



STUDIJŲ KOKYBĖS VERTINIMO CENTRAS

Lietuvos sveikatos mokslų universiteto  
**STUDIJŲ PROGRAMOS „SVEIKATOS PSICHOLOGIJA“**  
*(valstybinis kodas – 621S13002, 6211JX003)*  
**VERTINIMO IŠVADOS**

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**EVALUATION REPORT**  
**OF “HEALTH PSYCHOLOGY”** *(state code - 621S13002, 6211JX003)*  
**STUDY PROGRAMME**  
at Lithuanian University of Health Sciences

**Review’ team:**

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## DUOMENYS APIE ĮVERTINTĄ PROGRAMĄ

Studijų programos pavadinimas	<i>Sveikatos psichologija</i>
Valstybinis kodas	621S13002, (6211JX003)
Studijų sritis	Socialiniai mokslai
Studijų kryptis	Psichologija
Studijų programos rūšis	Universitetinės studijos
Studijų pakopa	Antroji
Studijų forma (trukmė metais)	Nuolatinė (2)
Studijų programos apimtis kreditais	120 ECTC
Suteikiamas laipsnis ir (ar) profesinė kvalifikacija	Sveikatos psichologijos magistras (Socialinių mokslų magistras)
Studijų programos įregistravimo data	2015-04-29

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## INFORMATION ON EVALUATED STUDY PROGRAMME

Title of the study programme	<i>Health Psychology</i>
State code	621S13002, (6211JX003)
Study area	Social Sciences
Group of Study field	Psychology
Type of the study programme	University studies
Study cycle	Second
Study mode (length in years)	Full-time (2)
Volume of the study programme in credits	120 ECTS
Degree and (or) professional qualifications awarded	Master of Health Psychology (Master of Social Sciences)
Date of registration of the study programme	April 29 <sup>th</sup> , 2015

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## 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.	Final theses

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

The Health Psychology master programme is a social sciences second cycle university study programme, carried out at the Faculty of Public Health of the Lithuanian University of Health Sciences ( hereafter - LSMU) in Kaunas. The LSMU has two major academic divisions: the Medical Academy and the Veterinary Academy. The Faculty of Public Health is one five Faculty at

the Medical academy. The first and second cycle study programmes in Health Psychology are organized by the Department of Health Psychology, which is part of the Faculty of Public Health. The activities of the Public Health Faculty are organized by the Faculty Council and the Dean. Study programmes are coordinated by Study Programme Committees, which are accountable to the Dean of the Faculty. The Health Psychology study programme is coordinated by the Study Programme Committee of first and second cycle Health Psychology studies. The majority of committee members belong to Health Psychology Department.

The mission of the study programme is formulated according to the most advanced educational ideas and best scientist-practitioner training traditions (according to the SER, p. 5).

#### **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 10<sup>th</sup> October, 2017.

1. **Prof. Dr. Phil Chantal Martin Sölch** (team leader), Professor in Clinical and Health Psychology, Department of Psychology, University Fribourg, Switzerland.
2. **Dr. Inga Millere** - Dean of the Faculty of Public Health and Social Welfare, Rīga Stradiņš University, Latvia.
3. **Prof. Vlasta Vizek Vidović**, Head of the Centre for Educational Research and Development, Institute for Social Research, Croatia.
4. **Ms. Žydrė Arlauskaitė**, assistant of Department of Development and Educational Psychology in Lithuanian University of Educational Sciences, Lithuania.
5. **Ms. Meda Vaitonytė**, student of the Mykolas Romeris University, study programme *Psychology*, Lithuania.

## **II. PROGRAMME ANALYSIS**

### **2.1. Programme aims and learning outcomes**

According to the self-evaluation report (SER), the aim of the MA in Health Psychology is “to train competent psychology specialists, who would understand peculiarities of health, health disorders and healthcare system functioning, would be able to work in teams of different specialists, choose methods, based on scientific data and best suited for specific areas of health psychology, assess effectiveness of own activities and self-improve.” (SER, p.8). The master programme was developed to ensure the continuity of psychologists' training after the first cycle programme in Health Psychology, and was launched in 2015 (SER, p.7). The definitions of the aims and of the fields are

clear to staff, students and stakeholders as evidenced in the different meetings during the site visit. The aims of the master program are not published on the homepage of the Department of Health Psychology, and therefore not publicly accessible. It is possible to find there the aims and the study plan of the BA in Health Psychology as well as the general mission of the Department, but not the aims, nor the study plan of the master of Health Psychology (see <http://www.lsmuni.lt/en/structure/medical-academy-/faculty-of-public-health-/departments/>, retrieved 10.12.2017). At the time of the site visit, the study plan (but not the aims) of the master programme were available on this webpage. The aims of this programme should be therefore published on the webpage of the institution.

