas	621N20004
Studijų sritis	socialiniai mokslai
Studijų kryptis	vadyba
Studijų programos rūšis	universitetinės studijos
Studijų pakopa	antroji
Studijų forma (trukmė metais)	Nuolatinės,1,5
Studijų programos apimtis kreditais	120
Suteikiamas laipsnis ir (ar) profesinė kvalifikacija	vadybos magistras
Studijų programos įregistravimo data	2009-08-17

INFORMATION ON EVALUATED STUDY PROGRAMME

Title of the study programme	***Quality Management***
State code	621N20004
Study area	Social Studies
Study field	Management
Kind of the study programme	University studies
Cycle of studies	Second
Study mode (length in years)	Full-time,1,5
Scope of the study programme in credits	120
Degree and (or) professional qualifications awarded	Master of Management
Date of registration of the study programme	2009 -08-17

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INTRODUCTION

Vilnius University is the largest higher education institution in Lithuania. It offers a rich provision of undergraduate, graduate and postgraduate studies in humanitarian, social, physical, bio-medical and technological sciences with over 100 Master study programmes. The Faculty of Economics runs three undergraduate programmes, fifteen Master study programmes and two doctoral study programmes: one in Economics and one in Business and Administration. The range of disciplines offered in the Faculty provides a broad foundation of expertise in subjects supportive of the MA. The Faculty's experience of providing education at master level ensures that there is a body of staff experienced at and competent in delivering master programmes. The Faculty has the management structures and capacity to put together a multi-disciplinary team of the highest quality to deliver the programme

The programme was last externally assessed in 2005. It was accredited unconditionally. The strengths identified by the experts were

- A strong relationship with business and conformity with national quality policy
- Programme content in line with Quality Management Master programmes of European universities
- A substantial number of lecturers who had working experience abroad including four with the EU certified qualification as quality experts
- A good balance of academic staff and practitioners in the teaching team
- Being one of only two programmes in this study field in Lithuania
- Master Theses that demonstrate a high analytical level and strong relationships with business
- Many students who have working experience in the field of the programme
- Some students studying in Western Europe within the framework of exchange
- Popularity with applicants
- A successful and positive atmosphere of student care

The experts recommended more internationalisation and increased integration into the European Master Programme for Total Quality Management. Some subjects should be taught in English to foster students' and lecturers' participation in international exchange.

The strengths identified in 2005 are still valid. There has, been some progress in making the programme more international. There are currently three electives related to Quality Management taught in English, and one in French. There is relevant language provision in the Bachelor programme, from which most students are recruited. Visiting lecturers from other countries provide an international perspective. Learning agreements ensure that there is no difficulty in recognising credits from abroad. Despite these arrangements, the students who spoke to the experts expressed little enthusiasm for studying abroad under Erasmus. They considered it to be a postponement of their full entry into work. This is consistent with a general attitude that might be called utilitarian. Students see the MA programme as a fount of professional knowledge that they can tap into at an appropriate stage in their careers

The Faculty, in keeping the programme current and relevant, have made good use of their membership of and participation in the EUN.TQM network. This gives guidelines on the design of competencies and learning outcomes that reflect market demand and international agreements on quality management. However, despite the fact that the SAR makes several references to the EMP TQM there was little awareness of it among either staff or students. Indeed,it is understood that the network has been moribund for some years.

The programme is now the only one in its study field in Lithuania. The Faculty regard this as a victory over direct competition.

II. PROGRAMME ANALYSIS

1. Programme aims and learning outcomes

The faculty has successfully adopted the learning outcomes approach at programme and subject level and provided training in its use to teaching staff.

The programme aims are well-defined and clear, but possibly rather too ambitious. The SAR identifies the goal of the programme as to develop quality management specialists across a broad profile. It claims a very full set of competencies, general and specific. It speaks of work in both applied and research areas and in various fields of activity. The programme claims to be a thorough grounding for a profession and also effective preparation for doctoral studies "not only in the area of quality management, but also in other areas of management or in other fields of social sciences". These are ambitious and admirable goals and the elements towards these goals are to be found in the programme. It may be, however, that they cannot be achieved in total for and by any particular student.

Paragraph 49 of the SAR says that the programme is oriented towards broadened needs in particular but also that "specialists of high qualification … are prepared". Our discussions with students, graduates and employers made clear to us that the programme provides a broad and solid foundation of skills and understanding. Graduates are able to begin useful work immediately on employment and they have the flexibility necessary to readily extend their skills in directions appropriate to their employment. The experts consider that this strength should be celebrated in the published descriptions of the programme, without introducing the distraction of specialties.

The programme aims and learning outcomes are based on professional requirements and the needs of the labour market, but they lack focus. The SAR identifies eleven objectives for the programme. None of these objectives is exceptionable in itself, but the overall impression is blurred. The objectives are very broad, with some overlap. They are not consistent in form. Some of them describe what the programme team will do, some of them refer to skills that students will acquire, some refer to overarching attitudes or principles. It would be helpful for the programme team to revisit the statement of objectives and learning outcomes with a view to bringing them more clearly into line with the undoubted qualities of the programme.

The SAR states that employer's needs are analysed and integrated into learning outcomes. Social partners on the Faculty Board and Study Committee can submit proposals on the development of competences. Being part of Faculty Board and Study Committee, they can assess the general and special competencies that are necessary for adaptation to a labour market reacting rapidly to environmental changes. The SAR points out that stakeholders keep changing and that learning outcomes are revised in consequence. This suggests that short term and local needs dominate the planning process. It confirms the need to consider carefully the balance between the short term and local and the long term and international. The fact that the stakeholders on the several committees have changed does not in any way imply that the real needs of the programme and its students have changed.

