

Overview report of the evaluation of three Agriculture and Agriculture and Veterinary Studies fields programmes at Lithuanian University of Health Sciences

The three study programmes were evaluated during the site visits 25th-26th of March 2014 at the Lithuanian University of Health Sciences. The visits included meetings with the administrative/management staff of the Department of Animal Science, Faculty and University, staff responsible for preparing the self-assessment documents, teaching staff, students, graduates, and social partners. The expert group examined presented BSc and MSc theses. The expert group also visited classrooms, laboratories, library and computer facilities but not animal facilities or teaching farms due to time-constraint.

The overall evaluations for all three programmes were *positive*. The main positive quality aspects of the programmes were the good facilities, the qualifications of the teachers and their accessibility for the students and the programme's strong support from stakeholders (social partners).

The weakest quality aspects observed were a fragmented view and understanding among the teachers about the goal of the programme, the limited progression in scientific quality of the MSc-theses and the poor international exposure to and visibility in the international academic community.

External factors such as changes in the employment market, student funding, reorganisation of the academy and university, and other external factors may have had significant influence on the study programmes evaluated. However, it was beyond the scope of the evaluation to assess these factors.

There are some overlaps as between the Master programmes and they have different formats and one concern regarding the all three programmes is the difficulties in recruiting students to in some – despite the appreciation of the education from recent graduates. Therefore the university management could consider review the profiles, formats as well as names of these three programmes and related ones in order to increase their attractiveness and the efficient use of resources.

In conclusion, these study programmes are vital for the development of the important agricultural sector in Lithuania. The programmes have several good academic qualities, but at the same time there are good opportunities to further develop these programmes together with related programmes, making the education even more efficient and the programmes more attractive for future students.