As declared by the Senior management (during site visit), the University has a business-oriented approach; and this is well evidenced in the analysis of the market needs provided in the SER (p. 7). The aims of the programme are based on statistics of the European Federation of Psychological Associations (EFPA), of the Lithuanian Ministry of Health; on analyses of the labour market trends, and on a survey among Healthcare institutions, among other, all showing future needs and good employment prospects for health psychologists. The need for health psychologists is also stressed in national strategic documents related to health and to prevention programmes (for instance, the Health Program of Lithuania in 2014-2023, or Mental Health Strategy Implementation and Suicide Prevention Action Plan for 2014-2016) as presented in the SER (p.8). Finally, the development of the master programme is related to a currently discussed project of psychologist practice law that will set the qualification requirement for the licensing of psychologists, working in healthcare system. If this legislation is approved, a master in Health Psychology or in Clinical Psychology will be required to work as medical psychologist in the healthcare system. It can therefore be concluded that the link to the market needs is given. In addition, social partners are involved in the development of the program as members of the Study Programme Committee as well as through regular meetings with the Study Programme Committee (as reported during the meetings with the SER team and the social partners), what ensures a direct exchange with the employers' needs. The support of the social partners for this programme is very strong as was evidenced during the interviews. This was also evidenced by the large number of social partners, who participated at the meeting. The strong relationship with stakeholders and social partners, expressed in regular meetings with them and their involvement in program development was identified as an area of excellence.

A specificity of the evaluated programme is that is offered in a medical Faculty, what allows to train the students together with other health specialists in LSMU. In addition, the University has the premises for practical training at the University Clinic (SER, p.8, and evidenced during the meetings). The importance of interdisciplinarity in the training was stressed as a very positive

aspect by the students. During the interviews with the Review Team, the social partners reported a clear difference in professional competence levels between master and bachelor students during practices. In addition, the inspection of the study plan (SER, Annex 1) suggests that the courses correspond to the level of study. The courses are specific and oriented towards the acquisition of specialized knowledge related to Health and Health psychology. The program learning outcomes are defined in terms of competences, and focus on practical abilities. However, there is little integration of research activities in the study program (according to the study plan, Annex 1, SER), and research-related outcomes related to the program aims and to the mission of the university would need more coverage. This point was also raised by social partners during the interviews, who also see advantages of having students with more research competences. A suggestion is to better formalize the integration of research in the study plan. This point is discussed more in detail in the section on the study processes. Overall, the learning outcomes of the programme are in line with the content of the programme, and with the qualifications to be obtained (master in Health Psychology). The program learning outcomes are formulated in compliance with the documents regulating psychology field and second-cycle studies in Lithuania, i.e. the Psychology Study Field Descriptor (Order No V-923), the Description Of The Lithuanian Qualifications Framework (Decision No 986), and the General Requirements for Master Degree Study Programmes (Order No V-826), as described in the SER (p. 9). A direct link between the programmes learning outcomes with the Psychology Field descriptor is given in Table 1.1. in the SER (p.9). The learning outcomes are clearly related to the aims of the programme and have a strong focus on the biomedical Health model and on Health Psychology.

In summary, the criteria associated with the aims and learning outcomes of the programmes are well-fulfilled, and are evaluated as very good. In particular, the strong relationship with stakeholders and social partners, expressed in regular meetings with them and involvement in program development was identified as an area of excellence. Another strength is the embedment of the programme in a medical Faculty that allows for interdisciplinary training and practices at the University Clinic. In addition, a great effort was given to evaluate the needs of the market and to integrate several sources (regulatory documents, statistics and labour market analyses) to develop the programme and its aims. The learning outcomes are linked to the programme aims and to the qualification to be obtained. Areas needing more improvement are related to the integration of research at programme's level and to the publication of the aims, which are not published on the homepage of the University.

### **Recommendations:**

- Ameliorate the integration of research at programme's level, and formalize the integration of students in research activities.

