STUDIJŲ KOKYBĖS VERTINIMO CENTRAS

VILNIAUS GEDIMINO TECHNIKOS UNIVERSITETO
STUDIJŲ PROGRAMOS *VERSLO VADYBA*
(valstybinis kodas – 612N10007)
VERTINIMO IŠVADOS
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EVALUATION REPORT
of *BUSINESS MANAGEMENT*
(*state code – 612N10007*)
STUDY PROGRAMME
at VILNIUS GEDIMINAS TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY

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Išvados parengtos anglų kalba
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DUOMENYS APIE ĮVERTINTĄ PROGRAMĄ

Studijų programos pavadinimas	*Verslo vadyba*
Valstybinis kodas	612N10007
Studijų sritis	Socialiniai mokslai
Studijų kryptis	Verslas
Studijų programos rūšis	universitetinės studijos
Studijų pakopa	pirmoji
Studijų forma (trukmė metais)	nuolatinė (4), ištęstinė (5,5)
Studijų programos apimtis kreditais	240
Suteikiamas laipsnis ir (ar) profesinė kvalifikacija	Verslo bakalauras
Studijų programos įregistravimo data	2012-07-17

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INFORMATION ON EVALUATED STUDY PROGRAMME

Title of the study programme	*Business management*
State code	612N10007
Study area	Social sciences
Study field	Business
Type 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	240
Degree and (or) professional qualifications awarded	Bachelor of Business
Date of registration of the study programme	17-07-2012

CONTENTS

I. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the evaluation process

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

1.2. General

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

No.	Name of the document
1	VGTU Library Electronic Information Resources

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

The University is a state higher education institution, a public legal entity and one of the largest higher educational institutions in Lithuania. It has a vision to be a leader in technology and engineering studies in the Baltic Region. The University is run by the collegial management bodies of the Council and the University Senate. The responsibility for the Bachelor's degree in

Business Management, the subject of this evaluation, is that of the Faculty of Business Management. The Faculty consists of six departments: Finance Engineering, Economics and Management of Enterprises, Social Economics and Management, Law and Business Technologies. In addition the Faculty has two research laboratories, Corporate Design and Environmental Economic Research.

The Self-Evaluation Report (SER) that forms the initial basis of the submission was completed in April 2015 by the Self-Assessment Working Group that consisted of 11 members drawn from 8 senior academics and lecturers of the Faculty, 2 student representatives and 1 social partner. The responsibilities for the preparation of the self-evaluation were clear and the work was undertaken against a planned schedule. The SER was supported by comprehensive annexes that were helpful in presenting the evidence for the expert panel to consider and review. It is clear that considerable work has gone in to the preparation of the report and supporting documents, which were comprehensive and appropriate.

The first cycle programme *Business Management* has been offered since 1993 and has been the subject of external assessment on one previous occasion, February 2005, where the programme was fully accredited. Following a number of recommendations from the expert panel the programme was revised in 2010-2012 to introduce a more student orientated approach, to revise the volume of studies in ECTS credits and to provide a focus on entrepreneurial knowledge and skills. It is this revised programme (612N10007) that is the subject of this review and evaluation.

The visit, that took place on Friday 23rd October 2015 included all of the required meetings with the differing groups including, senior administrative staff, the staff responsible for the preparation of the self-assessment, teaching staff on the programme, student representatives of the different levels and modes of study, alumni and representatives of the social partners. The panel had the opportunity of inspecting and reviewing all of the physical resources and facilities provided by the University for the delivery of the programme, and were able to examine samples of student work including the final thesis. The meetings were very positive, conducted in a professional manner and helpful to the panel in providing opportunity for the panel to be able to test the evidence against the SER and to be able to make judgments on the overall evaluation of the programme. The visit concluded with feedback session to the Faculty staff where an overview of the visit and initial conclusions were presented. The panel met post the visit to discuss and agree the contents of the report including final evaluation and recommendations for approval.

The study programme is offered in both full-time (4 years) and part-time (5.5 years) modes and requires 240 credits for graduation. This meets the requirement of the Higher

Education System in Lithuania. Practical training in the form of internships is an integral feature of the programme and has a credit value of 15 ECTS credits.

1.4. The Review Team

The review team was completed according *Description of experts' recruitment*, approved by order No. 1-01-151 of Acting Director of the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education. The Review Visit to HEI was conducted by the team on *23rd October 2015*.

1. **Prof. dr. Peter Jones (team leader),** *Educational Consultant, Visiting Professor at University of Derby, University of West London, Dean of the ehotelier Academy, the United Kingdom.*
2. **Prof. dr. Wes Wierda,** *Educational Consultant for Hobéon Agency, professor at Les Roches Gruyère University of Applied Sciences, Netherlands.*
3. **Prof. dr. Tatjana Volkova,** *Professor at BA School of Business and Finance, Educational Consultant, Latvia.*
4. **Prof. dr. Giedrius Jucevičius,** *Professor at the Dep. of Management, Vytautas Magnus University, Lithuania.*
5. **Ms. Karolina Zelbienė,** *Recruitment Project manager at "Western Union", Lithuania.*
6. **Ms. Vaida Spūdytė,** *Master student of International Business, Kaunas University of Technology, Lithuania.*

II. PROGRAMME ANALYSIS

2.1. Programme aims and learning outcomes

The programme of studies has the overarching aim, referred to as "the objective" in the SER, of: "*...to prepare bachelors of Business Management, with an integrated business management and other related professional knowledge and ability to apply general and special business planning, organisation, coordination and implementation skills to private and public sector as well as to apply these skills in a wider range of professional activities, to establish and develop their own business, be prepared to constantly improve through lifelong learning*".