It is clear, however, that the programme remains the responsibility of the Faculty. There is a strong community of interest consisting of students, who are mostly bachelor graduates, employers, who are mostly master graduates, visiting lecturers, who are frequently both employers and graduates, and teachers. They have easy and regular professional contacts which ensure that a balance is maintained between the immediate local needs of employers and the obligation to deliver a programme which manifests the intellectual rigour necessary at Master level and provides a solid basis for longer term career development.

Most lecturers on the programme work in quality management assessment, audit and implementation. About half of them deliver continuing professional development. In this way, direct relationships are maintained with social partners in solving real life quality management problems, finding out in the process what competences are necessary for the organisations and what competencies could be expected of a graduate from the programme.

The programme aims and learning outcomes are consistent with the type and level of studies and the level of qualification offered. The SAR records a "systematic improvement of the programme" in 2011 entailing "radical review and corrections" during which competences and learning outcomes were "developed and purified. This language gave the unintended impression that there were previously serious shortcoming in the programme which had to be addressed. In fact the programme was restructured in order to respond to new legal requirements, established in the Law of Higher education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania (No. XI-242, 30th of April 2009). Changes were made in the context of a systematic response by the University to Orders of the Minister of Education and Science No. V-826 (3rd of June, 2010) on the general requirements for Master study programmes and of the No. V-2212 (21st of November, 2011) on learning outcomes in second cycle studies.

In the process, the programme was shortened from two to one and a half years with the claim that the scope of the specialty disciplines had not been essentially changed but that studies had been made more intensive. The purpose of the restructuring is described in the SAR as being to bring VU into line with foreign universities and to respond to the requests of applicants and students that the period of studies should be shortened so that they could enter the labour market sooner and make their studies more affordable.

It was not apparent from the SAR that the change in length of the programme is a University-wide policy. The experts looked in vain, therefore, for a narrative of the change that was specific to this programme. They found that student views were mixed on the question, for example. Nonetheless, the experts are content that there is a programme-specific justification for the change. The normal route to the Master programme is via a Bachelor degree from VU which offers basic management understanding and, in particular, an elective in Quality Management. The reduction to three semesters eliminates overlap. The shift to three semesters was made possible by instituting a coherent three stage progression to the thesis and by reducing to thirteen the teaching weeks in the final semester. The experts are content that this arrangement ensures a progressive, supported, development of the student's understanding of and competence in research methods and individual study enabling them to respond successfully to the more intensive approach of the shortened programme.

The SAR explains the categorisation of subjects as compulsory or elective. "Compulsory subjects of the study programme form the conceptual field of knowledge and skills; elective subjects help to achieve learning outcomes of the programme on a different level, thus allowing students to develop their general and special competencies in parallel." It became clear in discussion with the programme team that the reality is rather more pragmatic. While there is a core of essential subjects, the distinction between compulsory and elective is used flexibly to respond to student demand and changes in teaching staff. This is achieved while maintaining the coherence and focus of the programme.

The programme's goals and learning outcomes are made public in the official homepage of the programme, in the homepage of the Faculty and in the AIKOS website. The programme website has received many visits, suggesting its usefulness. It was not possible to access the version in English but the Lithuanian version appears to be clear, well laid out and effective in operation. It is understood that the homepage includes information on programme goals, curriculum, study process, lecturers, feedback, planned improvements and current issues related to the programme.

There is also a timetable of events at which prospective students and other interested parties can discuss the goals and learning outcomes face to face. These include FE open days and an annual national fair. There is a number of VU publications that provide the same information.

The name of the programme, its learning outcomes, content and the qualifications offered are compatible with each other. This compatibility would be enhanced if it were possible for the title Quality Management to be used on the diploma.

Strengths

- Very full engagement of social partners, including potential employers
- Staff involvement in real-life quality management

Weaknesses

- Focus and realism of learning outcome objectives
- Progress in internationalising the programme since 2005

2. Curriculum design

The content of the modules is consistent with the type and level of the studies. The curriculum of the programme is in line with the curriculums of analogous programmes of Western universities. The programme is harmonised with the *European Master Programme for Total Quality Management (EMP.TQM).* This programme is implemented by the universities belonging to the European universities network EUN.TQM.

The curriculum design meets legal requirements. The programme requires 90 credits, which is in conformity with credit norms permissible for Master study programmes established in the order of the Minister of Education and Science (No. V-836, 3rd of June, 2010, "General requirements for Master study programmes"). A Master of Management degree is granted to students who have accumulated 90 credits, passed the exams of all modules taken and prepared and defended a Final Master Thesis. The programme complies with the relevant regulations, with 60 credits for study field subjects and 30 for final thesis and preparation, of which 20 are allocated to Final Thesis Projects, in the 1st and 2nd semesters. Elective subjects amount to 15 ECTS.

Three quarters of total study time allocated is for independent study. The independent study element of the taught units is in all cases above 50%. As discussed elsewhere, the previous study period of 2 years was reduced to 1,5 years. The opportunity to shorten the study period was found by letting students start writing the Master Thesis earlier than in the previous programme. In addition, the teaching period in the third semester was reduced to thirteen weeks, at the request of students, with a consequent reduction in teaching hours and increase in independent study hours.

