

Accreditation report

Accreditation procedure

Mykolas Romeris University Vilnius (Lithuania)

**“European and International Business Law” (joint degree; II cycle),
“International Law” (II cycle) and “Legal Regulation of Public Administration and
Human Rights” (joint degree; II cycle)**

I Procedure

Date of Contract: 08/01/2015

Receipt of self-evaluation report: 01/10/2015

Date of the on-site visit: 20/01/2016 to 22/01/2016

Standing Expert Committee: Economics, Law and Social Sciences

Attendance by the ACQUIN Office: Dr. Stefan Handke

Decisions of the Accreditation Commission: 31/03/2016

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The **Evaluation report** of the peer group is based on the self-evaluation report of the HEI and extensive discussions with the heads of the study programmes, staff representatives, students and employers. The reviewers thank the organisers and the participating teachers and students of the on-site visit in Vilnius that they were available for the discussions and have been prepared to provide information on programmes and university. The participation is perceived as very valuable not only for evaluating the programmes, but also for a better understanding of the legal and socio-cultural background of the Lithuanian higher education system, in particular the Mykolas Romeris University.

Evaluation Criteria have been the “Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area” (ESG) in the actual official version. At the same time the national context, particularly the national rules regulating the establishment of study programmes, has been taken into account.

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II Introduction

1 **Short Profile of Mykolas Romeris University**

Mykolas Romeris University (MRU) is the second largest university in Lithuania. MRU was established in 2004 by the Resolution of the Seimas (Parliament of the Republic of Lithuania) and is named after Professor Mykolas Pijus Paskalis Romeris, a founder of the Lithuanian Constitutional Law. Before, the university existed as a law university since 1990. MRU successfully operates in a competitive environment on a national and international level. With the aim of internationalisation, the university cooperates with more than 200 international institutions including universities, public and management institutions.

Approximately 16.000 students are currently enrolled; about 250 among them are foreign nationals. MRU offers more than 100 study programmes (Bachelor's Degree, Master's Degree, also non-degree programmes) and students can choose programmes from the disciplines Law, Public Administration, Economics, Finance Management, Psychology, Social Work, Social Policy, Sociology or Educology.

Studies are carried out in the following faculties: Faculty of Law, Faculty of Economics and Finance Management, Faculty of Politics and Management, Faculty of Social Welfare and Faculty of Public Security. Further, the university's structure comprises the Business and Media School with the status of a faculty. Except of the Faculty of Public Security, all faculties are located in Vilnius, whereas the Faculty of Public Security is located in Kaunas, about 100 km away from Vilnius.

The five faculties of Mykolas Romeris University offer the following *Bachelor's degree programmes*: Law, Informatics and Digital Contents (joint study programme with Korea's Dongseo University, DSU), English for Specific Purposes and a Second Foreign Language, Financial Economics (offered by Business and Media School in conjunction with U.K.'s Middlesex University), Tourism Management and a Heritage, Psychology, Social Work. As second cycle education, Master's degree programmes cover Business Informatics (with Fernando Pessoa University in Portugal), Communication and Creative Technologies, European and International Business Law, (in partnership with the French University of Savoie Mont Blanc), EU Law and Governance (in partnership with Bordeaux University), Electronic Business Management, Financial Markets (dual degree with U.K. Middlesex University), International Law (in cooperation with Ukraine's Jaroslav the Wise National Law University), Legal Regulation of Public Administration and Human Rights (in partnership with Taras Shevchenko National University Kiev), Psychology, Social Technology Management, Social Work with Youth and Children (with Stradins University Riga), or Work and Organizational Psychology.

In 2005 MRU introduced a Joint International Law Master's Programme and Joint Master's Programme in Comparative Social Policy and Welfare. Further, the university offers some Master's

degree programmes in English, namely EU Policy and Administration, Information Technology Law, International Law, European Union Law, Welfare Sociology, Psychology.

The faculties are supported by central offices at the university, in the first place by a Centre for Academic Affairs, responsible for supervising, drafting and implementing study programmes, study quality assurance, distance and international studies and student admission. Further, a Centre for Science, Communication and Marketing is responsible for supervising marketing and international relations activity.

2 The programmes in the faculty framework

The here assessed Master's programmes "European and International Business Law" (joint degree; II cycle), "International Law" (II cycle) and "Legal Regulation of Public Administration and Human Rights" (joint degree; II cycle) are operated by the Faculty of Law, which is structured into four institutes, namely, the Institute of Civil Justice, the Institute of Constitutional and Administrative Law, the Institute of Criminal Law and Procedure and the Institute of International and European Union Law. Further, the two departments, of Business Law and of Philosophy of Law and Legal History are part of the faculty.

The Faculty of Law has been established rather early at MRU. Already in 1997, the first students began their full-time Law programme studies at Mykolas Romeris University. In 1998 the Senate approved the new Law Academy structure and established the Law Faculty, which had 10 departments.

The Bachelor degree programmes of the Faculty of Law as well as the 20 Master's degree programmes and specialisations provide the basis for almost 8,000 students to study in full-time day studies and extramural studies.

The Faculty of Law offers two Bachelor's degree study programmes, which are "Law" and "Law and Management". These programmes include a wide spectrum of disciplines which are studied and which make up the fundamentals of a higher education in Law. Students take courses in Lithuanian and Foreign Countries Legal History, Roman Private Law, Theory of Law, Philosophy of Law, European Union Law, Main Material and Procedure Law Branches. Aside from the legal disciplines, students also take Philosophy, Latin and Foreign Languages, Logic, Political Science, or Forensic Medicine and Psychiatry.

Master's degree studies are based on knowledge and skills acquired in Bachelor's degree studies, but direct students toward a deeper knowledge of a certain legal branch. Those studying for their Master's degree can choose – besides from the here assessed programmes – from a variety of programmes, such as "Administrative Law", "Biolaw", "Business Law", "Criminal Law & Criminology", "European Business Law (also offered in English)", "European Union Law" (also offered

in English), “Finance Law”, “Labour and Social Security Law”, “Law and Management”, “Parliamentary Law and State Institutions” or “Transport Law”.

The study programme “*European and International Business Law*” is run as a joint degree programme of Mykolas Romeris University and the University of Savoy in Chambéry, France.

With 14.000 students, a variety of multidisciplinary education and 19 research laboratories with an international reputation, the Université Savoie Mont Blanc (USMB) is an establishment which seeks to combine proximity with its territories, founder membership of the University of Grenoble PRES and a wide perspective on Europe and the world. USMB was officially founded in 1979 from several colleges founded in the 1960s and 1970s. To avoid a straight choice between the two biggest towns of the Savoie/Haute-Savoie region, the authorities decided to set up a campus in each city for different areas of study. On its three university campus sites at Annecy-le-Vieux, Le Bourget-du-Lac and Jacob-Bellecombette, it offers good living and studying conditions.

The university offers short courses (university diplomas in technology, university diplomas) and long courses (generalist, specialist or vocational first degrees (licences), masters degrees by research or vocational masters degrees, engineering diplomas and doctorates), in both first level and continuing education, on a sandwich basis or including validation of experience.

The focus of the Université Savoie Mont Blanc is, on the one hand to develop international projects, joint award qualifications, and programmes delivered in English, and on the other hand, wherever possible, to encourage mobility for students, lecturers and researchers as well as for administrative staff.

The study programme “*Legal Regulation of Public Administration and Human Rights*” (*joint degree; II cycle*)” is run as a joint degree programme of Mykolas Romeris University and Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv (TSNUK), Ukraine.

Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv is today a classic university with a distinct research profile, and the leading contemporary academic and educational hub of Ukraine. With the independent Ukrainian nation arising, the University is facing new challenges and responsibilities. On 21 April 1994, Kyiv University was granted the status of “National” by the President of Ukraine. In 2008, the university became the main principal educational and scientific centre of Ukraine for the education of academic and teaching staff with higher qualifications. Then on 29 July 2009 the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine granted the university the status of being a self-governing and autonomous national research university, while providing increased funding for the future development of the university.