The website from the link provided in the SER refers to the "Study Programme Aims" and lists 8 specific aims, the first, the generic aim varies from that cited above as follows: "*To prepare Bachelors of Business Management **who would have** integrated **knowledge of business management and knowledge related to other professional activity** and be able to **apply general and special abilities** of business planning, organising, coordination and implementation in the private and public sector **and to use them constructively** in wide range of professional **activity**,*

Studijų kokybės vertinimo centras

to create and develop business, to be prepared for **constant improvement** through lifelong learning".

The variation in the wording between that shown as the "programme objective" in the SER and those shown as "programme study aims" on the website are relatively minor but similar minor variances occur between each of those objectives/aims for those presented in the SER and those on the website. The variation in the terminology used and the content of the stated "aims/objectives" should be addressed. Those shown on the website will be those publicly accessible, whilst the statements in the SER could be considered internal and could lead to confusion. As a matter of note aims 2 and 3 on the website that relate to the financial management specialisation are repeated.

The programme of studies provides for the following six specialisations:
1. Financial Management
2. Economics and Management of Enterprises
3. Information Business Management
4. Marketing Management
5. Business Environment Management
6. Business Projects Management

Each specialisation has its own objective/aim that relates to the specialist areas of knowledge, understanding and skills. Therefore for each programme route, students have to fulfil two concurrent programme aims/objectives, the generic for the programme overall and the specialist for the route selected.

The overall and specialism aims are defined and publicly available on the website (See above comments), but when reviewed as the overall purpose of the programme of studies they could be considered as very broad. For example, the generic aim/objective relates to "implementation in the private and public sector… and …to create and develop business". This could imply a very broad set of management organisational skills that could be equally applied across the entire spectrum of business organisations whereas the actual focus of the programme, from the review of the SER and of the curriculum content, suggests a more focused and analytical approach.

In considering the aim/objective of the programme, the statement on the website that relates to "Professional Status" suggests a different focus for the outcome of the programme of study as follows: "*Bachelor is prepared to carry out various management functions in enterprises: to establish and develop business, to organize work of people and their groups, to prepare and implement projects, to analyze and forecast economic situation in different markets, to initiate and implement innovations, to make independently effective business decisions*". If the

purpose of the programme aim is to provide all stakeholders with the information on which to make the appropriate judgments as to the focus of the knowledge, skills and understanding that a student should be able to demonstrate on graduation, it could be argued that the statement relating to the professional outcome of the programme could be a more appropriate aim/objective. This is a singular aim that clearly identifies the range of graduate knowledge and skills that the individual should be able to demonstrate on completion of the programme.

The differing use of terminology in describing the aims/objectives and the ambitious statements of intent that make up the aims/objectives suggests that the programme aim lacks a clearly defined focus. In addition to the points raised above, the SER makes direct reference to the review in 2010-2012 where a focus on entrepreneurship was introduced to the programme. This is included in the current aim as "to establish their own business" yet the skills, knowledge and understanding in establishing a business also include those of planning, coordination and implementing. These are also currently cited within the overall broad aim.

The programme aim/objective may benefit from being reviewed to provide a more concise and clear focus for the programme, this would also assist in differentiating the programme from the many other 'Business' programmes now being offered. If the focus is intended to be on entrepreneurship, such a programme aim could be "to prepare graduates of this programme with skills, knowledge and attributes of business that are required to be innovative and creative entrepreneurs, who make a significant business, social and economic contribution to the future development of the country".

As presented in the SER there is some confusion around Table 2, in particular the relationships between the presented programme objectives and the described learning outcomes. The learning outcomes are described as 'learning outcome standards' and are presented as statements of: knowledge application, research skills, special skills, social skills and personal skills. When comparing the learning outcome statements with those as presented on the website there is a difference in the use of the terminology. On the website they are described as "prospective study programme results", whilst the SER refers to them as "learning outcome standards" and when presented at the individual subject level (Annex A) are described as "Foreseen outcomes of the course". The variation in terminology in the different documents apparently describing the same thing gives rise to concern. There is a distinction to be drawn between what could be considered as a 'prospective result' and 'foreseen outcomes' with the commonly used term of learning outcome.

In addition, on the website there is significant duplication of statements, for example outcome Z3 is identical to Z4 and GV3 is the same as GV4. This could be considered confusing in documents which are publicly accessible. The panel has been made aware that the variations

noted between the publicly available website and the SER are the subject of an ongoing dispute between the University and the third party external company commissioned to develop the new website. This is unfortunate, but the panel would urge the University to resolve the matter as quickly as possible as the differences in text could continue to confuse potential students and stakeholders.

As learning outcomes the learning outcomes standards are not described entirely as would be expected. International best practice suggests that learning outcomes are statements of expected outcomes and expectation that should/could be assumed on completion of a programme. For example "On completion of this first cycle programme a student should be able to demonstrate the appropriate knowledge and understanding of… ". To simplify the presentation especially that in the public domain it may be appropriate to reconsider the most appropriate approach to describing learning outcomes.

Table 2 of the SER demonstrates the connection between the programme objective, the learning outcomes standards and the subjects in which those outcomes will be developed. What is not entirely clear from the study subjects listed is how the study subjects directly contribute to the programme objectives and learning outcome standards. As currently presented, they are the list of the study subjects and whilst they may contribute to the context in which the learning outcome standards are being developed, it is difficult to see from purely the subject title how the relationship is established. Rather than try to demonstrate how the subjects may contribute to the outcomes in this type of table, it may be appropriate to provide a matrix showing the outcomes against the study subjects, and where and how they may contribute to the outcomes. By developing more explicit statements of learning outcomes that directly relate to "what a learner knows, understands and is able to do on completion of the programme" this will assist in defining the appropriate knowledge, skills and competencies that the learner should be able to exhibit in each study subject.