- The aims of the programme should be published on the webpage of the institution.

## ***2.2. Curriculum design***

Curriculum design is intended to give students an integrated approach in acquiring professional competences by combining theory and practice and preparing them for lifelong learning in the field of health psychology. According to the national legislation regulating second cycle program requirements (General Requirements for Master Degree Study Programme, Order No V-826, 2010), the program has a total volume of 120 credits with 86 credits allocated (min 60) to the study field subjects including 30 credit for practice, 4 credits for the electives and a maximal amount of 30 credits to the final work (SER, Table 2.1, p.11-12). It should be noted that although the allocation of credits reflects well the program orientation, more space should be left for electives. Although the curriculum is built upon the general knowledge and skills acquired in the first cycle, it aims to offer topics in specialized areas related to health, health disturbances, healthcare system and health psychologist's work (SER, p.12). In that way, the systematic approach is provided without repetition or overlapping of content between the two levels. Regarding credit allocation, the student representatives during the meeting with students expressed the opinion that the estimated workload in credits does not always correspond to the real workload in certain courses. The issue of the workload should be checked by comparing the level of assignments in courses with the students' statements about them. This is in line with a discipline-centred approach, rather than a student-centred approach as discussed below.

The programme offers two career orientations. One leads to the acquiring qualification for general health psychology practitioner, while the other offers possibility to the students with specific interests to specialize in five areas of health psychology: oncopsychology, addiction psychology, rehabilitation psychology, health psychology in organizations, sports psychology. The flexibility in the choice of the programme's options allows students to fulfil personal interest at an early stage of professional development. However, the possibility to offer specializations as a part of formal education in life-long learning perspective to those who got general health psychologist degree should also be considered, and could be an interesting development's option for the programme. Although the programme has a strong applied orientation, which is reflected in several specialization options, during the meeting with students, they have expressed the need to incorporate more of the practically oriented elective courses among the obligatory ones.

Since the integrated Programme Study Committee manages both study programmes at BA and MA level, the similar deficiencies in the subject outline and formulation of subject learning outcomes occur at the MA level as at the BA level. Learning outcomes appear as the last item in subject description instead of being the starting point for subject planning, few subjects are missing specific



learning outcomes, the subject learning outcomes are formulated in too general terms using very general fuzzy verbs such as “to know”, “to raise awareness” or “to understand”. Instead of using one specific active verb for each outcome, learning outcomes cover simultaneously several issues, which makes it difficult to link specific outcome to the teaching methods, assessment techniques and content units. In order to make learning outcomes more clearly defined, the complex formulations could be split into several outcomes. Also in comparison to the LTQF description of the 7 level, the complexity of the mental requirements should be increased using specific verbs indicating higher levels of cognitive functioning. In general, inspection of the subjects’ plan indicates adherence to a more discipline-centered approach fixed on content, rather than to a student-centered approach to teaching. The useful tools to assist the suggested improvements might be found in *ECTS user’s guide* first edition of 2009 and revised version 2015, as well as in the Bloom’s taxonomy of cognitive teaching goals.

The 30 credits allocated for the preparation of the Master thesis comprise the step-by-step approach to do planning and carrying out independent medium scale research. Although the MA final thesis did not accumulate yet in sufficient number to analyse them, the inspection of the accepted topics for the final thesis suggests that more sophisticated designs are desirable using, for instance using mixed methods approach or controlled experiments. During the meeting with students, the students have confirmed that ethical issues of their research are discussed before the topic is approved.

The scope of the course is sufficient to cover all relevant content, which in turn corresponds to state of the field knowledge.

In summary, the curriculum for this programme is evaluated as good with some recommendations. A specific strength of the programme is the systematic approach that allows avoiding repetition or overlapping of content between the bachelor and master levels. Further, the allocation of the credits reflects well the program orientation; and the scope of the course is sufficient to cover all relevant content. Areas needing more improvement are related to the logic behind the attribution of the ECTS to courses, which is a rather discipline-centred than student-centred approach, what is in turn the modern standard. The learning outcomes should be revised, and more emphasis should be put on more sophisticated design for the final thesis work.

### **Recommendations:**

- Adapt the attribution of credits in the study curriculum according to the students’ workload and not to the importance of subjects, using a student-centred approach rather than a discipline-centred approach.
- Adapt the formulation of the learning outcomes using active verbs and make sure that the formulations correspond to the program level.
- Review the differentiation between subject / topics level and program level.