The university awards Junior Specialist’s, Bachelor’s, Specialist’s and Master’s degrees, Higher Qualification Post-graduate degrees and Doctoral degrees. Training and retraining programmes

are provided in 14 specialties of Junior Specialist qualification, 55 fields of Bachelor training programs, 49 areas of Specialist training programmes and 98 fields of Master training programmes. More than 26.000 students study at TSNUK. Courses are provided by 198 departments with more than 60 full members and corresponding members of the National Academy of Science of Ukraine, 626 members of staff with Doctor's degrees and 1,645 staff with higher postgraduate degrees.

III Evaluation

1 Objectives of university and faculty

According to the mission of Mykolas Romeris University, it is the goal of the university to educate society, to accumulate and cherish intellectual potential, to educate leaders capable of creating and introducing innovations that determine diverse scientific, cultural and technological progress. MRU aims at educating a personality which is mature, entrepreneurial, an independent leader of the future, and a citizen fostering Lithuanian identity.

As key strategic priorities MRU defines creating new attractive national and joint study programmes developed in collaboration with foreign universities, fostering lifelong learning and electronic studies, and research activity. The self-evaluation report of the university refers to the MRU Statute, which sets out the main goal of its activity. This is to carry out studies which provide a person with university higher education based on research and advanced level of knowledge and technologies, a higher education qualification, develop a thoroughly educated, ethically responsible, creative and entrepreneurial person.

These principals are not only part of the statute, but also determine the so-called MRU Strategic Activity Plan 2010–2020, which includes the development of new market-oriented study programmes, development and implementation of joint study programmes created in collaboration with foreign universities, internationalisation, and development of distance studies, qualitative and qualitative growth of research. With these issues MRU seeks to develop unique selling points in competition with other national universities and HEIs from abroad.

The university points out that the competition for qualified students becomes fiercer due to a complicated demographic situation in Lithuania. These demographic factors are said to result in a sharp decrease in the number of students in the future, by inconsistency of the state policy on higher education, its poor funding and in general by the growing competition among universities in Europe.

With the aim to be successful in the future, MRU and each faculty create and implement study programmes, which are attractive for national and foreign students. Graduates should gain best chances to have access to the European labour market with skills and competences being acquired at MRU.

Among the university's programmes, Master's programmes should particularly foster the development of analytically thinking specialists, who are able to solve problems in the various fields of scientific research and practice. Upon the completion of the second-cycle studies at MRU, students have comprehensive and systematic knowledge and understanding of the study field, which extend the knowledge acquired in the first-cycle; the students are able to use the context of scientific

research and develop and implement their ideas in a creative way as well as to tackle problems in a new or unfamiliar multidisciplinary environment, to integrate their knowledge and solve complicated problems in the absence of complete or full information, to make ethical and socially responsible decisions, to clearly and unambiguously convey scientific knowledge-based findings to expert and non-expert audiences.

Therefore, besides knowledge and competences linked to the specific subject, students of the three assessed programmes acquire competences, which are summarised as soft-skills and personal competences. They gain knowledge and skills which pave the way for the development of own ideas, the judgment on the basis of market and business information in various sectors, communication of thoughts and the ability to solve problems relevant to the society. Further, graduates in each of the assessed programmes, have well-developed self-study skills, which allow a focused and creative development of their professional life, participation in public life and further studies.

2 Objectives and concepts of study programme “European and International Business Law” (joint degree; II cycle)

During the on-site visit at Mykolas Romeris University the peer group had the possibility of talking and discussing with several professors of the study programme, current students and alumni. The peer group is especially appreciative of the possibility of interviewing a representative from the Université de Savoie, France. The interview with the professor, who participates in developing and implementing the programme made it possible to better understand the concept of the study programme for both sides of the process, the module principle of the programme and several other applied aspects.

2.1 Objectives of the study programme

2.1.1 Short summary of the study programme

The Master’s degree programme “European and International Business Law” is set up as a two years joint degree study programme with two partner universities, Mykolas Romeris University in Vilnius and Université Savoie Mont Blanc (USMB). The cooperation with the French partner university dates back to 2006. At the beginning, the two partners organised common conferences and visits of teaching personal. In 2013 the university started the Master’s programme “European and International Business Law”, which provides the opportunity to get the second diploma of the Université de Savoie. Like that the programme is in conformity with the overall strategy of the HEI, especially by focusing on the aspect of internationalisation.

Students spend the first and second semester at MRU and the third semester at USMB. In the last semester they have the possibility to choose between an internship in Lithuanian or France; the last two semesters are administered by USMB. After finishing the study programme with 120 ECTS credits, graduates receive two different graduation certificates, one from MRU and one from USMB, which is a specific of double degree programmes. Therefore, the study programme should be described as “double degree” programme, as long as two separate documents are awarded after graduation from the two partner universities. By renaming the programme degree, the university should follow the terminology of the “European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes”.

The university does not set any limitation for the number of student which can be enrolled for the fee-paying programme. According to state regulations, at least 15 students per cycle are needed. In the academic cycles 2013/2014 and 2015/2016 there have been 17 students, in the year 2014/15 there have been 13 students being enrolled. The university aims to ideally admit and enrol 20 students per academic year.

The full tuition fee amounts to around 2500 Euro. Per semester 1120 Euro are paid at MRU and around 260 Euro per year at USMB.

2.1.2 Objectives and competences

According to the self-report of MRU the programme aims at qualifying highly motivated students as law specialists in an international environment, who are able to provide legal advice to the transnational and European business environment, to explain the latest business law issues and trends, to analyse and assess business-related legal situations, to promptly and effectively deal with legal problems faced by business, to conduct research and provide suggestions for the legislator on the improvement of business environment regulation.

The programme’s task is the development of leadership, cross-cultural, entrepreneurial, organisational and analytical qualities of students, which are necessary for international professions. Programme managers and teachers in charge of the programme ensure the integration of the latest scientific or artistic developments into the curriculum. Especially the following general and specific competences are taught: independent work and planning; initiative and entrepreneurship, professional knowledge; ability to carry out the research work; ability to apply the knowledge gained in professional activity; evaluative analysis of the sources of business law.

The objectives of the programme are regularly assessed by the Study Programme Committee. The process of making adjustments is described transparently and in congruence with the institutional framework of MRU.

According to the expert group, the objectives of the study programme meet the requirements of the field of law and business and are well balanced in regard to the intended job perspectives of graduates.

2.1.3 Employability

The peer group has – in particular in regard to the interviews with the alumni – no doubt that the study programme focuses on the aspect of employability. This is in congruence with the overall target of qualifying highly qualified business law specialists, who are able to provide legal advice to the transnational and European business environment.

2.1.4 Conclusion

The programme consequently adopts an international approach with the major focus on the employability of the graduates. For this purpose, it may be helpful to invite more international teaching staff as well as attracting a bigger number of international students. Apart from this aspect, the programme has clearly defined targets to achieve the described goals and competences for an international Master's degree programme which fits in the overall strategy of the university.

2.2 Concept of the study programme

2.2.1 Admission criteria and recognition of competences

For the inscription in the study programme, applicants have to submit a Bachelor's degree (or its equivalent) in law from a university and they have to have a sufficient knowledge of the English language (B2 level).

In case there are more applicants than available places – which is still not the case for this particular programme –, MRU applies a score based admission procedure. According to the General Admission Requirements two elements make up the competitive score: the mark of the final exams and (or) the final thesis multiplied by 0.8 and the average of all the other marks in the diploma and its annexes. Additional scores to the competitive can be achieved under certain circumstances, e.g. for applicants that hold a MRU leader's diploma. Non-formal education or self-training skills shall not be recognised within the study programme.