The panel considers that the programme aims/objectives and learning outcome standards are based on the academic and/or professional requirements, public needs and the needs of the labour market. Overall the programme aims/objectives are consistent with the outcomes and the type and level of the qualification offered. The name of the programme is consistent with the nature of qualifications broad aims and objectives, however, in any reformulation or refocusing of the programme and to better differentiate it in the marketplace a review of programme name to incorporate a stronger entrepreneurial and management focus, may be of long-term benefit.

2.2. Curriculum design

The design of the curriculum is based on: general universities study subjects, general theoretical basic subjects, main studies direction subjects, special studies direction subjects, cognitive and professional practice and final work/thesis (see Table 1). The programme is offered over 8 semesters with an even distribution of the workload across those semesters of between 6 and 7 study subjects. This equates to 30 credits per semester. There is a variation in the part-time mode which is undertaken over 11 semesters with the distribution of workload that varies between 18 to 24 credits per semester. The curriculum design meets legal requirements with a total of 240 ECTS undertaken in full time mode over 4 years, or part-time mode 5.5 years. The programme currently contains 53 study subjects of which 2 are professional practice and the final work/thesis.

It is understood from the SER that some rebalancing of the curriculum in relation to its ECTS credits was undertaken following the previous evaluation. The panel noted from the SER Table 3 (The Programme's Full-Time Studies Plan), that there was still significant variations in the ECTS credits for courses, the minimum credit number being 3 whilst other courses offered were at 4 credits, 5 credits 6 credits and 8 credits. Pricing (B.5 Subject) for example delivered in semester 5 has a credit value 8, while Strategic Management (B.5 Subject) has a credit tariff of only 3. The panel observed that given that the programme is Business Management and the inherent importance on Strategic Management within that subject domain neither the academic nor professional rationale for these variations was clear. There may be opportunity for a further rebalancing of the ECTS credits which in turn would have implications for the student assessment load.

The number of specialisations provides opportunity and significant choice for the students. However, given the declining number of student enrolments, 48 full-time students admitted in 2014, +12 part-time students, the longer term sustainability of the number of specialisations must be kept under close review in order to ensure an appropriate student experience and efficiency in the use of resources. The process of adding new specialisations at departmental level based on staff interest and research expertise can provide innovative new developments but could lead to over specialisation and a loss of focus on the aims/objectives of the programme.

It was noted that some study subjects are offered under different specializations, as with for example, Innovation management. With some further rebalancing of the ECTS credits it may be possible to offer a wider range of subjects as options rather than just with specialization routes. For some study subjects, the panel were of the view that the content, as currently

described, appears ambitious for the value of the subject in credit terms. For example, the Strategic Management study subject of 3 ECTS has the aim of: "*To provide a theoretical background of strategic management and* **comprehensive understanding of the strategic management process**. *To provide the knowledge and develop skills to apply strategic analytical tools, which would help to make effective decisions and implement successful actions. To develop practical skills of strategic management*". The course description is "*Strategic management course discusses implications of strategic management, analysis of external environment and strategic capabilities, aims and expectations, business level and corporate level strategies, international and cooperation strategies, mergers and acquisitions, strategy and structure, implementation of strategy. Taking into consideration the peculiarities of contemporary strategies and analysing experience of organizations, the students are acquainted with the main models and tools of strategic management; the role of leadership is discussed; the factors impacting strategy are revealed; the problems and the means how to overcome these problems in order to successfully implement strategy are discussed*". The panel recognises that this is the only study subject where these strategic issues are addressed and that, as described, the content is very comprehensive, but questioned whether the depth of knowledge and understanding to meet the subject aims, could be achieved within limited number of contact hours.

The programme structure is balanced between theory and practice, but it is recognised that this would need to be kept under review to maintain its currency given the rapid changes in the economic and labour market trends. The emergent strategic focus on entrepreneurship and leadership in business will highlight any need for future changes in reformulation of the programme.

The learning and teaching focus on independent learning and encouraging lifelong learning is evidenced through the development of a number of different learning and teaching strategies. It is clear that a wide range of learning and teaching forms are being used across the study subjects. The use of problem-based learning strategies is commendable and reflects some of the international best practice in learning and teaching, as is the use of case studies that develop a clear relationship between the real world of work and the study subjects.

The differing forms of assessment are indicative of an innovative and best practice approach. The approach that the assessment is not seen purely as an end test but also to facilitate the learning activity indicates the important of the wider value of assessment, that the assessment is not seen purely as an end test but also to facilitate the learning activity. The use of student self-assessment to encourage students to understand the nature of the assessment process that in turn encourages deeper learning is an example of that professional understanding of the role of assessment in the totality of the programme. The differing forms of presentation of student

material, observations of group and individual presentations, expert professional conversations and report analysis, significantly extend the range of assessment tools which in turn provides students with engaging learning and assessment opportunities.

The presentation of the study subjects as found at Annex A of the SER are extremely comprehensive, well presented and in accordance with international best practice, but see section 2.1 on the variable use of terminology.

The methods of delivery of the subjects are appropriate for the achievement of the intended learning outcomes and the scope of the programme 240 ECTS is sufficient to ensure learning outcomes.

2.3. Teaching staff

The teaching staff of Business Management programme consists of 66 full-time and part-time teachers: 8 Professors, 26 Associate Professors, 20 Lecturers, 10 Junior Lecturers and 2 Doctoral students. In 2014-2015, teachers with Ph.D. degree accounted for 58% of all teachers, thus meeting the legal requirement for teaching staff in University undergraduate programme. However, in previous years (2012-2014) the share of teaching staff with Ph.D. fell below 50% (38% and 45,5% accordingly). The current trend above 50% should be maintained to meet the legal requirements on a more consistent basis.