- Put more emphasis on applying qualitative and experimental methods in student's projects and final thesis research.

### ***2.3. Teaching staff***

Teaching staff of the academic institution meets the requirement for master degree programmes (General requirements of Master degree study programmes approved by Order No V-826 of 3 June 2010 of the Minister for Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania), as 80% of Programme study area teachers have a scientific degree (SER, p.19).

During the interviews with the Review Team, the teachers stressed their strong motivation to fulfill the country's needs and report being open and flexible to reach that goal. The qualification of teaching staff is high. For instance, the SER states that the competences, skills and experience of Department teachers are recognized at national and international level; and 3 teachers (prof. N. Žemaitienė, D. Antinienė, assoc.prof. K. Šmigelskas) are experts or advisers in various Lithuanian and international institutions and organizations (SER, p.16). Teacher's qualifications are also continuously developed and improved by participating at national and international scientific conferences, seminars, fellowships. For instance, in year 2015, 25 teachers from the Department teaching staff participated at scientific conferences; and in year 2016, 33 did (by SER, p.16). Teachers of the Department also publish in international scientific journals (with a total of 44 scientific publications between 2012 – 2016). Teachers have the opportunity and the duty to improve their teaching skills on a regular basis. The teachers have mandatory education for teaching skills that is offered by the Teachers Education Competence Department. This Centre offers regular trainings on the development of teaching skills as well as trainings with updated relevant information. In addition, to improve the Department teachers' pedagogical competences, the Department of Health Psychology organizes twice a year, internal teacher training seminars, every year (SER, p.16). During the interviews with the teachers, the senior management and the SER group, this was common knowledge. The teachers clearly expressed a strong motivation to improve their teaching and their professional level. In addition, teachers not only gain, but also share their qualifications and skills with others – 3 teachers are regular lecturers at LSMU Teachers' Educational Competence Department (by SER, p.16). It can be concluded that the academic institution invests great efforts to improve teaching skills of their teachers. In addition, the mandatory training is a good way to ensure the quality of teaching and the regular update of teaching skills.

The number of the teaching staff is adequate to ensure learning outcomes (16 teachers for 22 MA students). The proportion between junior and senior teachers is good – almost one third (27%) of the Department pedagogical staff is younger than 39 years old (SER, p. 15), what ensures in turn proper balance between expertise, open mindset, and creativity. The teaching staff turnover is not

big. In year 2014-2015, 2 teachers left for maternity leave, and because of terminated working agreement. In 2015, 1 teacher left and none in 2016 (SER, p. 15). On situations of maternity leave, the SER team reported having invited professors from abroad, to partly compensates the lack of turnover. Although the academic institution, ensures qualified conditions for upgrading professional and didactic skills (through LSMU Teachers' Educational Competence Department, as described above), there is personal mentoring or career coaching as reported by the teachers during the meetings with Review team.

A strength of the programme is the teachers' active interest to sustainable improvement of programme, for instance through collaboration. For instance, the teachers indicated during the meetings that one of their strengths is the close, continuous and fruitful collaboration with social partners, students, SER and administration (site visit, meeting with teachers). This is also a good way to obtain a clear view on the programme's strengths and weaknesses and to allow for adaptation to the country needs, especially with regard to the changes of National regulation for medical Psychologists (see section on Programme aims and learning outcomes), about which the teachers are well aware. Another strength is the interdisciplinary approach, with classes of mixed group of students; and with teachers from other disciplines intervening in the programme. This was recognized as a strong asset by the SER group, the teachers and the students. One area needing some improvement concerns the mobility of teachers. There is already some mobility, with 2 to 4 teachers engaged in mobility programmes each year of the evaluation period (SER, p. 16). However, the Review Team suggests to put more focus on the mobility of teachers.

In summary, the criteria related to the teaching staff were evaluated as very good. Teachers meet legal requirements. They are very well motivated, open and flexible. Their qualification is very high. They have mandatory education for the continuous development of teaching skills, and are themselves strongly motivated to improve their teaching and professional skills. The number of the teaching staff is adequate to ensure learning outcomes. A specific strength is the close, continuous and fruitful collaboration with social partners, students, SER and administration. Another strength is the interdisciplinary approach used by the teachers (see also section on study processes). One area needing some improvement concerns the mobility of teachers.

