

Overview report of Geology field Study programmes at Vilnius University

Two Master programmes were evaluated during the site visits in the period of 24th - 27th of February at the Vilnius University. The visits incorporated all required meetings with different academic and public groups, including the administrative staff of the Faculty of Natural Science, staff responsible for preparing the self-assessment documents, teaching staff, students of the first and second years of study, graduates, and social partners. The expert group examined presented Master theses. The expert group also inspected various support services (classrooms, laboratories, library, computer facilities).

The overall impression of the both Master programmes is positive. Many students interviewed during the visits took part in the discussion in a very active way, and appeared open minded, critical, and capable, which is the mark of a successful academic training. However, some of the students of the *Hydrogeology and Engineering Geology* programme took part in a somewhat passive way, the probable reason being limited English language capabilities. More international mobility is needed for students of this programme.

For both programmes, all the social partners confirmed that they could trust the competences of the students they employed. The programmes aims and outcomes are clearly defined and well presented. The aims take into account both the requirements of global and EU labour market and local needs in Lithuania. The learning outcomes assure that the graduates are flexible and can proceed with various specialisation paths in their careers within the industry or academic framework. The Curriculum and Study programmes are being constantly improved taking into consideration feedback from social partners and students. The curricula design meets legal requirements; the contents and teaching methods are appropriate for the achievement of intended learning outcomes. The teaching staff are all well qualified both academically and by virtue of professional experience outside academia for the both Departments. More mobility is suggested for some staff of the Hydrogeology and Engineering Geology Department.

The teaching staff are engaged in research relevant to the subjects being taught. In all cases there is a clear link between teaching responsibilities and research output. The Departments have primary research equipment. The Master students are given access to geochemical and other research equipment in different departments and cooperation partners. In-house geochemical equipment, which is lacking at the moment, could potentially strengthen the research environment. The teaching and learning equipment is generally satisfactory to good, students have access to computer labs and library.

The student practice is adequate and is mainly related to thesis subjects. However, it has mentioned by students that they encourage the Departments to increase the

practical part of the programme, especially for the *Geology* programme. Admission requirements and organization of study process are well prepared, but needs more announcements outside the university. The responsibilities of the programme management are clearly defined at all levels. Semester-based evaluation and analysis of the examination results and academic year-based analysis of student's opinions are significant parts of the quality monitoring and management system. The well-established network of contacts with employers and graduates enables continuous tuning of the study programmes according to the changing requirements of the local labour market.

In conclusion, both programmes meet educational and specific national and international requirements and are sustainable. As these programmes are the only ones in the Geology study field in Lithuania, it is most important that the programmes keep its high education standard, are sustainable and meet national and international quality requirements and labour market needs in the future.