The content and methods of the subjects/modules are appropriate for the achievement of the intended learning outcomes. Study methods are well tuned to the task of achieving the learning outcomes. Teaching methods and forms of assessment vary, depending on the particular needs of the subject in question, but it is particularly noted that all subjects include seminars to develop critical analytical thinking and the ability to present research results to a target audience. Where appropriate, subject teaching includes practical work. It is entirely proper that teaching should vary from subject to subject in response to the skills and knowledge required. Our discussion with the teaching team confirmed that teachers have clearly defined authority to vary the delivery of modules. They can modify the content according to the interests of the students or to respond to current issues but they must maintain the learning outcomes and assessment pattern as approved. There was a clear

understanding between staff and students of the complementary roles of lectures, seminars and workshops in the teaching and learning process.

The scope of the programme is sufficient to ensure learning outcomes. As indicated elsewhere, major changes were introduced into the programme in 2011 and 2012. According to the SAR, several conditions came together to prompt this planning exercise. These included critical survey results, statements by stakeholder groups (students, lecturers and business representatives) and changes in business and the labour market. There was an intention to offer a broader selection of elective subjects and to make it possible for students on more than one programme to study together in particular electives.

Paragraphs 60 to 78 of the SAR report the process and outcomes of a thorough going analysis and consequent replanning of the previously accredited programme. The planning team considered in detail the definitions and component elements of subjects and their role in the programme. They considered the structure and placement of modules in terms of compulsory and elective and their placement in semester. The structure of all subjects was analysed and new syllabuses prepared following the standard format for VU syllabuses. The experts were impressed by the care with which the curriculum achieves a coherent, progressive student experience eliminating overlaps. Subjects are spread evenly; their themes are not repetitive.

A major restructuring of this sort, at the behest of more than one stakeholder and in pursuit of varying goals, is very risky. The success of the endeavour is testament to the effectiveness of the programme leadership.

The content of the programme reflects the programme team's active engagement with quality management and current research. The SAR notes that quality management has experienced significant change during recent years. The classical quality control model is being replaced by TQM, performance development and sustainable development methods and models. In their planning and the flexibility of their module content and delivery the programme team responds very effectively to a state of affairs that is necessarily more fluid and less linear in its development than is the case in many other disciplines.

The SAR provides a very full analysis and justification of the sequencing of units across three semesters and of the balance of compulsory and elective units. It is noted that there have been significant changes in the curriculum. The SAR speaks of the Strategic Management unit as converted from compulsory to elective at the request of students. The Marketing Research unit has been replaced by Statistical Research Data Analysis. It is understood that units have been discontinued or replaced as a consequence of staff changes. The unit Managerial Ethics was replaced by Leadership in consequence of staff changes. The experts were concerned that this might represent a policy of drift in pursuit of short term ends. They were reassured that the programme team use the categories of compulsory and elective modules to respond creatively to the exigencies of personnel planning, ensuring the integrity of the programme and making best use of the teaching staff available. Discussion at meetings with students and with social partners confirms that this integrated planning process generates a programme which has an excellent balance of theory and practice, with the relationships between them clearly explored.

The SAR informs the reader that all subjects are taught in Lithuanian except guest lectures by quality professionals and practitioners from abroad and teaching by non-Lithuanian professors. The SAR identifies the dominance of the Lithuanian language as a weakness, arguing that it restricts the pool of potential lecturers who are expert in quality management. A genuinely international role for the programme cannot be achieved until English plays a larger role in teaching and learning.

Strengths

- Flexible, module-specific, approach to teaching and learning
- Detailed, progressive and holistic planning of modules across three semesters
- Rapid response to a fluid quality management environment

Weaknesses

- Inadequate role for English

3. Teaching staff

The staff who provide the study programme meet legal requirements. National requirements for second cycle studies prescribe that the lecturers delivering a programme have to hold an appropriate degree or to be experienced practitioners in the field. This requirement is met by the programme. 93% of teaching staff are engaged in relevant research 87% have higher degrees and 33% are full professors. 37% of units are taught by full professors. These figures comfortably exceed the requirements. Teaching staff are appointed and appraised according to VU requirements, which are designed to maintain a high quality of teaching provision.

The evidence is overwhelming that teaching staff are engaged in continuous professional development, CPD, in active engagement in real world quality management, in a wide range of personal staff development activities and in active membership of international academic organisations. The SAR contains substantial lists of staff publications, positions of responsibility in international organisations, research, consultancy and visiting lectureships abroad. It would be superfluous to repeat the lists here.

The University has a programme of support for CPD with particular support for attendance at conferences. Seminars in research related and teaching related subjects are provided on a continuing basis. For example, when the Faculty adopted a learning outcome approach to educational provision seminars were held with the support of the University Quality Management Center to train staff members on how to develop and describe learning outcomes.

The teaching staff are thoroughly embedded in the community of the University, avoiding the isolation that can limit the effectiveness of colleagues teaching at postgraduate level in specialist disciplines. Eighty per cent of the lecturers are employed full time at VU, lecturers teach on all three study cycles and in other study programmes of the University. This is a healthy and inclusive pattern of work. It enables expertise from several departments to be made available to the programme. There is, at the same time, a core of teachers heavily involved in this programme who constitute its champions and ensure its continuing vigour and relevance.