The programme applies pre-defined and published regulations covering all phases of the students' "life cycle", e.g. student admission, progression, recognition and certification. The criteria and the selection procedure for the students' admission are transparent and easy to understand.

2.2.2 Structure of the study programme

The programme has a normal completion length of 2 years. Course structure and teaching methods are described in the descriptions of subjects available online in the ECTS catalogue at MRU's website.

During the first semester of the first study year students of the programme study the French language within 6 ECTS credits. This part of the programme aims to prepare students for the second study year in France. Modules on Law are "European and International Corporate Law", "International Tax Law", "International Banking Law" and "European and International Labour Law".

During the second semester, no further language trainings are provided, but students already start with their "Master's thesis". Moreover, the modules "European and International Insolvency Law", "Industrial Property Law", "European and International Competition Law" and "International Commercial Litigation" are located in the second semester.

The third semester, which is spent in France, covers the modules "Comparative Contract Law in context of economic analysis", "International Transport Law", "Special Contracts of International Business", "Economical Integration of the European Union" and "Foreign language II" (5 ECTS credits).

With the fourth semester students finish their studies with a "Master's thesis" and an internship. Obligatorily, students participate in an internship during the programme. The professional standards are guaranteed by the Practical Training Regulations for Students of MRU.

Classes of the programme are conducted in English. This English-language programme is destined to developing knowledge and skills in business law and focuses on international business law.

All students are obliged to spend the third and fourth semester in France at the Université des Savoie, so all participants have the possibility to study in two EU membership countries. Thus, eligible students have an opportunity to get a second degree from the Université de Savoie (France). In 2014 11 students were awarded a Double Degree.

The structure and the content of the programme are designed to meet the objectives set for the studies. The courses are appropriate on the educational level. The qualification that results from the programme is clearly specified and communicated and refers to the correct level of the national qualifications framework for higher education and to the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area.

2.2.3 ECTS and modularisation

The study programme follows the Law on Higher Education and Research of the Republic of Lithuania, by fully introducing ECTS credits into the study system as national credits. The total amount

of studies is 120 ECTS credits, comprising 68 ECTS credits of main studies, 3 ECTS credits for the master thesis, 6 ECTS credits for an international traineeship, 11 ECTS for foreign languages and 5 ECTS for non-legal subjects. Each module has a size of 5 to 8 ECTS credits; the Master's thesis amounts to 30 ECTS credits, consisting of two modules.

60 ECTS credits correspond to the workload of a full-time year in the programme. One credit corresponds to 27 hours of work. In total the programme consists of a student workload of 3240 hours. The independent work covers 81 percent of the whole study time, the contact work 19 percent of the study time.

2.2.4 Teaching methods and study contexts

Apart from classic lectures and seminars the programme tries to offer new innovative study methods like moot courts, brainstorming, analyses of speeches and role plays. The implemented teaching methods encourage students to take an active role in creating the learning process and enable them to reflect this approach. The new teaching methods are especially encouraging students to achieve study goals.

2.2.5 Conclusion

As a result of the site on-visit and analysis of written evidence the peer group arrived at the following conclusions about the programme "European and International Business Law". The peer group is of the unanimous opinion that the goals of the programme are achieved. The self-evaluation report for the accreditation procedure was clearly articulated, explicit, and transparent. Goals and objectives of the study programme were clearly formulated, the measurable evaluation parameters, which provide quality management of the process, were distinctly defined.

The study programme is conceptually well thought out and is being implemented in the education and training process. Qualification resulting from the programme was clearly specified and communicated, and referred to the correct level of the qualifications framework for higher education. Only some details of the programme might be continuously improved, e.g. by providing all necessary information for students in the English language (e.g. the guidelines for the master thesis) and further information about the French part of the programme in order to prepare students effectively for the stay abroad and make the programme even more coherent.

3 Objectives and concepts of study programme “International Law” (II cycle)

3.1 Objectives of the study programme

3.1.1 Short summary of the study programme

The study programme “International Law” (2nd cycle) is part of MRU’s international programme. It is a consecutive Master programme with 2 years of full-time studies, which is offered annually and amounts to 120 ECTS credits. Distinctive features are that the programme is conducted in English, and that one semester abroad is mandatory. In these respects, it differs from the Master’s degree programme “International Law Specialization” being also offered by MRU in Lithuanian and designed for national students only. Its study subjects cover all fields of International Law with a focus on International Public Law.

The study programme prepares international law specialists of high qualification and it is therefore targeting students who seek an international career and who have an international background.

Its qualification objectives reflect the needs of the relevant professional practice in international organisations, internationally active business corporations and other international labour fields. Representatives from professional practice are involved in the development and implementations of the programme, mainly through their participation in the Study Programme Committee.

The university does not set any limitation for the number of student which can be enrolled for the fee-paying programme. According to state regulations, at least 15 students per cycle are needed. In the academic cycles 2013/2014 there have been 16 students, only 5 in the period 2014/15, but already 30 students in the admission year 2015/2016. The university aims to ideally admit and enrol 20 students per academic year. The full tuition fee amounts to 2240 Euro per academic year.

3.1.2 Objectives and competences

The study subjects contribute adequately to the professional competences of students to analyse complex international legal situations and to assess and solve problems involved in such situations. The peer group discussed the selection of study subjects with its focus on International Public Law both with faculty and with students. There is a demand for more private international law issues that should be considered in the further development of the programme, e.g. by inviting lecturers with expertise in these fields. Nevertheless, the peer group agrees with the director of the programme that the focus will remain on International Public Law.

Aiming at international law specialists, language competences are of the utmost importance. This was also confirmed by several stakeholders and social partners of the programme. Since English is the language of instruction and international mobility is obligatory, these generic competences are adequately developed. However, the peer group would hold that additional language studies could be useful, although these need not necessarily be integrated into the programme.

The development of methodical competences is properly considered in the description of the programme. The director of the programme informed the peer group that students successfully participated in moot courts (this was not mentioned in the self-report), which is a proved method to foster relevant skills and competences in the subject field of the programme.

3.1.3 Employability

The international orientation of the programme (language of instruction, international mobility) contributes substantively to the personal development of students and secures their employability. As discussions with stakeholders and social partners of the programme confirmed, it is very important to maintain and strengthen these assets of the programme. The peer group had the impression that students are not completely convinced that this special programme does receive enough attention at MRU. Whether this assessment is correct or not, the peer group is convinced that the programme is an important contribution to the overall strategy of MRU.

3.1.4 Conclusion

According to the peer group, the Master's degree programme "International Law" is well designed, has clearly formulated objectives and its qualification targets meet these objectives. It has a clear-cut profile and it corresponds to the correct level of the national qualifications framework for Master's programmes.

The peer group discussed the possibility to merge the programmes in "International Law" which are taught in English and Lithuanian at MRU with the faculty and the director of the programme. This could improve the standing of the programme and the utilisation of existing capacities. It could further foster the diversity of students with respect to their national background and it would be in line with a trend at many law schools to have more courses in English. The peer group was informed that there are reasons for law programmes in Lithuanian, which cannot be dismissed completely. Nevertheless, the peer group recommends that this question should be considered further and that a programme in "International Law" could be an appropriate subject if at least some subjects are taught in English.

3.2 Concept of the study programme

3.2.1 Admission criteria and recognition of competences

The programme has clearly defined admission criteria and there is no indication that the admission procedure is not adequately performed. Applicants for the programme "International Law" must

have a Bachelor of Laws Degree or any other Professional Bachelor Degree after one year supplementary law branch studies at Mykolas Romeris University. The programme is conducted exclusively in English and students are expected to be well versed in written and spoken English.

With respect to the number of students within the programme, there was a remarkable decrease in the admission year 2014/2015. It shows that marketing for this programme is not easy. However, the peer group was informed that due to the larger number of students from Ukraine the programme has a sound footing in the current year.