The members of the academic staff are qualified professionals in their respective fields. Academic staff of the programme have published more than 10 textbooks and study books to be used in the study process. It is commendable that every teacher is required to have a practical internship at Lithuanian or foreign business organisation / research centre at least once in every five year period. Over 62% of academic staff have participated in international scientific conferences, with 79% published in relevant journal. One third of the teaching staff are members of professional organisations and one fifth have participated in scientific research projects. Around one fifth of the teaching staff deliver courses abroad within Erasmus+ framework. The level of institutions that are involved in partnership indicates the level of confidence in the academic staff on the programme.

The number of teaching staff is balanced with the number of the students on the programme and is sufficient for successful implementation of the programme. In 2014, there were 66 teachers and 359 students in the programme (a staff- student ration of 5.43 students per teacher). In relation to previous years the data in the SER is not sufficiently clear and consistent to fully appreciate the dynamics of teacher-student ratio over the entire period. For example, in 2013/2014 there were 99 teachers in the programme, which would dramatically decrease the teacher-student ratio and potentially impact on the viability and sustainability of the programme

(the dynamics of student numbers throughout 2012-2015 is not clearly revealed in the report, especially in relationship with teaching staff). The SER shows that in 2012-2015 there were 115 teachers in the full-time studies of the programme, whereas only 146 students were enrolled in full-time studies in 2014. With a declining student population it could appear that the teaching staff numbers are excessive in comparison to the number of students in the programme. The latest position from the SER suggests that the Faculty is moving to optimise the number of teaching staff against the student enrolments with a reduction by one third of the staff teaching on the programme from 2013 to 2014.

On the whole, the staffing position is stable and turnover is relatively low due to the fact that majority of the teaching staff are long-term employees of VGTU. This provides stability of the core teaching staff, thus ensures adequate implementation of the programme.

The majority of teaching staff within the programme have excellent opportunities for the development of professional competence. Almost 25% of all teachers in the programme (29 teachers) had training abroad in high-level international academic institutions and a further 88% participated in qualification courses.

The University has a Staff Training Committee, which has oversight of the staff training and development activities including the planning and budgeting. Members of the University management and administration team stressed the importance of new encouraging and developing new teaching methods for the academic staff. All of the academic staff are required take an internship in a production company in order to be up-to-date regarding the market needs. In this regard, 21 out of the 22 teachers at the meeting confirmed that they had internships abroad during the last 5 years. They are involved in ongoing training and development activities to learn innovative teaching methods and enhance English language skills.

The teachers of the programme are involved in research on a regular and ongoing basis. Engagement in research accounts on average for 14% of the average staff workload. The majority of teachers have taken part in international conferences, including the ones organised by the Faculty at VGTU. The Faculty coordinates and supports the publication of several high-level academic journals including those listed in the relevant international databases. The teachers of the programme are contributors to the research outputs of the Faculty, thus, the research level conducted by the teaching staff of the undergraduate programme is appropriate to ensure adequate level of studies.

2.4. Facilities and learning resources

The premises of VGTU are extensive, well maintained and well equipped. The teaching facilities and resources for the programme belong to the Faculty of Business Management and

there are 56 rooms available that provide classrooms, IT resources and facilities and Faculty and programme offices. There is a large lecture theatre available that can accommodate 200 students with 15 additional classrooms that can accommodate from between 25 to 90 students. The majority of the classrooms are equipped with modern multimedia facilities. One classroom also has an interactive whiteboard (CleverBoard 3). These resources are entirely appropriate for the delivery of programmes of this type.

The Faculty has a significant range of information technology and support systems in place for the delivery of this programme. In addition to standard MS office software the Faculty also provides for a wide range of analytical and statistical tools, project planning software tools and specialist tools such as AutoCad. Students also have access to some innovative information management solutions including those for Customer Relations Management (SugarCRM) and document management systems. All of the Faculty buildings are covered by wireless points to facilitate the active use of the Internet for students both for independent study and during classroom sessions. This ensures that students can also access the appropriate databases and virtual library systems.

It is clear the Faculty updates the information technology systems to ensure that the latest versions in both hardware and software are available to the students. Overall the facilities are entirely appropriate for the student body. Access to the appropriate databases ensure that students have access to a wide range of research and learning support materials and staff teaching notes are available via the virtual learning environment (VLE). Moodle as the VLE, is active as a central teaching, calibrating and communication platform within the learning environment.

The internship is obligatory for the students of the programme and should it be necessary this can be arranged on request by the Integration and Career Office of VGTU. The Faculty social partners are very active in providing positions for instance, Lithuania Railways, KEMEK engineering and Lidl Lietuva. Students are encouraged to, and actively participate in the Erasmus mobility programme for studies abroad.

The facilities available to the students on the programme in the main library of VGTU are very extensive, professionally maintained and entirely appropriate for undergraduate programmes of this nature. The library subscribes to 26 databases as well as 22 databases connected to the "Opening of the online Research Databases for Lithuania" project. 525 academic E-books are offered by VGTU publishers "Technika" via the site www.ebooks.vgtu.lt. The library has an impressive range of facilities and is appropriate for the implementation of the programme. The library has a policy of annually updating resources and the Faculty publication fund is annually supplemented with 200 new publications. The extensive publications and

databases are constantly being updated to ensure they contain the most appropriate and up-to-date literature in English, German, Russian and other languages. The library is proactive in offering interlibrary loan systems especially for students and researchers seeking specific literature not currently available within the library itself. The range of foreign journals in the domains of economics and management was extended in 2014 and the library has subscriptions to some seven additional full-text research journals. In total there are 3430 e-journals and 27,470 e-books related business management and economics in the total subscribed databases.