There are currently fifteen staff delivering the programme. This is a large enough number to ensure coverage of the subjects and small enough to enable the development of a team ethos. The range of expertise recorded in staff CVs is adequate to allow professional delivery of all modules. Teaching staff turnover is adequate to ensure learning outcomes. There has been little turnover in the past five years, with the core group of staff remaining constant. The age profile of the teaching team is satisfactory. 50% of staff are between 35 and 45 and there are three members of staff in each of the ranges 46 - 55 and 56 – 65. The Faculty does not have the immediate problem of a cluster of staff retiring close together. Since teaching management requires both academic achievement and professional experience it is not to be expected that there will be staff members much under 30. There might be some anxiety, however, over the fact that the youngest teacher is as old as 37. While not fetishising youth, the Faculty may wish to seek new blood when the opportunity arises

Students confirm that the general level of teaching is high. They also speak of a small number of teachers who are no better than satisfactory. The Faculty has quite a clear picture of the quality of teaching, despite the fact that there is no programme for peer review of teaching. Formal feedback comes via student participation in University semester end questionnaires. Informal feedback comes via social partners from students.

It is Institutional policy to provide support and guidance to struggling teachers, young or old. This is particularly important in an applied discipline where well informed social partners can provide some of the most insightful material but may have the least understanding of how to put that material over

Strengths

- Staff engagement in research and consultancy in quality management
- Programme embedded in the life of the Faculty
- Staff team capable of delivering a wide range of topics in quality management.
- Staff have a good working environment

Weaknesses

- Some concern over the teaching ability of some members of teaching staff

4. Facilities and learning resources

The facilities and learning resources are of outstanding quality. Having visited the site the experts would wish to endorse the detailed account given in the SAR; to reproduce that account would be superfluous.

The most significant details are

- The Sauletekis Centre, the library and learning resource centre for the Faculties of Economics, Communication and Law, is of the highest quality with ample study, storage and movement space and an efficient computerised self-issue system
- There is a programme of regular, substantial investment by the Faculty in books and other material for the learning needs of the students.
- There is a range of classrooms of varying sizes sufficient to accommodate the varied teaching needs and group sizes of modules on offer
- All classrooms are equipped with multi-media necessary for the various teaching practices in use and appropriate to the size of the room.
- There are ample computer workplaces for the students who require to use them.
- There are fully equipped rooms available for student group work.
- Staff and students have access to relevant electronic full text databases
- Teaching staff have the opportunity to specify learning materials to be bought for the library

Specific learning resources for the programme under discussion are available through a special homepage which includes textbooks, slides and the most recent articles on quality management. It contains a literature list for programme studies, methodological guidelines, curriculum description, and other important information.

The experts find little to question in respect of learning resources other than a suggestion that the programme team make fuller use of facilities such as Moodle for the online submission of assessment and return of feedback

Strengths

- Excellent provision, with no obvious gaps or weaknesses

5. Study process and students' performance assessment

The admission requirements are well-founded. Admission to the programme is carried out according to the VU rules of admission for second cycle studies. The SAR outlines a process that is appropriately demanding, in respect of prior achievement by the student, and creatively flexible, in respect of recognition of admission qualifications alternative to the standard academic achievement.

The available places are readily taken up, indicating the positive reputation of the programme. The programme team have an effective annual target of 15 students. Entry grades have been increasing and wastage rates have been falling. These figures testify to the programme's growing reputation and justify the programme team in holding to their target of fifteen students.

Many students embark on the programme having first met Quality Management in a final year module of the Bachelor degree. The students that the experts met were explicit in ascribing their progression to the Master programme to their dealings with the charismatic leader of the programme but it was apparent that the students recognise a quality that reaches across the teaching team.

The organisation of the study process ensures an adequate provision of the programme. The SAR is accompanied by a full specification of all units. The level of detail in the planning is impressive, and gives confidence that the programme team have the delivery of the programme under control. There is an admirable policy whereby the contact hours, and therefore the individual study hours, vary from unit to unit according to the specifics of the subject. It is noted with approval that the distinction between lectures and seminars is not rigid. Lecturers normally use teaching methods that ensure active participation, even in lectures. This is entirely appropriate at Master level.

The unit specifications break student learning activity down into very small parcels. For example the unit Design of *Quality Management Systems*, a 5 ECTS unit of 138 total study hours, is subdivided into 16 topics. Each topic has its own allocation of individual study time and its own tasks. The SAR analyses the tasks carried out in individual study time as comprehending textbooks, analysis of additional sources, preparation of group and individual tasks, preparation of reports and development of information search skills. None of this is exceptionable; it is the product of detailed and well-informed planning which must ensure effective learning across the syllabus. It may be that this level of detail is unnecessary for a postgraduate unit since it implies a level of micromanagement that is perhaps inappropriate for both lecturer and students.

The assessment system is adequate but would profit from reconsideration of certain details. Assessment for all modules includes assessment of individual and group works, participation in seminars and practical work and results of mid-term and final exams. Mid-term and final exams are conducted in written form only. Subject goals and learning outcomes, outlined in the syllabus of each subject, are in line with the learning outcomes of the entire programme. The assessment regime for each module is specified in the module description. Students confirm that they are given the details of the module assessment at its start.