3.2.2 Structure of the study programme

The study programme "International Law" is structured into four semester with 30 ECTS credits each. The first semester comprises the compulsory modules "International Law of Treaties", "Refugee Law" and "Master's Thesis". Further, students have to choose one of the optional modules "International Dispute Settlement" and "Law of International Organisations".

During the second semester student continue to work with their Master's thesis and take courses in "Diplomatic and Consular Law", "International Protection of Human Rights" and "International Trade and Investment Law". The modules are complemented by the optional module "Dispute Settlement in Private International Law" or "International Informatics Law".

The third semester, which is designed as the mobility window, covers topics of "Air and Space Law", "International and European Environmental Law", "International Commercial Transactions" and "Maritime Law" as mandatory components at MRU. Students have the choice between "Contemporary Issues of Public International Law" or "International and European Biodiversity Law" as optional modules.

The study programme finishes with a "Traineeship" and the "Master's Thesis" in the fourth semester.

With respect to the overall structure of the study programme, the peer group sees no reason for major changes. As previously mentioned, there is a discussion whether a stronger focus should be laid on International Private Law. The peer group is convinced that both aspects of International Law are well balanced at this stage, although changes might be conceivable in future. The faculty considerations to cancel the course on "Lobbying" find the peer group's approval.

"Maritime Law", which is a study subject in the programme, seems to give this programme of MRU a unique profile compared with programmes in International Law offered in other countries. The peer group has drawn the attention of the faculty to this aspect, although it is understandable that the possibilities to expand a certain subject depend on the availability of teaching personnel.

3.2.3 ECTS and modularisation

The study programme follows the Law on Higher Education and Research of the Republic of Lithuania, by fully introducing ECTS credits into the study system as national credits. The total amount of studies is 120 ECTS credits; each module has a size of 6 ECTS credits; the Master's thesis amounts to 30 ECTS credits, consisting of two modules and 12 ECTS credits are assigned to the traineeship. 60 ECTS credits correspond to the workload of a full-time year in the programme. One credit corresponds to 27 hours of work. In total the programme consists of a student workload of 3240 hours.

The contribution of ECTS credits, the distribution of workloads and the modularisation of the programme did not give rise to objections. The description of the study subjects and of the individual course unites available at MRU's website are adequate. Content and learning outcomes, instructional practice, participation requirements, the examination system etc., are well defined and transparent. It does seem that these information is not annually updated, which should be done.

3.2.4 Teaching methods and study contexts

When the self-report refers to "innovative teaching methods", these methods are not comprehensively reflected in the description of the individual courses, which contains "lectures" and "seminars". In its discussions with the director and teachers, the peer group nevertheless got the impression that such methods are employed in practice. Further, the programme managers try hard to attract lecturers from abroad, which is indeed indispensable for any international programme. The peer group recommends that the recruitment of guest lecturers should be performed in a more systematic way at the university level.

3.2.5 Conclusion

According to the unanimous judgement of the peer group, the concept of the study programme "International Law" is consistent and appropriate to achieve its objectives. The overall education content is fit for the purpose and enables graduates to work in an international legal environment. The individual courses contribute adequately to the intended competences of graduates and the employed teaching methods are convincing. Different educational forms promote harmonious development of personal qualities of students (ability to work in teams, presentational and organisational skills, analytical thinking etc.). The recommendations made above should be considered, although they do not refer to any critical point.

4 Objectives and concepts of study programme “Legal Regulation of Public Administration and Human Rights” (joint degree; II cycle)

4.1 Objectives of the study programme

4.1.1 Short summary of the study programme

The study programme “Legal Regulation of Public Administration and Human Rights” is an international two-year Master’s double degree programme, delivered jointly between by Mykolas Romeris University (MRU) in Vilnius, Lithuania and Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv (TSNUK), Ukraine. The Constitutional and Administrative Institute of the Law Faculty of MRU and the Administrative Law Department of the faculty of law of TSNUK are responsible for organising and delivering the study programme, in line with applicable regulations and quality insurance requirements. The study programme should be described as a “double degree” programme, as long as two separate documents are awarded after graduation from the two partner universities. By renaming the programme titles, the university should follow the terminology of the “European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes”.

The study programme offers theoretically informed yet practice-oriented graduate training on legal frameworks relevant to the work of public administrations and agencies. It takes a comparative perspective and is tailored to the specific needs of civil servants and governmental legal advisors in countries of the EU Eastern neighbourhood, taking into account the demands in expertise required by increased European cooperation and the globalisation of governance. The programme is delivered partly at TSNUK, and partly in MRU. It has been designed to meet the formal requirements of Master’s degree programmes in both Lithuania and Ukraine, and has been adjusted to remain compliant with these requirements as they evolved, and to improve the capacity of the programme to achieve its stated objectives, based on evaluations and feedback from students, stakeholders, faculty, and staff.

The study programme is one of the four English language Master’s degree programmes in law offered at MRU and oriented towards a more international study body (the others are the Masters’ programmes “International Law”, “European and International Business Law”, and the “European Union Law and Management” Master’s programme). It has been approved by the MRU Senate on 15 July 2013, and introduced on 17 September 2013. It has been revised by decision of the MRU Senate of 22 June 2015.

The study programme complements existing Master’s degree programmes in Lithuanian language on “Public Administration”, “Administrative Law”, “EU law and governance” and “International law”. Its integrated approach, combining elements of constitutional, administrative, private, and international and EU law, gives it a distinctive edge. It is the only one of its kind in Lithuania, and

probably one of the very few in Europe specifically catering for the legal training needs of civil servants in countries of the Eastern neighbourhood. It usefully builds on Lithuania's successful European integration experience.

The study programme, in line with the Constitutional and Administrative Institute at MRU and the Administrative law department at TSNUK, and in complementary with other existing undergraduate and graduate programmes, seeks to prepare qualified public law specialists, knowledgeable about national and international legal frameworks applicable to public authorities, and able to provide sound and prompt legal advice in national and transnational environments, explain latest constitutional and administrative trends, analyse and assess relevant legal situations, conduct research and provide logical, motivated and efficient solutions. The study programme places a particular emphasis on the respect for human rights as an essential component of modern public administration and governance.

The target group is foreign students, in particular from the EU Eastern neighbourhood countries (currently Ukraine but in the future possibly other non-EU eastern countries), who have a Bachelor's degree, are proficient in English and who envisage a public sector career, or careers in the private sectors' firms in regulated areas of activities (e.g. energy, telecommunications, etc.).

The university does not set any limitation for the number of student which can be enrolled for the fee-paying programme. According to state regulations, at least 15 students per cycle are needed. In the academic cycles 2013/2014 there have been 13 students, 16 students enrolled in the year 2014/15, and 2015/2016 another 14 students started with their studies. All students enrolled on the programme so far are Ukrainian; the gender-ratio is balanced. Discussions are underway to extent admission into the programme to graduate of other Ukrainian university, as well as students from other nationality.

The full tuition fee currently amounts to 2240 Euro per academic year at MRU. The full tuition fee at TSNUK totals to around 1460 Euro per year. The mentioned tuition fees are valid for EU-citizens – Ukrainian students are equal to EU-students – while non-EU-citizens have to pay around 2600 Euro per year at MRU.

4.1.2 Objectives and competences

The study programme is designed to develop subject-related competence and general and professional abilities, skills and knowledge, as well as foster important values. The self-study report does not clearly outline these competences in a synthetic manner, referring to an annex which could not be accessed. However, based on an analysis of the objectives and description of the program, the course components and teaching faculty, as well as discussion with faculty, staff and students, it is possible to identify the key competences which the programmes seeks to develop.

The self-study report and programme description stress the following subject-related competence: practical situations and problems, administrative law system analysis, solutions of practical situations, and knowledge of qualification of law violations and disputes arising in public administration sector/ principles of public administration law and human rights. These limited description of the competencies does not do justice to the study programme, which offers an integrated legal and interdisciplinary training, and should produce graduates who have a sound understanding of the complex legal environment in which those engaged in public sector activities operate, encompassing different areas of law, and of the overall political, administrative and cultural context of public administration in transition countries seeking closer European integration and adjusting to globalisation trends.