Overall the facilities, learning resources, including access to teaching notes, learning support materials, research journals, and e-books, correspond to the needs of the students and the programme and provide an appropriate learning resource base.

2.5. Study process and students' performance assessment

The process for the admission of students onto the programme was clear and well-founded with the requirements available in a variety of formats and media to potential students.

When on the programme, students are required to undertake a mandatory period of professional practice (internship) that provides practical experience and a better understanding of the nature of business organisations, organisational behaviour and to understand the role as an employee. From the discussions with the students it was clear that many students are also in part-time employment which has the advantage of supporting their study on the programme. The University has an Integration and Career Office that provides consultations on professional career opportunities and assists and supports establishing practical training and internships. The office is also responsible for organising meetings with employers and an annual careers day.

Students have the opportunity of participating in Erasmus plus mobility programmes and during the period 2012-2015 45 students took advantage of this opportunity. From the students involved in the discussion with the panel it was clear they significantly appreciate this opportunity and felt this gave them a breadth of understanding in addition to exposure to different cultural and educational environments which could only be to the long-term benefit.

As part of the programme of studies the students are actively encouraged to participate in research activities. The specific research studies subject provides the quantitative and qualitative research skills in order to be able to carry out an appropriate piece of research that can result in a number of different forms of research output. This active engagement in research including an involvement with published works by lecturers encourages a research culture that can benefit both the individual, the programme and the institution. Additionally, the Faculty has established a student scientific society which promotes the opportunity to gain research experiencing

cooperation with researchers of the Faculty. They hold an annual Young Researchers Conference which is organised by the Faculty.

The Entrepreneurship Centre was established in 2012 for the promotion of students' research and applied activities. Students have the opportunity to participate in the projects implemented by the centre including entrepreneurship forums. Students are particularly active in the Innovation Business Development Promotion Project. This project and the establishment of the Entrepreneurship Centre underpin the emergent focus of the programme in relation to entrepreneurship and leadership in business.

Students enjoy an appropriate level of academic and social support that commences in the first year with the appointment of student mentors. Students are encouraged to participate in the wider activities of the Faculty, the University and the wider community. There is an appropriate student representation mechanism that provides opportunity for discussion with staff on the future development of the programme and to resolve any issues that may arise. It was noted that during the meeting the students felt that they did not directly receive feedback in response to any discussions recommendations or issues that they may have raised. They consider this particularly related to outcomes of meetings or subject changes. The Faculty drew the attention of the panel to the websites where feedback is made available to students. Whilst it is noted that the students do have access to such feedback through these websites, the students were of the view that were not directly informed of how their feedback will be actioned, therefore potential for misunderstanding occurred.

The students stressed the high levels of academic support they received during the course of the programme. They valued both the level of support and the wider professional experience of the staff that significantly enhanced the subject and the value of the total student experience.

The assessment system is clear, appropriate and publicly available. Assessments are in accordance with the developed criteria which are publicly accessible and described in the VGTU Senate's Order 5 – 2.4. The assessment of the students' knowledge and skills uses the regulated 10 point system based on the accumulated assessment criteria which is related to the appropriate learning outcomes at the subject level. The final marks awarded within the cumulative assessments are based on combinations of marks awarded for practical and in course tasks, mid-term examinations and a final examination depending upon the subject and the assessment criteria. The weighting of the various components of assessment are set by ratio values at the departmental level responsible for the subject and published in the subject specifications.

The requirements for the final thesis are well considered with the students on the full-time programme, commencing preparation in the 7th semester. This is an individual piece of work that is based on scientific or applied research and the application of the knowledge within

the specialisation chosen. The students are required to provide an oral defence at the defence assessment and Bachelor's degree awarding board, in accordance with the universities regulations. This board consists of 5 competent study area specialists including representatives of social partners. Each member of the board assesses the final thesis individually and then a final thesis mark is awarded on a 10 point scale on the basis of consensus of the results or by vote. This is a significant piece of academic work that provides the individual student with the opportunity to demonstrate both academic and professional achievement against the range of desired outcomes.

From the evidence of the works seen suggests the reliability and validity of the assessment process should give confidence in the outcome.

The meeting with alumni confirmed that the graduates considered that the programme overall met their expectations and that provided them with a broad set of professional skills that they were able to apply in the workplace. They considered the positions they were able to achieve were commensurate with their expectations and the programme providers.

Overall the social partners considered that the wider range of skills including the knowledge of languages, the professional and technical competence and a confidence and ability to work in an international environment, enhanced their employability. The students presented as confident, articulate with a strong sense of purpose and commitment to their programme.

2.6. Programme management

The University has a very well-developed set of policies, procedures and processes that regulate the overall quality assurance of all of the University's programmes. These ensure compliance and cover all of the areas of programme management and quality assurance including process examinations, thesis defence and student appeals procedures.

Responsibility for decisions and monitoring of the implementation to the programme is undertaken through the programme committee and the Faculty Council. The processes and procedures followed provide for: the systematic evaluation of students achievements, monitoring and tracking of the programme, comments on pedagogical development and ensures the conditions for teachers continuing staff development. The main purpose of the programme committee is to assure the quality and continuous development and improvement of the programme. The committee is organised by the chair and includes representatives of departmental staff, social partners and students. The committee is accountable to the Dean and the study committee of the Faculty. There is an annual reporting cycle that requires the committee to report on the programme and to initiate actions as required.