The programme uses cumulative assessment in all modules, with a range of assessment instruments. This should guarantee that no student fails unexpectedly at the end of a module. This is a sound policy, but it may be that some subjects are currently over-assessed or assessed inappropriately. Consider the second semester elective unit Cross Cultural Management, for five ECTS points, which is entirely typical of the units offered in the programme. The unit requires students to tackle 31 closed ended questions, for one point each, and seven open ended questions, for two points each. These together constitute 70% of the assessment for the unit. The programme team may wish to consider whether assessment in so many small chunks is appropriate at Master level. The fragmentation of assessment methods for some subjects does not help in linking students' assessment with the learning outcomes.

Students are encouraged to participate in research. Preparation of the Master Thesis is systematically organised to maximise the opportunity for solid research and to facilitate dissemination, whether through reading papers at conferences or through publishing in journals. Each year about a third of the students on the programme have a published article or a conference presentation simply from defending their Master Thesis. It is good practice that students must submit a paper as part of the master thesis defence. This is aligned with the NQF according to which "… at this level include abilities to independently carry out applied research". The practice of holding an annual conference for research work based on Master and Ph.D. theses is also commended.

The University ensures an adequate level of social support. VU has a Student Affairs Office which deals with everyday student queries and problems. Routine issues of academic and social support for students are resolved through the Student Affairs Office and Directorate of Finance and Economics. The administration of FE provide specific information for students on FE programmes. It is understood that a comprehensive agenda of relevant information for students is announced in the homepage of FE http://www.ef.vu.lt and that it is also transmitted to students via their VU personal e mail. In addition, students have access to the VU Information system where information on requirements, teaching timetables, exam timetables, regulations, assessment results, debts and so on is provided. Students can select electives via this system. This is an ambitious programme. Students confirm that these communication systems work without hitch and that they are kept up to date.

The University has a code of study ethics covering the usual range of academic issues. This is supported by an electronic system for checking for plagiarism. The SAR claims that there has been no case of plagiarism. If so, that is a remarkable statistic. The SAR suggests that study ethics are observed so well because the students and lecturers on the programme form a compact and supportive group. This is a convincing analysis. The experts found that the existence of a supportive community contributes to success in all aspects of the work of the programme team.

Whereas the assessment tasks are clearly specified, with an implicit quality threshold, it is evident that there is no published set of assessment criteria to give guidance to teachers and to students on the level of a pass. If the mark of 5 indicates that the student has achieved the pass threshold, how do teacher and student understand a mark of 7, or of 9? This is not a simple matter, but the programme team woupd be well advisedto give it consideration, especially in the context of a system that assesses a large number of small tasks on an essentially binary basis. The experts noted note also that assessed group work is a frequent element of module assessment. Provided that the group work contributes to achieving the approved learning outcomes, and therefore contributes directly to the students' professional development, this is to be commended. In addition to developing team work, an essential skill of quality management, it makes possible an element of assessment of verbal performance, which is otherwise missing from the degree. The experts would advise that in this case also a clear set of assessment criteria be developed and published.

Given the excellent quality of the IT provision, it is surprising that the opportunity is not taken for submission of assignments and the provision of feedback through systems such as Moodle. Students feel that they could with profit receive more feedback on their assessments.

Students have the opportunity to study abroad under the Erasmus programme. As indicated elsewhere, very few take up this opportunity, regarding it as a postponement of their professional life.

A majority of the graduates get employment within their specialist field. This suggests strongly that the programme is meeting a real need and that its design and delivery are appropriate to that demand.

The experts regard the study process and students' performance assessment as good. Their only concern was that some students reported that some members of teaching staff should be taught how to teach. The experts have no way of knowing how general this feeling is, or to how many lecturers it applies. The

quality assurance systems, formal and informal, identify poor teaching quite readily. There is already provision for advice to be given to teachers who do not meet appropriate standards. Poor teaching is identified through the evaluation processes. A senior colleague can watch the teacher at work. There are intensive discussions of the problem and the staff member is given advice on teacher training available. These are real provisions but the Faculty is advised to examine these procedures to see if more timely and effective guidance can be given. There is certainly an age profile issue for the Faculty. The experts don't wish to say that all ineffectual teachers are older (or all older teachers ineffectual) but they were able to observe that at least some of the older colleagues would profit from focused staff development.

Strengths

- Excellent detailed specifications of teaching, learning and assessment by module
- Student engagement in research
- Most satisfied students and graduates among all programmes of the faculty

Weaknesses

- Possible over-planning of modules, at Master level
- Possible over-assessment of modules, at Master level
- Student concerns about teaching ability

6. Programme management

Measures for quality assurance and quality enhancement involve all stakeholders, inside and outside the institution, and are very successful

The Self-Assessment Report (SAR) refers to a complex of governance in the Faculty. The Faculty Board is the supreme governing body of the Faculty, its resolutions mandatory on all Faculty staff and students. Each study programme is monitored by a programme committee. Programme committees are chaired by heads of departments and experienced professors, and are composed of teachers representing the core programme areas alongside social partner and student representatives. The Vice Dean for Master studies and development is responsible for the development of study programmes at the Master level, for services and consulting work offered by the Faculty.

The SAR refers to the analysis of learning outcomes taking place in Programme Committee at least once per semester with changes ratified by the Faculty Board. Major decisions on learning outcomes and the improvement of units are established in overviews and presentations by the programme chair. Overviews are discussed in autumn and spring with students, alumni and social partners.