The self-study report suggests individual and team-work, legal research and legal resolutions to practical situations as methodological skills which the programme seeks to develop. The diverse teaching and learning methods involved in the mandatory courses should contribute to develop these skills. The study of judicial decisions and practical cases exercises, and the mandatory internship, should contribute to developing problem-solving skills, whilst the study of cases and readings and analysis of scholarly works, and work on the Master's thesis, should sharpen students' analytical skills and familiarise them with different types of legal research methods. The acquisition of legal methodology, in particular legal reasoning and problem solving, is supported by the participation in the programme of instructors who, in parallel to their academic position, hold judicial appointments, or government offices, or are working as practising lawyers.

The self-study report also suggests academic and professional writing skills and oral communication, and research and problem-solving skills as key competences which the programs seeks to develop.

4.1.3 Employability

The introduction of the programme was motivated by the observation that there is a lack of qualified public law specialists in the Eastern neighbourhood, who can take the challenges of contemporary administration (i.e. greater involvement of private actors, globalisation trends and the need to respect human rights), by a need to address directly interactions between constitutional and administrative law in the context of European cooperation and globalised governance and by the desire to facilitate Ukraine's European integration path.

The programme has been designed to fit the demands for qualified legal personal in Ukraine, and benefits from the input, at both design and teaching levels, from practitioners. It also includes a practical component in the form of the mandatory internship, which contributes to students' familiarity with professional work environments, provides opportunities for networking and is likely to improve their employability upon graduation.

As the programme only started in 2013, it is difficult to make an assessment of students' career destinations; however, based on the knowledge, skills and practice experience, and exposure to professional circles, gained through the programme, graduates should easily find employment in national or local authorities, regulatory or executive agencies in Ukraine, or in international organisations or programmes. Many of the students on the programme are already employed alongside their study course. Graduates may also pursue further training (e.g. doctoral studies).

4.1.4 Conclusion

Overall, the programme's objectives are clear and address a real demand from countries in the EU Eastern neighbourhood, for qualified personnel with a contextual and integrated knowledge of relevant legal frameworks applicable to public administration and private operators involved or subject to regulatory activities. Building on the successful European integration experience of Lithuania, and benefiting from the insight of key personnel involved in constitutional and administrative reform and development in Lithuania, the programme puts together a set of courses, tasks and activities that aims to develop core professional, methodological and generic skills. This, however, does not obviously come across in the self-study report or in the programme description available on the university website, and effort could be made to present better the distinctiveness of the programme and make it attractive to a broader student body (i.e. beyond the current agreement with TSNUK).

From the perspective of the reviewers, the programme title should be modified. The current title "Legal Regulation of Public Administration and Human Rights" is wordy and partly misleading. It is suggested to adjust the title to reflect better the content of the programme, i.e. legal frameworks of good governance in a comparative, European and global perspective. The expert group understood the title has been subject to extensive discussions between the partners, and that the notion of public administration, although "old-fashioned", remains appealing in the region. The peer group, however, felt that a title including the concept of governance could make the programme more appealing to new generations of public servants and the future staff of public and private entities endowed or subject to regulatory powers in EU neighbouring countries.

Finally, the programme description should be sharpened and made to convey better the actual content and objectives of the programme and address better the expectations of potential applicants in countries of the Eastern neighbourhood. The course content could be further adjusted to address better the expertise needs of the targeted student market (e.g. more interdisciplinary approach to regulation, more anti-corruption oriented course), although it is understood that regulatory requirements in Ukraine and Lithuania make it difficult at this stage to make further amendments along those lines. Efforts in that direction should nonetheless continue. For example, the course on Professional and Corporate Ethics could be further adjusted to offer a greater focus on anti-corruption, and the programme may want to include more courses addressing modern

regulatory challenges in a more multi-disciplinary and global perspective (beyond the course Legal framework for the EU regulatory authorities, which focuses on executive and regulatory agencies).

4.2 Concept of the study programme

4.2.1 Admission criteria and recognition of competences

Applicants must hold a first degree, i.e. Bachelor in Law. If a student does not hold a Bachelor's degree in law, she can attend an additional one-year course to obtain the credits required for Master's studies. Applicants must also have a good knowledge of professional English language (at least B2 level on the CEFR). At equal qualifications, the partners will seek gender equality and special attention will be paid to candidates with disabilities.

The admission procedure is regulated in compliance with requirements set out by the Ukraine's Ministry of Education and Science for admission for Master's level programmes. Students apply to TSNUK, where exams and interview are organised. In order to be enrolled, applicants have to pass two entrance exams: one in the foreign language (English) and one in the specialty. The applicants for the programme are selected by a Joint Admission Commission composed of an equal number of representatives from TSNUK and MRU. The application information lists the documents which must be submitted to the Admission Commission. The list is different for Ukrainian citizens and for foreigners. In order to enable enrolment on the programme of non-Ukrainian students, the admission procedure has been adjusted. Non-Ukrainians will not need to take the exam and will be selected based on an interview. The criteria for admission of non-Ukrainians are however not explicitly defined. Therefore, the expert group recommends defining criteria for the admission of Non-Ukrainian applicants.

Admission criteria defined in the agreement between MRU and TSNUK can be changed upon the written consent of both partners. In absence of an agreement at least 3 months before the start of the application period defined by the partners, the admission criteria shall remain as provided by the last agreement.

The partners fully recognise the courses offered within the programme, evaluations of the learning outcomes and the credits awarded by each of the partners. The recognition and transfer of credits and grades are made in accordance with each partner's internal rules and the agreement. The credits achieved in the partner institution are automatically recognised when the programme's requirements are met and conditions satisfied. The credits and grades of a student acquired during studies at the partner university in compliance with the programme agreed by the partners are transferred and fully recognised in the document received from partner's university (Transcript of records). All the subjects included in a student's Transcript of records, the credits and grades are included in the Diploma Supplement attached to the degree diploma of a partner university. Each

partner university uses its own grading scale, which may be different, but all are convertible to the ECTS grading scale (use of equivalent grading table, yearly updated and approved yearly by partner universities). Upon request, the university can assess a student's non-formal study achievements and recognise the competences thus acquired.

4.2.2 Structure of the study programme

The Master's degree programme "Legal Regulation of Public Administration and Human Rights" provides targeted legal training to future civil servants in the Eastern neighbourhood countries, with a focus on the various sets of law which frame and regulate the activities of national administrations and agencies. It provides for a mandatory set of courses including "Intellectual Property", "Professional and Corporate Ethics", "Topical Issues of Public Law", "Topical Issues of Procedural Law", "Topical Issues of Private Law", "Constitutional Rights in Old and New Democracies", "Legal Framework of Public Administration", "International Protection of Human Rights", "Comparative constitutional law", "EU institutional Law", "Administrative Justice", "Constitutional Justice", "Legal Framework for Regulatory authorities", "Pedagogy of Higher Education", "Refugee law", "Human Rights Philosophy", "Legal Framework of electronic Government", "Administrative Regulation of Business", "Legal Protection of Personal Data", "Energy law", "Aspects of Constitutional and Administrative Law and Justice", "International Human Rights Law", "Institutional European Union Law", and "Issues of Procedural and Private Law".

Courses other than international and EU ones adopt a comparative approach, which should be better emphasised in the programme documentation. The content of the course is generally appropriate; however, the peer-group expressed doubts as to the relevance of courses such as "Intellectual Property" or "Pedagogy of Higher Education". The study programme leader explained that the inclusion of these topics was required by Ukrainian regulations. Discussions with the Ukrainian partner and authorities are under way, with the view to replace these subjects with more relevant courses. The Pedagogy course has now been replaced by the Corporate and Professional Ethics course, which is welcome.