**Recommendation:**

- Ameliorate the conditions for teacher mobility by better promoting the advantages and offering flexible conditions.

#### ***2.4. Facilities and learning resources***

The Faculty of Public Health has new and modern facilities with the auditoriums that are adequate in size and quality, and have very well organized and a functional environment of the study classes and staff facilities (site visit). The Public Health Faculty has 22 various size auditoriums (SER, p.18). The classes look convenient for the group work and discussions, the computer classes (6 classes as disposal) are organized in a good manner. Moreover, the inspected facilities are accessible for people with disabilities (evidenced at site visit). The Library is accessible for 24 hours during the weekdays, having a great amount of literature, good working spaces for the students that can be booked in advance, including 3 group work rooms where, also are books and multimedia gear provided. The library also has special workplaces for people with disabilities. Unfortunately, majority of the books are specialized on medical subjects rather than in psychology, what was evidenced after the visit of the library and visual revision of the literature. The literature offered covers sufficiently the scope of the master, but could be expanded. Most books relevant for the master programme are related to psychopathology, mental disorders, and the biomedical model of Health. The library currently subscribes to 53 scientific databases, some of which are directly relevant to psychology studies, for instance “EBSCO publishing”, “PsycARTICLES”, “Sage”, or “ScienceDirect” (SER, p.19). The databases can be accessed from university computers or using distant access through VPN or “Ezproxy”. In 2016, the programme has difficulties with database access. The problem was solved by end 2016. According to the SER (p.19), this problem affected mostly the bachelor students in Health Psychology rather than the master students as they were not so advanced in their studies at that time. And because, students mostly need the access to the database at the time of the final thesis. This problem was also reported by the students during the interviews. This is certainly an issue that should not happen anymore.

The University has several newly and well-equipped laboratories for (bio)-medical studies. The Department of Health Psychology has a brand new behavioral laboratory suited for behavior observation, social experiments and consulting skills training. There are also simple portable biofeedback devices that are used for teaching only, but could be also used in research. In general, the laboratory situation for psychology students could be improved, especially by increasing resp. ameliorating the research facilities for experimental research and actively use the laboratory and research devices. Students are provided with adequate arrangements for students’ practice and can choose from rehabilitation centers, prison, schools and clinics such as Kaunas Center of Addictive Diseases, Kaunas Interrogation Insulator, LSMU Gymnasium and Hospital of Lithuanian University of Health Sciences Kauno Klinikos.

In summary, the criteria related to the facilities are evaluated as good. The quality and size of the auditoriums and computer classes are good. There are many working places for students, and the

organization of the library is good. Practice places are organized in several types of institutions. However, the scope of the books related to the master topics and to psychology could be improved. Another area of improvement is related to the laboratory facilities at disposal for the students in psychology.

### **Recommendations:**

- Improve the laboratory situation and the research facilities for experimental research, and actively use the research facilities at disposal for research.
- Expand the number of books and the literature related to the master topics and to Psychology (for University).

### ***2.5. Study process and students' performance assessment***

Entrance requirement and student admission's procedures are clearly described and transparent. They are performed according to "Regulations of student admission to Lithuanian University of Health Sciences", that is annually renewed and approved in University Senate (SER, p.20). Admission is performed by the Admission Commission, approved by Rector (SER, p.20). Students with a bachelor degree in Psychology degree can be admitted to the Program. The competition score integrates the average grade obtained for the Bachelor studies, and the evaluation of the motivational interview performed by the Admittance Commission, formed from Department teachers (SER, p. 20). The integration of two sources for the competition scores, especially the integration of a motivation interview is evaluated as positive by the Review team. The programme was launched in 2015. There were 5 applications in the first year (all admitted) and 50 applications in 2016, of which 17 were admitted (SER, p. 20). This is showing a clear and growing interest for the programme. There were so far no drop-outs among the students, who began to study (SER, p.20). No students have graduated so far, so the employment prospects of the graduates cannot be evaluated.

Students recognize that they have specific professional competences such as ability to apply diagnostic instruments, to plan the intervention or to evaluate the effects of treatment, and these competences are also recognized from the social partners (meetings with students and social partners). Competences correspond to the learning outcomes of the program as well as to the expectation of the employers, to the market needs, and to the legal changes to come. A specific strength of the programme with regard to the acquisition of professional competences is the use of an interdisciplinary approach. This was stressed by the students and the teachers during the interviews. Students can participate in mixed classes with students from other health professions

and have teachers from other disciplines. They report feeling prepared for their future activity in healthcare institutions, where interdisciplinary work is the standard (evidenced at site visit). This aspect was identified as an area of excellence.