The SAR outlines a complex structure of governance, quality assurance, quality enhancement, feedback, communication and consultation with involvement of external stakeholders, staff and students. The existence of this network of people, committees and tasks testifies to a real concern for quality in the Faculty. The system incorporates a very full programme of student and graduate feedback which involves both written questionnaires and more informal face to face discussions. The experts note with approval the use of student feedback and collective deliberation to generate a programme of improvements, for example a code of ethics for participants at Master presentations. They note that the processes of quality monitoring are co-ordinated by the Quality Management Centre. The Faculty runs some more focused surveys to complement the University-wide questionnaires administered by the Quality Management Centre. A quality coordinator is employed to work in the faculty. Students are supportive of the questionnaire system. They do not yet suffer from questionnaire fatigue. It is unfortunate, therefore, that they do not think they get feedback on the outcomes of the evaluations.

There are many references in the SAR to the use of this complex of governance for the enhancement of the programme. Claims are made that the views of social partners, alumni, employers, students and lecturers are taken into consideration. Some views are gathered on paper, through questionnaires, some orally, at meetings of the Programme Committee or the Faculty Board.

These structures of consultation and quality assurance were used in the major restructuring of the programme referred to above. A major restructuring of this sort, at the behest of more than one stakeholder and in pursuit of varying goals, is very risky. It is to the credit of the programme team and a confirmation of the effectiveness of the formal structures that they were able to complete so complex an exercise so successfully, responding to such a range of requirements

It is very clear in addition that employers and social partners, who are mostly themselves graduates of the programme, provide in an informal way the feedback that is necessary to programme development. The programme has a cohesive core group of staff under charismatic leadership. Teachers, employers and graduates are known to each other, many of them falling into more than one of these categories. That being so, feedback can be taken and enhancements planned in an informal way. There is, however, no short circuiting of the formal procedures of programme and module approval. The module tutor, where appropriate in consultation with the Head of Department, can implement changes in content to enhance the achievement of the learning objectives. Changes in learning outcomes require the support of the Study Committee and ratification by the Faculty Board.

The programme is delivered by a group of staff, including staff of other departments, who are quite clearly a team and not a collection of isolated individuals. This is not axiomatically the case with multi-disciplinary programmes. It is evidently a product of the charismatic leadership referred to earlier. This development of team working is to be commended. It avoids the trap of the programme becoming a one man band. Nonetheless, careful succession planning will become critical in due course. If the charismatic leader moves on to other things, the deflationary effect on the teaching team and students can be very marked.

The team quite clearly includes employers and other related professionals who are seen as social partners and who turn up in good numbers for occasions such as accreditation visits. Their enthusiasm is testimony to the quality of the programme as is their eagerness to employ the graduates;

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Strengths

- Thoroughgoing internal quality, consultation and planning network, formal and informal
- Charismatic leadership and quality culture
- Strong team work
- Good relationships between lecturers, students and graduates
- Strong support from the clients – local employers

Weaknesses

- Need to support less effective teachers and teachers on the margin of the team

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1. Revise the programme aims, objectives and learning outcomes to reflect more accurately the broad foundation of professional skills and understanding provided, bringing them into line with the undoubted qualities of the programme

3.2. Explore ways of increasing the role of English in the teaching and learning experience of the students.

3.3. Make fuller use of technologies for the online submission of assessment assignments and return of feedback

3.4. Reconsider module descriptions to determine whether teaching plans are too detailed and assessment tasks too many and too small for a master level programme

3.5. Adopt a clear set of assessment criteria for all forms of assessment in use on the programme,

3.6. Seek ways of providing more timely guidance and support for colleagues having difficulties in effective teaching

IV. SUMMARY

The programme aims and learning outcomes area is evaluated as good.

The programme aims and learning outcomes are well defined, based on professional requirements, consistent with the Master level of studies and publicly available. The programme gives a broad and solid foundation of skills and understanding. Graduates are able to begin useful work immediately on employment and they have the flexibility necessary to readily extend their skills in directions appropriate to their employment. Consultation and planning processes are in place which ensure that a balance is maintained between the immediate local needs of employers and the obligation to deliver a programme which manifests the intellectual rigour necessary at Master level and provides a solid basis for longer term career development. Staff involvement in real life quality management ensures that they are up to date in their understanding of the needs of the profession. However, programme aims and learning outcome statements are too ambitious and objectives too broad. The claim that specialists of high qualification are prepared is inappropriate. It would be helpful for the programme team to revisit the statement of objectives and learning outcomes with a view to bringing them more clearly into line with the undoubted qualities of the programme. There has been inadequate progress in internationalising the programme since 2005when the visiting experts identified this as an important weakness.

The curriculum design area is evaluated as very good.

The content of the modules is consistent with Master level studies. The curriculum of the programme is in line with the curriculums of analogous programmes of Western universities. The curriculum design meets legal requirements. The content and methods of the modules are appropriate for the achievement of the intended learning outcomes. There is a flexible, module-specific approach to teaching and learning. There is a clear understanding of the complementary roles of lectures, seminars and workshops in teaching and learning. The curriculum statements are the outcome of a thorough going analysis and consequent replanning across three semesters of the previously accredited programme. The curriculum achieves a coherent, progressive student experience, eliminating overlaps. Staff expertise and thorough consultation ensure rapid response in respect of the

curriculum to changes in the external environment of quality management. The only serious weakness is the inadequate role for English in the delivery of the curriculum.

The teaching staff area is evaluated as very good.