The Faculty management makes decisions on the amendments of the programme and provides measures for improvement. Any required revisions or other issues to the programme are discussed by the programme committee and in the wider Faculty studies committee. This is a continuous internal evaluation process of the programme overall. Responsibilities for monitoring and evaluating the individual subjects on the programme are at the departmental level where the locus of the responsibility of the subjects is housed. At the university level since 2013, the project has been introduced "VGTU internal quality of studies management systems implementation". This project is to assure the efficient utilisation were managerial tools that enhance the quality of the services provided by the University. This is coordinated by the Strategic Development Quality Management and Analysis Centre. This includes an internal audit to review the implementation of the quality requirements.

The responsibilities for the monitoring of the implementation of the programme are clearly allocated. Overall from the evidence presented it is clear the programme is monitored, reviewed and managed in accordance with University policies and procedures and international best practice.

The data presented as a result of student grading of achievement including the final thesis are regularly analysed as part of the quality management system. The VGTU Studies Committee, the Rectors Office and the Senate of the principal decision-making bodies of the University and would be advised of the outcome of the regular review monitoring process. In addition, regular student and staff surveys are undertaken which provides additional information that can be used as the basis for further review for improvement. Each study subject has an evaluation questionnaire provided at the end of each semester when the subject is delivered. The evaluation of the questionnaires is publicly available. In this the student evaluates the syllabus, presentation of the material for its clarity presentation and understanding, the teaching methods followed, the quality of the communication and recommendations for improvement. The results can be individually accessed by each of the members of staff thus providing a feedback loop that considers student opinion. An overall summary of results as discussed in the programme committee. What is not entirely clear from the SER is how student and the staff feedback through both informal and formal processes is coordinated and integrated to provide a development and improvement narrative, supported by both qualitative and quantitative evidence that could be used to better inform any modifications and developments to the programme of studies.

From this evidence and the range of qualitative and quantitative feedback from staff, employers and students it is clear that the programme enjoys a high standing with its stakeholders. Students' responses were very positive in relation to content and the development

of the professional knowledge and practical skills and the facilities and learning environment provided.

From the evidence in both the SER and from the discussions with the appropriate groups it is clear that the programmes are constantly being monitored and reviewed, including the engagement of the wider stakeholders of the alumni and social partners. In particular the social partners demonstrated a very strong support for the University and programme and felt the University was a listening organisation and responsive to the changing needs in the labour market.

The panel confirmed that the process and procedures in place for the management, monitoring and reviewing of the programme including the quality assurance and improvement components were well-managed, appropriate and in accord with appropriate best practice.

2.7. Examples of excellence *

The development of problem-based learning and teaching strategies is commendable as this reflects well on the development of a wider professional understanding by the students and allows the learning to be put into the appropriate professional context. This would be considered to be an example of international best practice.

The establishment of the Entrepreneurship Centre and the Innovation Business Development Promotion Project in partnership with Northtown Technology Park – a high technology business centre in the Campus of Northtown, is a successful example of extending learning opportunities for students and creating a culture for innovation and entrepreneurial development.

The active engagement of students in research activities through the student scientific society and the annual Young Researchers Conference is a valuable example of how to increase student research participation and to promote the relationship between all of the stakeholders in the research activities.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the programme aim is reviewed to ensure a common clearly articulated focus that encompasses the stated intent of the programme that is consistent across all documentation.

2. That the programme aims/objectives and learning outcomes standards are reviewed to ensure consistency in terminology and meaning between the different documents and that the relationship between the aims/objectives, learning outcomes and study subjects is more clearly identified.

3. That the number of specialist strands offered is kept under review, given the reduction in the student enrolments. This to ensure that the learning experience is sustainable for the students, staff and the programme overall.

4. That the rebalancing of subjects against the ECTS credits continues to achieve a more consistent credit value approach across programme. This should include consideration of the contents of the subjects to ensure they are not overly ambitious and provide depth of understanding required to meet the overall learning outcomes.

5. To consider the development of a formal narrative process that incorporates both the formal and informal staff, student and social partners feedback to better inform the further development and quality improvement of the programme of study. Such a comprehensive annual quality monitoring and review document would be considered to be an example of international best practice.

IV. SUMMARY

The Faculty of Business of VGTU is responsible for the *Business Management* Programme the subject of this report. It was clear to the panel that the relationship between the knowledge and skills the students develop through the programme is in part related to the strong sense of application and practice that pervades the programme. By establishing a strong context for the programme, that of understanding the technical and practical application this has in turn ensured that the theory and practice is well balanced and that the students experience supports the development of their self-confidence and self-esteem.

The evidence from the visit supported the view that the relationship the programme has with the social partnership is very strong. The panel were of the view that the Faculty have the opportunity to further develop this relationship to the benefit of all of the stakeholders. The social partners consider the University to be a "listening" organisation and they would welcome the opportunity to be able to make a greater contribution. Given the speed of change in the economic landscape of Lithuania it is clear that the employability of the graduates, will in the future need to reflect the speed of these changes. The input from social partners will be invaluable in assisting for future directions for the programme as well as enhancing its status and stature in the business community.

The panel recognised that the students are well respected and valued in the labour market and the students value the access and personal engagement that they receive from the academic staff and programme management. The continuing reduction in the number of students following the programme is a matter of concern given the clear importance the programme has in providing graduates with the appropriate sets of skills and employability characteristics for the current and emergent labour market. The long-term sustainability of the programme must be a matter of strategic importance of the University as well as the Faculty.

The stated focus and aim of encouraging entrepreneurship and leadership manifests itself in the strong relationship with the research and innovation centres providing interesting opportunities for entrepreneurial activities. This approach largely fostered through joint research and publications is recognised and commended.

For the future, based on the continuing need for innovation and creativity in economic development, the focus on entrepreneurial skills and leadership will be important in developing the curriculum structure of the programme.