The courses syllabi are generally not very detailed, and do not always outline all sessions. There are often incomplete (e.g. required readings are often missing) or not up-to-date (e.g. reference to old editions) descriptions. However, in general, the readings, tasks and assignments appeared in line with expectations in terms of analytical skills and depth and range of expertise expected at Master's level. They would – which is recommended – benefit from editing and updating, and more detailed lists of topics and sessions, and relevant mandatory readings.

The learning outcomes in the courses descriptions are not always in line with the overall course objectives and content, and aligned with tasks and assessment methods. For example, the learning outcomes for "European Union Institutional Law" are very narrowly defined, and do not appear to match the overall content and aims of the course. This should be improved.

4.2.3 ECTS and modularisation

The programme is a full-time two year study programme, which offers 120 ECTS credits, among these 68 ECTS credits are devoted to mandatory courses (in the first two years, students could choose optional courses, but since the academic year 2015-2016, all courses are mandatory), 30 ECTS credits are allocated to writing and defence of the Master's thesis, 6 ECTS credits to the mandatory internship and 6 ECTS credits to the final exam. The mandatory practical component (internship) has been introduced in 2015-2016, to respond to students' demands. 60 ECTS credits correspond to the workload of a full-time year in the programme. One credit corresponds to 27 hours of work. Although the workload (3240 student workload hours, including 660 contact hours (20%) and 2580 hours (80%) of independent study time) appears in line with Master's level requirements in other MRU programmes and elsewhere, some of the students enrolled on the program felt that the workload was too light, and asked for more work.

The study programme is spread over four semesters. The first and the last semester are spent in TSNUK, Kiev, and the second and third in MRU. Students have to do their mandatory internship during the third semester. In the second and third semesters, students may spend study time abroad in one of MRU partner universities. Students have five compulsory courses in the first and second semesters, and four in the third semester. The fourth semester is dedicated to the Master's thesis defence and final examinations (students must choose the thesis topic in the first semester and carry out research for it in the second semester).

4.2.4 Teaching methods and study contexts

The various courses rely on a range of teaching methods, combining traditional lectures, and more interactive and student-led seminars relying on discussions, case studies, case or legislation analysis, moot-exercises, practical cases, presentations, simulations or advocacy practice. Interviews with faculty members confirmed that many courses use a problem-oriented approach to teaching and learning. These appear particularly suited to develop the range of professional, methodological and generic skills envisaged by the study programme. Moreover, as many of the teaching staff members are qualified professionals who combine academic qualifications with practical experiences (as government's lawyers, private attorneys, Supreme Court judges or assistants, etc.), they are able to bring into the class-room real-life situations and discuss it against more theoretical materials and scholarly works. The mix of academic and practical input appears as a strong asset of the programme.

In addition to in class activities, students benefit from various study visits in official institutions in Lithuania and Ukraine, as well as conferences and events organised at MRU. The practical component (internship) also contributes to fostering relevant professional and social skills, and throughout the programme, students benefit from the close proximity with professionals working

in relevant fields. Teaching is also supported by the use of the Moodle e-learning platform to share course materials, give instructions about tasks, and communicate with students.

4.2.5 Conclusion

The mandatory course content, as well as the practical and research components are in general appropriate to achieve the stated objectives of the programme. The teaching tools, which are varied although perhaps not as innovative as stated in the self-study report and by the faculty interviewed, are nonetheless suitable, and the students greatly benefit from the practical experience of the faculty teaching them. The interim assignments and final examination are diverse enough and suitable to assess that the learning outcomes have been reached, although the link is not always made explicit in the programme documentation and individual course descriptions. Moreover, information on study programme requirements (e.g. thesis guidelines) should be more systematically available in English.

5 Implementation

With the following statements the expert group evaluates, whether necessary resources exist and organisational requirements are met to run study programmes. It is assessed whether resources are used consistently and purposefully to implement the concepts of the presented programmes. The following general remarks are valid for all programmes to be accredited. General statements are supplemented by specific findings where necessary. Through consistent, dependable, and adequate funding, the university provides the personnel, resources, and facilities to support the delivery of curriculum, instruction, programmes and services.

5.1 Resources

5.1.1 Personal resources

At five faculties and one school with more than 30 departments at MRU around 1.300 staff members are employed, among them more than 900 academic staff members. Many teachers are not employed exclusively as full-time teachers at MRU and are engaged at other universities and in professional fields as well. In regard to the assessed study programmes, the expert group comes to the conclusion that quantitative capacities are sufficient.

The Faculty of Law has 6 academic organisation units: four institutes (Institute of Civil Justice, Institute of Criminal Law and Procedure, Institute of International and EU Law, Institute of Constitutional and Administrative Law) and two departments (Department of Business Law, Department of Philosophy of Law and Legal History).

The International and EU law Institute offers its expertise in such fields as international human rights law, refugee law, maritime law, humanitarian law, aviation law, trade law and various policies of the EU. The institute is one of the largest units in the faculty (5 professors, 7 associate professors, 22 lecturers, 2 assistants and 14 doctoral students). It offers 5 Master's degree programmes, 2 of them are delivered in English.

In total, for the study programme "European and International Business Law" there is a capacity of 12 full-time teachers, 4 part-time teachers 2 visiting professors and lecturers. In the programme "International Law" 5 full-time teachers, 9 part-time teachers and 3 visiting professors are teaching. Teaching capacity in "Legal Regulation of Public Administration and Human Rights" is provided by 2 professors, 7 associate professors and 1 lecturer from Ukraine; 4 professors, 5 associate professors and 5 lecturers from Lithuania.

The development of relevant expertise is reinforced by the practical experience of the faculty teaching on the programme. Many of the staff members hold, in parallel to their academic position, judicial appointments, or government offices, or are working as practising lawyers.

The Personal office organises the employment of the teaching staff. The teaching load in the programmes is planned in the end of the academic year. The workload of teachers in the assessed study programmes consists of lectures, seminars, training exercises, advisory hours face to face or on-line, via Moodle system, reviewing, assessment of final thesis, work in the qualification commission for the defence of final thesis and other tasks at the university.

All staff members are admitted to their positions by public tender competitions and promoted by the rector, following proposals of the recruitment commission, after an evaluation of employees' qualifications which is carried out using established criteria. Salaries of the staff consist of a fixed component and a variable component, which is calculated by use of defined criteria including mostly involvement in research, designing new study programmes, creating joint programmes. There are courses for teachers to improve their didactical competences; the attendance is voluntarily, but if a staff member does not take part, there will be no promotion at the university.

5.1.2 Financial Resources

Mykolas Romeris University is a public university, which receives money from the Lithuanian state and tuition fees of students. However, in contrast to the majority of other universities of Lithuania MRU receives about 75 percent of its income not from the state budget, but from its own earnings via provided services or implementing projects which were won in the tenders. MRU looks for additional sources of funding through active participation in national, regional and international research programmes and projects. At present the state budget, EU Structural Funds, the Research Council of Lithuania, international mobility programmes and projects and the tuition fees are the main sources of income.

Following legal provisions, MRU allocates all the funds to the implementation of its main functions, this is the activity of studies and research and its administration, as well as on the support of infrastructure. As prescribed by the statute, annual income and expenditure estimates, their amendments and implementation reports are approved by the Council of MRU. Estimates and reports are subject to analysis in the Rectorate and Senate before they are submitted to the Council.

According to the self-report, MRU has a remuneration system oriented towards strategic MRU priorities and achieved results. Remuneration for teachers is allocated based on transparent and impartial system for specific works performed in line with the university's strategic development directions. Clear criteria create a possibility for teachers to plan work according to their interests and to plan their remuneration. International EUA experts evaluated this remuneration system as a progressive and innovative one. The new remuneration system played a very important role in activating teacher activity in priority areas of MRU activity – development of study programmes, remote and electronic studies, and scientific publications.