The organization of the study processes ensures the implementation of the program, under tight supervision of the Study Programme Committee, that is held about once a month. The assessment methods are adapted, clearly communicated and well structured as reported by the students (site visit). Student assessment system is defined in Study Regulation (SER, p.22), and includes colloquium, defense of practical assignment, course work, case history, and at the end of subject studies – exam or independent work (SER, p.21). The subjects' assessment methods should be and are communicating at the beginning of the classes (SER, p.21 and confirmed by the students during the interviews).

There is a good climate and a good and easy communication between students and teachers, and an atmosphere of trust. For instance, students describe that they feel as being “part of the team”, and that can meet and exchange with the teachers easily (meeting with students). This was also evidenced as an area of excellence. The students can receive academic support, consultations and a teacher-monitor system was set-up to support the students during the study processes (SER, p.22). Students have opportunities to complain (procedure described in the SER, p. 24), and their voice is heard. Students reported that changes were made according to their feedbacks and / or complaints (interviews with the students, site visit). In addition, students are integrated in the Study Programme Committee; and students Union representatives have obtained the right to visit exams. There are supportive measures for students with disabilities and special needs as well as social support measure (for instance social scholarships, tuition fees reduction,...) provided by the University (SER, p. 21).

However, there is little integration of students in applied research activities (and also in cultural activities, SER, p. 21). Evidence for the lack of integration in research studies came also from the interviews. Students reported having the choice to write their final thesis also on theoretical matters, and not obligatorily with empirical data. They reported not being regularly involved in the research activities of the teachers, and that it was possible to study the programme without performing research. The review team recommends to formalize the integration of research activities in the study processes. for instance by requiring empirical master thesis and integrating students in the research activities of the teachers. In addition, there is a mobility problem, with no students taking part in mobility programmes. Reasons given by the students are related to the lack of attractiveness of the university proposed and the question of the language, that is particularly important in the field of Health Psychology, which contradicts to the fact that professional language is being taught already in 2 courses at the BA level. Students have raised the issue that these courses are oriented

toward broader biomedicine area and focused approach to the health psychology is missing (meeting with students). The SER gives as additional reason for the lack of mobility, that the students could participate in mobility programmes at the earliest in the third semester, which corresponds to their practice time (SER, p.21-22). The Review Team recommends therefore to promote the advantages of mobility programmes and to offer flexible solutions for students taking part in such programmes.

In summary, some criteria related to study processes, such as the entrance requirements, the professional competences acquired, the organization of the program and the communication with the students, are well-fulfilled. Two areas of excellence were identified, the good climate and the good and easy communication between students and teachers as well as the interdisciplinary approach in teaching. However, some strong areas of improvement were also identified, including aspects related to students' mobility and integration of students in research activities. In conclusion, This domain evaluation area is evaluated as good with some recommendations.

### **Recommendations:**

- Formalize the integration of research activities in the study processes, for instance by requiring empirical master thesis and integrating students in the research activities of the teachers.
- Advantages of mobility programmes should be promoted and flexible solutions for students taking part in such programmes should be offered.

### ***2.6. Programme management***

The master study programme in Health Psychology belongs to the Faculty of Public Health of LSMU. Study program management in the University is performed on several levels. On University level program management and implementation is regulated by Senate documents, coordinated by Vice-rector for Studies and Study Centre. There are Quality Assurance Regulations in LSMU and all departments, participating in studies, are responsible for quality of their activities. Study Quality Monitoring and Assurance Commission coordinate monitoring assessment and improvement of study quality (SER, p. 25). At Faculty level, the study organization is regulated by the Faculty Council, coordinated by Dean. The main responsibilities for the implementation of the program and its direct management are assigned to the Study Programme Committee (SER, p.25). The Study Program committee besides academics and management team also includes social partners and students. The Study Program committee meetings are held regularly, once a month on average (described in the SER, 26.p; verified at site visit). The Study Program Committee is responsible for study program implementation and constant quality monitoring. The Study Programme Committed includes representatives of social partners, and students to ensure that the programme is in line with the market needs, the expected professional skills and the students needs (as reported in previous

sections, and verified at the site visit). The programme receives a strong support from the Faculty and from the University (information obtained and verified at site visit during the interviews at different levels). This was also evidenced by the large number of Senior management members who were present at the meeting.