The panel made the following observations to support the work of the Faculty and to assist in any further evaluation:

1.   That the Self-Evaluation Report (SER) was more of a descriptive commentary rather than the analytical critical reflection that could have been expected. The panel considered

that the Faculty did themselves a disservice in this regard, as the evidence presented during the visit was significantly stronger than that described in the SER.

2. The programme aims/objectives and learning outcomes do not appear entirely congruent with the study subjects as described in the SER. As currently presented the use of differing terminology and the articulation between programme aims/objectives, the learning outcomes and the subjects can be confusing and lead to a lack of clarity. A greater focus on clear descriptors and how study subjects directly relate to the achievement of the programme aims and learning outcomes will provide greater clarity.

3. From the meeting with the students there was a concern that the regular survey responses may not be directly acted upon and although evidence was presented in the SER that the programme responses were publicly available, students felt they were not directly informed as to any changes or outcomes as a result of their feedback.

4. For future of the programme a stronger focus could be developed that includes the multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary approach to support the future needs of entrepreneurs and management leaders. This would enhance the competitive positioning of the programme and its longer term sustainability and clear potential in contributing to the labour market and the national economy.

The panel would commend the strength of the programme by quoting from one of the current students who considered the real value of the programme as: "Being taught by people know what they're doing".

V. GENERAL ASSESSMENT

The study programme *Business Management* (state code – 612N10007) at Vilnius Gediminas technical University is given **positive** evaluation.

Study programme assessment in points by evaluation areas.

No.	Evaluation Area	Evaluation of an area in points*
1.	Programme aims and learning outcomes	3
2.	Curriculum design	3
3.	Teaching staff	4
4.	Facilities and learning resources	3
5.	Study process and students' performance assessment	3
6.	Programme management	3
	Total:	**19**

*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: **Prof. dr. Peter Jones**

Grupės nariai:
Team members: **Prof. dr. Tatjana Volkova**

Prof. dr. Wes Wierda

Prof. dr. Giedrius Jucevičius

Ms. Karolina Zelbienė

Vaida Spūdytė

Studijų kokybės vertinimo centras

VILNIAUS GEDIMINO TECHNIKOS UNIVERSITETO PIRMOSIOS PAKOPOS STUDIJŲ PROGRAMOS *VERSLO VADYBA* (VALSTYBINIS KODAS – 612N10007) 2015-11-18 EKSPERTINIO VERTINIMO IŠVADŲ NR. SV4-292 IŠRAŠAS

<…>

V. APIBENDRINAMASIS ĮVERTINIMAS

Vilniaus Gedimino technikos universiteto studijų programa *Verslo vadyba* (valstybinis kodas – 612N10007) vertinama **teigiamai**.

Eil. Nr.	Vertinimo sritis	Srities įvertinimas, balais*
1.	Programos tikslai ir numatomi studijų rezultatai	3
2.	Programos sandara	3
3.	Personalas	4
4.	Materialieji ištekliai	3
5.	Studijų eiga ir jos vertinimas	3
6.	Programos vadyba	3
	Iš viso:	**19**

* 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

VGTU Verslo vadybos fakultetas atsako už studijų programą *Verslo vadyba*, kuri yra šių vertinimo išvadų objektas. Ekspertų grupei aišku, kad šioje studijų programoje studentų įgytos žinios ir įgūdžiai iš dalies susiję su dideliu pasiryžimu taikyti žinias praktikoje, kas jaučiama visoje programoje. Sukurtas geras studijų programos turinys, kuriame buvo siekiama suprasti techninį ir praktinį taikymą, kas savo ruožtu užtikrino tinkamą teorijos ir praktikos balansą, o studentai skatinami ugdyti pasitikėjimą savimi ir savigarbą.

Vizito metu gauta informacija patvirtino, kad studijų programa palaiko labai tvirtą ryšį su socialiniais partneriais. Ekspertų grupė mano, kad fakultetas gali toliau plėtoti šiuos ryšius, kurie naudingi visiems dalininkams. Socialiniai partneriai mano, kad universitetas įsiklauso į tai, kas sakoma, ir mielai galėtų padidinti savo indėlį. Atsižvelgiant į Lietuvos ekonomikos pokyčių

spartą ir siekiant išlaikyti studentų įsidarbinimo galimybes, būtina ateityje atspindėti šių pokyčių greitį. Socialinių partnerių indėlis bus neįkainojamas padedant nubrėžti studijų programos ateities kryptis, taip pat gerinant jos statusą ir svarbą verslo bendruomenėje.

Ekspertų grupė pripažįsta, kad studentai yra gerbiami ir vertinami darbo rinkoje, o studentai vertina prieigą ir asmeninį dalyvavimą, kurį jiems suteikia akademinis personalas ir programos vadovybė. Nuolat mažėjantis šios programos studentų skaičius kelia susirūpinimą, todėl absolventams reikia aiškiai parodyti programos svarbą ir kad jie įgis tinkamus įgūdžius ir galės įsidarbinti dabartinėje ir atsirandančioje darbo rinkoje. Universitetas ir fakultetas privalo skirti strateginę svarbą studijų programos ilgalaikiam tvarumui garantuoti.

Verslumo ir lyderystės skatinimas parodo stiprų ryšį su mokslinių tyrimų ir inovacijų centrais, kurie suteikia įdomias galimybes verslumo veiklai vykdyti. Toks požiūris, kuris ypač puoselėjamas vykdant jungtinius mokslinius tyrimus ir skelbiant publikacijas, yra teigiamai vertinamas.