5.1.3 Infrastructural Resources

Mykolas Romeris University is a modern and dynamic European university with a creative and efficient research and academic community. From the fall of 2015, the Social Innovations Laboratory network, MRU LAB, has been established. It unites 19 research laboratories on campus and is open for researchers collaborating in different fields, such as Environmental Management, Intellectual Property, Digital and Creative Industry, Social Technology or Business Innovation.

Considering the number of students of the study programmes, the material infrastructure is sufficient. MRU has in place all necessary technical conditions for high quality implementation of the educational process, which includes academic and support facilities, gyms, the university's administration quarters, the main library, a reading hall, a conference hall, resource centres and other auxiliary facilities. The facilities are supplied with all necessary technical equipment, which provides means for implementing the academic process at a high level and creating high-quality social conditions for students, teachers and employees of the university.

The expert group finds that for the implementation of the programmes contemporary material and classroom facilities are available. Moot courts are used in every subject; speeches are analysed in courses. Currently students and employees at MRU use more than 1,300 stationary and mobile computer work places.

Besides technical equipment, the library of MRU is a crucial factor for all study programmes. The resources of the central library are sufficient in all subjects. Searching and delivery of books and articles is organised in a pleasant way. Students also have access to online bibliographical and full text databases and the online electronic library systems. It is remarkable that the library has 24/7

opening hours and provides enough work space for students. It should be especially noted that the library provides equipment for students with special needs, such as computers for blind student and Braille printers.

5.2 Organisation, counselling and cooperation

Organisation

Responsibilities and contact of the individual programmes are clearly defined. The decision-making processes within MRU are well documented. Regarding the university structure MRU follows the law on higher education which states: “a state university must have the collegial management bodies — the council and the senate, as well as a sole management body — the rector”. The expert group finds that the necessary bodies and institutional requirements are in place. Further, the group takes note of the fact that Mykolas Romeris has been successfully evaluated in procedures of institutional accreditation by the Lithuanian Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education (SKVC) and the European University Association (EUA).

The decision making procedure in regard to study programmes is well organised and documented. In compliance with the “Mykolas Romeris University Studies Procedure” a Study Programme Development Working Group develops a study programme. As a second step a Study Programme Committee updates the programme, its implementation and quality. Both bodies involve social partners and student representatives. The Chairperson of the Study Programme Committee is approved by the Senate on Rector's recommendation. The Study Programme Development Working Group and the Study Programme Committee are approved by the Faculty Dean or Institute Director.

Counselling

The programme management, teachers and support staff provide personal counselling and advice to students and faculty members where necessary in respect to their studies, academic issues and organisational issues. Applicants and students are substantially supported in regards to visa requirements, since many of the students at MRU come from abroad, e.g. Ukraine, Belarus, Georgia or other non-EU-states.

Cooperation

MRU has a cooperative approach to networking with other HEIs, research institutes and representatives from business and administration. Cooperation particularly exists with social partners and national as well as foreign universities in different ways. MRU is also well integrated in the education system of Lithuania and the academic community.

Special cooperation exists between MRU and other universities in the context of joint programmes. The university has several of these programmes with other European universities. For the study

programmes “European and International Business Law” and “Legal Regulation of Public Administration and Human Rights” joint degree programmes are set up with Université Savoie Mont Blanc (USMB), France, and Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv (TSNUK), Ukraine.

Established with the help of European projects, the cooperation for running these two joint degree programmes is agreed upon in contracts between MRU and USMB, respectively TSNUK. The partnership agreements concerning the implementation of the joint study programmes contain provisions on aims and structures of the programmes, responsibilities of both partners and the management of the study programmes. It is laid down that programme committees with representatives – also students – from each university organise and coordinate the programmes. The contracts also contain all necessary regulations on admission requirements and procedures, examination regulations, quality assurance and support for students.

The self-report of MRU and the documents of USMB and TSNUK show well organised study programmes. Based on the documents, the expert group only makes the recommendation to change the designation of the programmes from “joint degree” to “double degree” as long as two separate documents are awarded after graduation from the two partner universities. By renaming the programme degree, the university should follow the terminology of the “European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes”.

5.3 Examination system

Mykolas Romeris University has implemented its own methodology for conducting continuous and final assessments. A system of cumulative grades is used to assess the academic subject study achievements. The final assessment of the academic subject study achievements is based on calculations provided in the programme of a relevant subject. In separate cases knowledge checks can be conducted after an academic subject or a module is delivered. Subject to a permission of the Faculty Dean/Institute Director, the assessment of achievements may take place before the end of a semester. The timetables of the examinations and other knowledge checks are drafted and published at least two weeks before the end-of-semester examinations. A scoring system is used to assess study achievements. A ten-point grading scale is used to assess the knowledge of the university students. The lowest positive grade is 5. In the course of studies and the assessment of the study outcomes, the students and teachers must comply with the rules of the Code of Ethics of the University. For violation of the principle of fair competition, cheating, plagiarism or any other form of academic dishonesty in connection with the assessment of study achievements, the student is expelled from the university on the basis of a serious breach of academic ethics. Other principles and the procedure for the assessment of study outcomes are established in the Procedure for Assessing Study Achievements. The opportunity for repeating exams exists. The experts assess the test frequency and organisation as adequate and appropriate load.

Students' final assessment consists of interim assessment and examination. The final examination makes up 40 to 50 percent of the final grade for the course. The interim grade follows a cumulative point system (grades out of 10), which includes an assessment of various types of coursework (theoretical knowledge test, presentation, written essay, colloquium, etc.). The final examinations are designed to test skills, generic and subject specific knowledge, and include essay questions, hypothetical/practical case, knowledge test, etc. The passing grade is 5/10.

The academic feasibility of the programmes is guaranteed by a suitable curriculum design and appropriate testing organisation. Overall, the test system is appropriate. Examination procedures are suitable in quantity and frequency. The tests are module-related and knowledge- and skills-oriented.

5.4 Documentation and transparency

A complete package of documents, which regulate the assessment of knowledge and competencies of school leavers and students (information on study programmes, requirements for applicants, information on academic process, requirements for evaluation of knowledge and competencies of students, special regulations and requirements for evaluation of knowledge and competencies, rules of qualification recognition), is developed and approved by the university. All information and documents are published and available in Lithuanian and many of them also in English for students and prospective students. However, some other information on study programmes and supporting documents, such as the guideline for the Master's thesis, should be also provided in English.

All necessary data for the admission procedure are transparent, well documented, and accessible to students and to the public. The same is true for regulations on exams and the recognition of competences according to the Lisbon Convention and the recognition of professional competences. Required legal documents such as final grade certificates, Transcript of Records and Diploma Supplement are contained in the self-report on the study programmes.

5.5 Gender justice and compensation opportunities for disabled people

Gender equality and equal opportunities are provided for students who are in difficult life situations, in particular, students with children, foreign students, students with health problems, students from among migrants and / or students from the so-called uneducated strata of population. In the implementation of study programmes MRU guarantees equal opportunities in all of the following situations: admission to the programmes; granting of scholarships or loans; design and approval of educational programmes; evaluation of students' academic achievements. The university facilities have a universal design and provide barrier-free access in all visited buildings.

5.6 Conclusion

At MRU all requirements for the successful implementation of the study programmes are met. For the realisation of the programmes adequate personal resources as well as an organisational and administrative framework, including a suitable examination system, is in place. Necessary documents are available and decision-making processes are transparent.

6 Quality Management

The university has established a quality assurance system on the central level and on the faculties' level as well. There are study programme committees for all study programmes at MRU, comprising different stakeholders such as teachers, students, external social partners and alumni. The committees are responsible for content and structure of one or more study programmes.

One of the strong points of an effective quality management system is the implemented principle of continuous enhancement. The results of quality monitoring of programmes reveal weaknesses and allow developing measures for overcoming possible problem situations and preventing students from negative learning experience. The outcomes of the internal quality evaluation are taken into account in the processes of developing curricula and selecting personnel.