The staff who provide the programme meet legal requirements. They are appointed and appraised according to VU requirements, which are designed to maintain a high quality of teaching provision. Staff are heavily involved in research, in active engagement in real world quality management, in a wide range of personal staff development activities and in active membership of international academic organisations. They have the expertise and experience to deliver a wide range of topics in quality management. They are an integral part of a Faculty which offers a range of disciplines dupportive of the Quality Management programme. The age profile is such that the Faculty faces no immediate problem of significant staff changes. By all measures the general standard of teaching is good or very good. Students have, however, expressed some concern over the teaching ability of some teachers. Procedures to assist these colleagues are in place.

The facilities and learning resources areas is evaluated as very good.

The facilities at the Sauletekis Centre, library, teaching rooms, electronic equipmtnet, online resources, are outstanding with no shortcomings evident.

The study process and students‘performance assessment area is evaluated as good.

Admission procedures are sound. Entry grades have been increasing and wastage going down. The organisation of the study process ensures an adequate provision of the programme. The level of detail in the planning is impressive, and gives confidence that the programme team have the delivery of the programme under control. The delivery of the programme, with particular reference to the thesis preparation and production, encourages students to engage in research. Staff student communication is excellent, making full use of the ambitious VU information system. There is excellent provision for social support and for the security of assessment.

However, whereas the detail of module planning, in respect both of content and delivery and of assessment, is impressive, it may be that both are excessively detailed for Master level study. On the other hand, it would be useful to the student for the programme team to publish clear criteria demarking the level of achievement in assessment tasks. As indicated above, some students express concern over the teaching ability of some teachers.

The programme management area is evaluated as very good.

Measures for quality assurance and quality enhancement, both formal and informal, involving all stakeholders inside and ouside the Institution, are excellent. Procedures for using feedback in the replanning of learning outcomes, curriculum and assessment are meticulous and diligently applied. The programme is delivered by a group of staff, including staff of other departments, who are quite clearly a team and not a collection of isolated individuals. There is a cohesive core group of staff under charismatic leadership. The team includes employers and other professionals who are seen as social partners. There is a good relationship between teachers, students and graduates.

The only weakness is the concern expressed by some students over the teaching ability of some members of teaching staff. There are procedures in place to help such colleagues, but the Faculty is advised to provide more support for less effective teachers and teachers on the margin of the team.

V. GENERAL ASSESSMENT

The study programme *Quality Management* (state code – 621N20004) of Vilnius University 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	3
2.	Curriculum design	4
3.	Teaching staff	4
4.	Facilities and learning resources	4
5.	Study process and students' performance assessment	3
6.	Programme management	4
	Total:	**22**

*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:
Team leader: Roger Hilyer

Grupės nariai:
Team members: Gyula Bakacsi

Su Mi Dahlgaard-Park

Guenther Dey

Ingrida Mazonaviciute

Pandelis Ipsilandis

<...>

V. APIBENDRINAMASIS ĮVERTINIMAS

Vilniaus universiteto studijų programa *Kokybės vadyba* (valstybinis kodas – 621N20004) vertinama teigiamai.

Eil. Nr.	Vertinimo sritis	Srities įvertinimas, balais*
1.	Programos tikslai ir numatomi studijų rezultatai	3
2.	Programos sandara	4
3.	Personalas	4
4.	Materialieji ištekliai	4
5.	Studijų eiga ir jos vertinimas	3
6.	Programos vadyba	4
	Iš viso:	**22**

* 1 - Nepatenkinamai (yra esminių trūkumų, kuriuos būtina pašalinti)
2 - Patenkinamai (tenkina minimalius reikalavimus, reikia tobulinti)
3 - Gerai (sistemiškai plėtojama sritis, turi savitų bruožų)
4 - Labai gerai (sritis yra išskirtinė)

IV. SANTRAUKA

Programos tikslai ir numatomi studijų rezultatai yra apibrėžti, pagrįsti profesiniais reikalavimais, atitinka magistrantūros studijų lygmenį ir viešai skelbiami. Ši programa užtikrina tvirtus įgūdžius ir gilias žinias. Absolventai gali būti naudingi vos įsidarbinę, jiems būdingas lankstumas, reikalingas norint išplėsti savo kvalifikaciją tomis kryptimis, kurių reikia dirbant konkrečiame darbe. Įdiegtos konsultavimo ir planavimo procedūros, užtikrinančios pusiausvyrą tarp darbdavių vietos poreikių ir poreikio programai, kuri užtiktina magistro lygmenį atitinkantį intelektinį pasirengimą ir suteikia tvirtą pagrindą ilgalaikei karjeros plėtrai. Personalo dalyvavimas realioje kokybės vadybos veikloje užtikrina, kad jie šiuolaikiškai suvokia savo profesijos reikalavimus. Tačiau programos tikslų ir numatomų studijų rezultatų formuluotės yra pernelyg plataus masto, o tikslai – per platūs. Tvirtinimas, kad rengiami aukštos kvalifikacijos specialistai, yra netinkamas. Programos (*rengimo, tobulinimo*) grupei būtų naudinga peržiūrėti tikslų ir numatomų studijų rezultatų formuluotes ir aiškiau susieti jas su programos ypatybėmis, kurios nekelia abejonių. Pažanga, pasiekta nuo 2005 m. internacionalizuojant šią programą, nepakankama; apsilankiusių ekspertų nuomone, tai vertinama kaip silpnybė.