An appreciable approach has been setup to establish on November 2016 one study committee for two programmes – first and second cycles. Previously Health Psychology Bachelor Study Program Committee was separate from Master Study Program Committee. These changes were made to ensure better quality management for psychologist training throughout all 6 years; however difficulty could arise for people having done their BA at another place. A suggestion to have more information about this potential problem would be to introduce alumni surveys (not done so far as there are no alumni yet).

There is evidence (described in SER and checked in communication with students and staff) about regular collection of data about the programmes quality at different levels, including anonymous students' surveys for each subject. However at this point there are no alumni (the study program is new, the implementation of the study program started in 2015 and there are no graduates during the program evaluation period). Stakeholders are integrated in programme and well involved in all processes: take students in practices, during student practice assess their knowledge, skills and achievements. Practice students and tutors receive feedback from heads of practice in institutions. Collected data and other information regarding programme implementation are analysed as well as used for the improvement of the programme. The information about the study programme on the university's website is not easy to reach (see recommendation under section 2.1). One other limitation is the lack of alumni at the moment of the evaluation as the programme was still new, and there are no alumni yet. So there is no data available from this group. The review team suggests however to introduce alumni surveys as soon as there will be alumni.

In summary, this evaluation area is evaluated as very good. A specific strength is the quality management at the several levels (University and Programme levels). Other strengths include the regular meeting of the Study Programme Committee, the integration of social partners and students in the Study Programme Committee, and the good and clear distribution of the roles. A limitation is associated with the lack of alumni as the programme is still new; and the Review Team suggests the introduction of alumni surveys as soon as possible.

## **2.7. Examples of excellence**

Review Panel identified the following examples of excellence:

- Strong relationship with stakeholders and social partners, expressed in regular meetings with them and involvement in program development.



- Interdisciplinary approach in teaching with mixed group of teachers and of students, good preparation for practical work.
- Very good quality of the relationship with students and good and open communication.

### III. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Ameliorate the integration of research at programme's level, and formalize the integration of students in research activities.
2. Publish the aims of the programme on the webpage of the institution.
3. Adapt the attribution of credits in the study curriculum according to the students' workload and not to the importance of subjects, using a student-centred approach rather than a discipline-centred approach.
4. Adapt the formulation of the learning outcomes using active verbs and make sure that the formulations correspond to the program level.
5. Review the differentiation between subject / topics level and program level.
6. Put more emphasis on applying qualitative and experimental methods in student's projects and final thesis research.
7. Ameliorate the conditions for teacher mobility by better promoting the advantages and offering flexible conditions.
8. Improve the laboratory situation and the research facilities for experimental research, and actively use the research facilities at disposal for research.
9. Expand the number of books and the literature related to the master topics and to Psychology (for University).
10. Formalize the integration of research activities in the study processes, for instance by requiring empirical master thesis and integrating students in the research activities of the teachers.
11. Advantages of mobility programmes should be promoted and flexible solutions for students taking part in such programmes should be offered.
12. Introduce alumni surveys as soon as possible (suggestion).