Provisions are also created with the universities MRU cooperates with. This shows that quality management is as important for the foreign university as for MRU.

Evaluations

The university organises evaluations in each semester. Students are invited to give their feedback by filling out an online questionnaire before getting access to their grades in a particular course. The students can decide if they want to take part in the evaluation or to skip and continue to go on to their results. One questionnaire focusses on overall aspects and another one focusses on aspects related to the specific course. The students' opinion evaluates the teachers' work which covers e.g. their internationalisation or use of Moodle and is one part of the basis for the performance related pay component of the salary. The other part is the assessment of their research work. The evaluation results can be reviewed by the teacher, the deans and the vice-rector for quality assurance. The programme leaders are responsible to give feedback to students about the results of the evaluation. It arises that there is still a lack in this feedback procedure, since not all programme leaders give feedback to the students. So in 2015 the central quality centre of the university started to give oral feedbacks to students. However, the peer group recommends that the university should regularly provide feedback on the results of surveys to the students. Also students of Masters' programmes should be informed about measures, which are taken by the university to react on students' evaluations.

Teaching performance and staff development

Lecturers are stimulated by the assessment they receive and the related benefits. In addition, opportunities for continuous improvement and maintenance of their qualification are provided. The university offers courses to improve professors and teachers didactical competences. The attendance is voluntarily. But if someone does not take part the consequence will be that the person cannot receive a doctor's degree. Furthermore the requirements for new staff members at MRU are high and they have to show good teaching competences.

Quality of Study Programmes

Study programmes are initiated by the faculties. First a proposal will be discussed in the faculty board. If there is a positive decision about it, the proposal is forwarded to the Centre of Academic Affairs. The Marketing Centre of the university evaluates whether the proposed study programme has a sufficient market potential and is not competing with other programmes of the university. The rectorate discusses the proposal and decides if the university will establish the study programme. All of the study programmes have to comply with legal regulations such as the number of given ECTS and study regulations as well. National regulations do not yet exist for all programmes. The quality of study programmes is continuously observed by programme committees.

Finally, the quality management system is fully functional and it gathers all the relevant information through evaluation procedures and data analysis. During the meeting with the programme managers, teaching staff and also with students the expert group could get a detailed impression of how MRU's quality management works. The peer group encourages MRU to adhere with its laudable and diversified quality management. For the future development the group just recommends the regular feedback on the results of surveys to students. In addition, MRU could test different methods to get more students' feedback. Maybe it is possible to launch a meeting with the programme leaders, a coordinator of the faculty and some students in each semester.

7 Summary

The programmes "European and International Business Law" (joint degree; II cycle), "International Law" (II cycle) and "Legal Regulation of Public Administration and Human Rights" (joint degree; II cycle) have been assessed on the basis of the "*Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area*" (ESG). The reviewers come to the conclusion that the standards 1.1 (Policy for quality assurance), 1.2 (Design and approval of programmes), 1.3 (Student-centred learning, teaching and assessment), 1.4 (Student admission, progression, recognition and certification), 1.5 (Teaching staff), 1.6 (Learning resources and student support), 1.7 (Information management), 1.8 (Public information), 1.9 (On-going monitoring and periodic review of programmes) and 1.10 (Cyclical external quality assurance) are fulfilled..

8 Recommendation of the expert group

The group of experts recommends the following **decision**: Accreditation without conditions.

IV Decision of the ACQUIN Accreditation Commission

On the basis of the report of the expert group, the statement of the HEI and the statement of the standing expert committee, on 31/03/2016 the Accreditation Commission takes the following decision:

According to the order of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania „On the approval of the Description of the Procedure for the External Evaluation and Accreditation of Study Programmes” (as of July 29 2011), the assessed study programmes are evaluated against the standards mentioned in annex 1 and 2 of the order.

The programmes “European and International Business Law” (joint degree; II cycle), “International Law” (II cycle) and “Legal Regulation of Public Administration and Human Rights” (joint degree; II cycle) have been evaluated positively.¹

1 General recommendations

- Information on study programmes and supporting documents such as the guideline for the Master’s thesis should be provided completely in English.
- After conducting course evaluations, the university should regularly provide some feedback on the results of surveys to students. Students should be informed about measures, which are taken by the university to react on students’ evaluations.

2 Public Administration and Human Rights (joint degree; II cycle)

No.	Evaluation area	Evaluation of the area
1	Aims of the programme and intended learning outcomes	4
2	Curriculum design	2
3	Teaching staff	3
4	Facilities and learning resources	3

¹ According to the ministerial order, study programmes shall be evaluated positively if the evaluation score in the external evaluation report of ACQUIN is no less than 12 and not a single area has been evaluated as ‘negative’ (in accordance with the evaluation areas defined in Annex 1 and Annex 2 to the Description and the grading scale). Positively evaluated programmes with a score of no less than 12 should be accredited for a period of 3 years; programmes with a score of no less than 18 should receive the accreditation for 6 years.

5	Study process and students' performance assessment (student selection, performance assessment, support)	3
6	Management of the programme (administration of the programme, internal quality assurance)	3
	Total:	18

The study programme „Public Administration and Human Rights“ (joint degree; II cycle) is for the first time accredited without any conditions.

The accreditation is limited until 30th September 2019.

Additional recommendations:

- The study programme should be described as a “double degree” programme, as long as two separate documents are awarded after graduation from the two partner universities. By renaming the programme titles, the university should follow the terminology of the “European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes”.
- The title of the programme should be changed, since the component of human rights shows some imbalance.
- It should be pointed out in course descriptions that the programme has a comparative approach, especially in regard to good governance.
- Criteria for the admission of Non-Ukrainian applicants should be defined.
- The comparative dimension of non-EU and international course should be better emphasised in the programme and course description.
- The content of the curriculum in the first semester should be further adjusted. The module “Intellectual Property Law” should be replaced by modules, which are more related to legal regulation of public administration.
- The programme and course description should be better drafted and further detailed and adjusted to reflect better what seem to be faculty practice and actual course content. Learning outcomes, materials, tasks and assignments should be better aligned and the link between them made more explicit in the course descriptions.
- Information on study programme requirements (e.g. thesis guidelines) should be more systematically available in English.

3 European and International Business Law (joint degree; II cycle)

No.	Evaluation area	Evaluation of the area
1	Aims of the programme and intended learning outcomes	3
2	Curriculum design	3
3	Teaching staff	4

4	Facilities and learning resources	4
5	Study process and students' performance assessment (student selection, performance assessment, support)	3
6	Management of the programme (administration of the programme, internal quality assurance)	3
	Total:	20

The study programme „European and International Business Law“ (joint degree; II cycle) is for the first time accredited without any conditions.

The accreditation is limited until 30th September 2022.

Additional recommendations:

- The study programme should be described as a “double degree” programme, as long as two separate documents are awarded after graduation from the two partner universities. By renaming the programme titles, the university should follow the terminology of the “European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes”.
- More information on study conditions in France, such as examination system and study organisation, should be provided.

4 International Law (II cycle)

No.	Evaluation area	Evaluation of the area
1	Aims of the programme and intended learning outcomes	3
2	Curriculum design	3
3	Teaching staff	3
4	Facilities and learning resources	4
5	Study process and students' performance assessment (student selection, performance assessment, support)	3
6	Management of the programme (administration of the programme, internal quality assurance)	3
	Total:	19

The study programme „International Law“ (joint degree; II cycle) is for the first time accredited without any conditions.

The accreditation is limited until 30th September 2022.

Additional recommendations:

- The university should take into consideration to merge study programmes in International Law and to run just a single programme in English.
- Information on content and learning outcomes, instructional practice, participation requirements or the examination in modules should be updated annually.
- The recruitment of guest lecturers from abroad should be performed in a more systematic way at the university level.