Modulių turinys atitinka magistrantūros studijų lygmenį. Programos dalykai atitinka panašių Vakarų universitetų programų dalykus. Programos sandara atitinka teisės aktų reikalavimus. Modulių turinys ir metodai yra tinkami numatomiems studijų rezultatams pasiekti. Taikomas lankstus, moduliais pagrįstas požiūris į mokymą ir mokymąsi. Aiškiai suprantama papildoma paskaitų, seminarų ir darbo grupių svarba mokymui ir mokymuisi. Programos dalykų formuluotės yra kruopščios analizės ir tolesnio anksčiau akredituotos programos perplanavimo per tris semestrus rezultatas. Programos dalykai užtikrina studentams nuoseklią, pažangią patirtį, vengiama dubliavimosi. Darbuotojų kvalifikacijos ir išsamių konsultacijų dėka programa greitai kinta atsižvelgiant į kokybės vadybos išorinę aplinką. Vienintelė rimta silpnybė – nepakankamas dėmesys anglų kalbai dėstant šią programą.

Programą dėstantys dėstytojai atitinka teisės aktų reikalavimus. Jie skiriami ir vertinami pagal VU reikalavimus, skirtus užtikrinti aukštos kokybės studijas. Darbuotojai aktyviai dalyvauja mokslinių tyrimų, kokybės vadybos, įvairioje su personalo tobulinimu susijusioje veikloje, tarptautinėse akademinėse organizacijose. Jie turi kompetencijos ir patirties dėstyti daug dalykų iš kokybės vadybos srities. Jie yra fakulteto, kuriame dėstoma daug kokybės valdymo programą papildančių dalykų, dalis. Amžiaus struktūra yra tokia, kad fakultetui nekyla tiesioginių sunkumų dėl darbuotojų kaitos. Visų

priemonių atžvilgiu bendras mokymo standartas yra geras arba labai geras. Tačiau studentai išreiškė tam tikrą susirūpinimą kai kurių dėstytojų gebėjimu mokyti. Nustatyta tvarka, kaip padėti šiems kolegoms.

Saulėtekio centro infrastruktūra, biblioteka, auditorijos, elektroninė įranga, internetiniai ištekliai labai geri, akivaizdžių trūkumų nėra.

Studentų priėmimo tvarka tinkama. Įstojimo balai nuolat didėja, o studentų nubyrėjimas mažėja. Studijų proceso organizavimas užtikrina tinkamą programos dėstymą. Proceso planavimo detalumas yra įspūdingas ir rodo, kad programos rengimo grupė kontroliuoja programos įgyvendinimą. Programos įgyvendinimas, ypač pasirengimas baigiamajam darbui ir jo rašymas, skatina studentus dalyvauti moksliniuose tyrimuose. Darbuotojai ir studentai puikiai bendradarbiauja pasinaudodami pažangia VU informacine sistema. Sukurta puiki socialinės paramos ir patikimo vertinimo sistema.

Kadangi išsamus modulių planavimas turinio, pateikimo ir vertinimo prasme yra įspūdingas, gali būti, kad magistrantūros studijų programai toks detalizavimas nėra būtinas. Antra vertus, studentams būtų naudinga, kad programos rengimo grupė paskelbtų aiškius kriterijus, nurodančius pasiekimų lygį vertinant užduotis. Kaip jau minėta, kai kurie studentai yra susirūpinę dėl kai kurių dėstytojų sugebėjimo dėstyti.

Kokybės užtikrinimo ir kokybės didinimo priemonės, formalios ir neformalios, apimančios visus šios institucijos vidaus ir išorės socialinius dalininkus, labai geros. Naudojimasis grįžtamuoju ryšiu perplanuojant numatomus studijų rezultatus, programą (dalykus) ir vertinimą yra tikslus ir stropiai taikomas. Programą dėstantys dėstytojai, įskaitant kitų padalinių dėstytojus, nėra atskirų individų sambūris, o aiškiai sudaro komandą. Universitete yra darni pagrindinių dėstytojų grupė, kuriai vadovauja charizmatiškas vadovas. Grupę sudaro darbdaviai ir kiti specialistai, laikomi socialiniais partneriais. Dėstytojai, studentai ir absolventai palaiko glaudžius ryšius.

Vienintelė silpnybė yra kai kurių dėstytojų sugebėjimas mokyti, dėl kurio kai kurie studentai išreiškė susirūpinimą. Nustatyta tvarka, kaip padėti šiems kolegoms, nors fakultetui patariama daugiau padėti ne taip veiksmingai dirbantiems dėstytojams ir dėstytojams, kurie *nėra labai aktyvūs*.

III. REKOMENDACIJOS

3.1. Peržiūrėti programos tikslus, uždavinius ir numatomus studijų rezultatus siekiant tiksliau atspindėti platų suteikiamų profesinių įgūdžių ir žinių spektrą ir suderinti juos su neabejotinais programos privalumais.

3.2. Išnagrinėti anglų kalbos vaidmens studijose didinimo būdus.

3.3. Labiau naudotis technologijomis vertinamoms užduotims pateikti ir grįžtamajam ryšiui gauti internetu.

3.4. Persvarstyti modulių aprašus, siekiant nustatyti, ar mokymo planai nėra pernelyg išsamūs, ar vertinimo užduočių ne perdaug ir ar jos ne per mažos magistrantūros programai.

3.5. Patvirtinti aiškių vertinimo kriterijų rinkinį, skirtą visoms, programos vertinimo formoms.

3.6. Ieškoti būdų, kaip laiku suteikti konsultacijas ir paramą kolegoms, kuriems nelabai sekasi veiksmingai mokyti studentus.

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