#### **IV. SUMMARY**

In summary, the study programme is characterized by some very strong areas, especially at the level of the programme management and with regard to the communication with the students and the general climate that were identified as areas of excellence. In addition, the interdisciplinary approach provided by the programme was also identified as a major strength (area of excellence) as well as the strong relationship with social partners, and their integration in the development of the programme. Overall, areas needing improvement include the lack of formalized integration of research activities at the different levels of the programme and the low mobility of the teachers and of the students. More specifically, the criteria associated with the aims and learning outcomes of the programmes were evaluated as very good. In particular, the strong relationship with stakeholders and social partners, expressed in regular meetings with them and involvement in program development was identified as an area of excellence. Another strength is the embedment of the programme in a medical Faculty that allows for interdisciplinary training and practices at the University Clinic. In addition, a great effort was given to evaluate the needs of the market and to integrate several sources (regulatory documents, statistics and labour market analyses) to develop the programme and its aims. The learning outcomes are linked to the programme aims and to the qualification to be obtained. However, the integration of research at programme's level should be ameliorated and the integration of students in research activities should be formalized. The aims are not publicly accessible and should be published on the University' webpage. The curriculum design for this programme is evaluated as good with some recommendations. A specific strength of the programme is the systematic approach that allows avoiding repetition or overlapping of content between the bachelor and master levels. Further, the allocation of the credits reflects well the program orientation; and the scope of the course is sufficient to cover all relevant content. Areas needing more improvement are related to the logic behind the attribution of the ECTS to courses, indicating a rather discipline-centred than a student-centred approach. This should be adapted. The learning outcomes should be revised, and more emphasis should be put on more sophisticated design for the final thesis work. The criteria related to the teaching staff were evaluated as very good. Teachers meet legal requirements. They are very well motivated, open and flexible. Their qualification is very high. They have mandatory education for the continuous development of teaching skills, and are themselves strongly motivated to improve their teaching and professional skills. The number of the teaching staff is adequate to ensure learning outcomes. A specific strength is the close, continuous and fruitful collaboration with social partners, students, SER and administration. One area needing some improvement concerns the mobility of teachers, which is

low. The conditions for teacher mobility should be therefore ameliorated by better promoting the advantages and offering flexible conditions. With regard to the facilities (criteria evaluated as good), the quality and size of the auditoriums and classes are good. There are many working places for students, and the organization of the library is good. Practice places are organized in several types of institutions. However, the scope of the books related to the master topics and to psychology could be improved. Another area of improvement is related to the laboratory facilities at disposal for the students in psychology. The research facilities for experimental research for psychology students should be improved, and the research facilities at disposal should be actively used for research. The criteria related to study processes were evaluated as good. Some criteria such as the entrance requirements, the professional competences acquired ( e.g. the ability to apply diagnostic instruments, to plan the intervention or to evaluate the effects of treatment), the organization of the program and the communication with the students, are well-fulfilled. Two areas of excellence were identified, the good climate and the good and easy communication between students and teachers as well as the interdisciplinary approach in teaching. However, some strong areas of improvement were also identified, including aspects related to students' mobility and integration of students in research activities. The review team recommends again to formalize the integration of research activities in the study processes, for instance by requiring empirical master thesis and integrating students in the research activities of the teachers. The advantages of mobility programmes should also be better promoted and flexible solutions for students taking part in such programmes should be offered. The criteria related to programme management were evaluated as very good. A specific strength is the quality management at the several levels (University and Programme levels). Other strengths include the regular meeting of the Study Programme Committee, the integration of social partners and students in the Study Programme Committee, and the good and clear distribution of the roles. A limitation is associated with the lack of alumni as the programme is still new; and the Review Team suggests the introduction of alumni surveys as soon as there will be alumni.

## V. GENERAL ASSESSMENT

The study programme *Health Psychology* (state code – 621S13002, 6211JX003) at Lithuanian University of Health Science 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	4
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
	<b>Total:</b>	<b>20</b>

\*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:	Chantal Martin Sölch
Grupės nariai: Team members:	Inga Millere
	Vlasta Vizek Vidović
	Žydrė Arlauskaitė
	Meda Vaitonytė

**LIETUVOS SVEIKATOS MOKSLŲ UNIVERSITETO ANTROSIOS PAKOPOS STUDIJŲ  
PROGRAMOS *SVEIKATOS PSICHOLOGIJA* (VALSTYBINIS KODAS - 6211JX003) 2018-  
01-30 EKSPERTINIO VERTINIMO IŠVADŲ NR. SV4-11 IŠRAŠAS**

&lt;...&gt;

**V. APIBENDRINAMASIS ĮVERTINIMAS**

Lietuvos sveikatos mokslų universiteto studijų programa *Sveikatos psichologija* (valstybinis kodas-621S13002, 6211JX003) vertinama **teigiamai**.

<b>Eil. Nr.</b>	<b>Vertinimo sritis</b>	<b>Srities įvertinimas, balais*</b>
1.	Programos tikslai ir numatomi studijų rezultatai	4
2.	Programos sandara	3
3.	Personalas	4
4.	Materialieji ištekliai	3
5.	Studijų eiga ir jos vertinimas	3
6.	Programos vadyba	3
	<b>Iš viso:</b>	<b>20</b>

\* 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)

&lt;...&gt;

**IV. SANTRAUKA**

&lt;...&gt;

**III. REKOMENDACIJOS**

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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)