Ateityje, atsižvelgiant į nuolatinį poreikį plėtoti inovacijas ir kūrybiškumą šalyje, didelis dėmesys bus skiriamas verslumo įgūdžiams ir lyderystei sudarant studijų programą.

Ekspertų grupė nori išskirti šiuos pastebėjimus, kurie padės fakultetui ir tolesniam vertinimui:

5. Savianalizės suvestinė (toliau – SS) buvo daugiau aprašomojo komentarų pateikimo pobūdžio, o ne analitinis kritinis vertinimas, kurio buvo galima tikėtis. Ekspertų grupė nusprendė, jog fakultetas padarė sau meškos paslaugą šiuo klausimu, nes vizito metu gauta informacija buvo žymiai konstruktyvesnė, nei pateikta SS.

6. Studijų programos tikslai ir (arba) uždaviniai ir studijų rezultatai atrodo nevisiškai sutampa su studijų dalykų, kurie aprašyti SS. Taip, kaip pateikta šiuo metu, naudojama skirtinga terminologija ir programos tikslų ir (arba) uždavinių, studijų rezultatų ir dalykų formuluotės, o tai gali klaidinti ir sąlygoti aiškumo trūkumą. Daugiau dėmesio skirti aiškiems aprašams, kaip studijų dalykai tiesiogiai susiję su programos tikslų ir studijų rezultatų pasiekimu.

7. Po susitikimo su studentais kilo nerimas, kad nėra tiesiogiai reaguojama į nuolatinius apklausų rezultatus, nors SS pateikiama informacija, kad atsiliepimai apie programą skelbiami viešai, tačiau studentai mano, kad jie nėra tiesiogiai informuojami apie pakeitimus arba rezultatus, kuriuos sąlygojo jų grįžtamasis ryšys.

8. Rūpinantis studijų programos ateitimi reikėtų daugiau dėmesio skirti daugiadalykiškumui ir tarpdalykiniam požiūriui, kuris padėtų atsižvelgti į verslininkų ir valdymo lyderių poreikius ateityje. Tai leistų padidinti studijų programos konkurencingumą ir jos ilgalaikį tvarumą bei aiškų potencialą įsiliejant į darbo rinką ir prisidedant prie šalies ekonomikos.

Ekspertų grupė nori atkreipti dėmesį į studijų programos stiprybę pacituodama vieną iš esamų studentų, kuris nurodė tikrąją studijų programos vertę sakydamas, kad „dėsto žmonės, kurie žino, ką daro".

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III. REKOMENDACIJOS

1. Iš naujo apsvarstyti studijų programos tikslą, kad būtų suformuluotas aiškus akcentas, pabrėžiantis išreikštą programos tikslą, ir kad jis būtų išlaikytas visuose dokumentuose.

2. Iš naujo apsvarstyti studijų programos tikslus ir (arba) uždavinius bei studijų rezultatus, siekiant užtikrinti vienodą terminologiją ir prasmę įvairiuose dokumentuose, ir aiškiau nustatyti ryšį tarp tikslų ir (arba) uždavinių, studijų rezultatų ir dalykų rezultatų.

3. Nuolat stebėti siūlomų specializacijų krypčių skaičių, atsižvelgiant į stojančių studentų skaičiaus sumažėjimą. Užtikrinti, kad studijų metu įgyta patirtis būtų tokia, kurios tikisi studentai, dėstytojai ir bendrai pati programa.

4. Iš naujo apsvarstyti ir išlaikyti dalykų balansą pagal ECTS kreditus, siekiant užtikrinti nuoseklesnį kreditų skaičių visoje studijų programoje. Šiuo tikslu reikėtų peržiūrėti dalykų turinį ir užtikrinti, kad jis nebūtų pernelyg ambicingas ir garantuotų gilų suvokimą, kurio reikia studijų rezultatams pasiekti.

5. Apsvarstyti ir sukurti formalų vertinimo procesą, kuris įtrauktų formalų ir neformalų personalo, studentų ir socialinių partnerių grįžtamąjį ryšį ir kuris būtų naudingas toliau plėtojant studijų programą ir gerinant jos kokybę. Tokia išsami metinė kokybės stebėsena ir vertinimo dokumentas būtų laikomi gerosios tarptautinės praktikos pavyzdžiu.

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2.7. Išskirtinės kokybės pavyzdžiai

Pagirtinas problemų sprendimu grįsto mokymo ir mokymosi metodikų rengimas, kuris padeda ugdyti platesnį studentų profesinį suvokimą ir leidžia mokymąsi įtraukti į atitinkamą profesinį kontekstą. Tai puikus tarptautinės gerosios praktikos pavyzdys.

Verslumo centro įsteigimas ir Inovacijų verslo plėtros skatinimo projektas, vykdomas bendradarbiaujant su Šiaurės miestelio technologijų parku – aukštųjų technologijų verslo centru

Šiaurės miestelyje, – yra sėkmingas pavyzdys, kaip plėtoti studentų studijavimo galimybes ir kurti inovacijų ir verslumo plėtros kultūrą.

Aktyvus studentų dalyvavimas mokslinių tyrimų veikloje per studentų mokslo visuomenę ir metinę jaunųjų mokslininkų konferenciją – puikus pavyzdys, kaip didinti studentų dalyvavimą mokslinių tyrimų veikloje ir skatinti visų dalininkų bendravimą mokslinių tyrimų srityje.

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Paslaugos teikėjas patvirtina, jog yra susipažinęs su Lietuvos Respublikos baudžiamojo kodekso 235 straipsnio, numatančio atsakomybę už melagingą ar žinomai neteisingai atliktą vertimą, reikalavimais.

Vertėjos rekvizitai (vardas, pavardė, parašas)

Studijų kokybės vertinimo centras