



STUDIJŲ KOKYBĖS VERTINIMO CENTRAS

Lietuvos sveikatos mokslų universiteto
VETERINARINĖS MAISTO SAUGOS STUDIJŲ
PROGRAMOS (612A64001)
VERTINIMO IŠVADOS

EVALUATION REPORT
OF *VETERINARY FOOD SAFETY* (612A64001)
STUDY PROGRAMME

at Lithuanian University of Health Sciences

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Išvados parengtos anglų kalba
Report language - English

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DUOMENYS APIE ĮVERTINTĄ PROGRAMĄ

Studijų programos pavadinimas	<i>Veterinarinė maisto sauga</i>
Valstybinis kodas	612A64001
Studijų sritis	Biomedicinos mokslų
Studijų kryptis	Visuomenės sveikata
Studijų programos rūšis	Universitetinės studijos
Studijų pakopa	Pirmoji
Studijų forma (trukmė metais)	Nuolatinės (4 metai), Iššęstinės (6 metai)
Studijų programos apimtis kreditais	240
Suteikiamas laipsnis ir (ar) profesinė kvalifikacija	Visuomenės sveikatos bakalauras
Studijų programos įregistravimo data	2004-02-17

INFORMATION ON EVALUATED STUDY PROGRAMME

Title of the study programme	<i>Veterinary Food Safety</i>
State code	612A64001
Study area	Biomedical Sciences
Study field	Public Health
Kind of the study programme	University studies
Study cycle	First
Study mode (length in years)	Full time (4 years), Part time (6 years)
Volume of the study programme in credits	240
Degree and (or) professional qualifications awarded	Bachelor in Public Health
Date of registration of the study programme	17-02-2004

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The Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education

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I. INTRODUCTION

An international review team organized by the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education (SKVC) studied the submitted Self Evaluation Report (SER) and related documentation, conducted a site visit to the Lithuanian University of Health Sciences (LUHS) on 6th March 2014 and subsequently discussed study programme BA Veterinary Food Safety (VFS) under evaluation. The following assessment of the Programme is given.

LUHS is the only higher education establishment in Lithuania educating specialists in food safety. BSc Veterinary Food Safety is a niche specialist programme that caters exclusively for the Lithuanian employment market and consequently is not internationalized and has little potential to attract non Lithuanian students. However, the review team heard of a study of Lithuanian Ministry of Education and Science, which concluded that the biggest potential growth and demand of specialist is in the sector of Food and Veterinary Control. Demand for the programme remains high from potential students and drop out rates have decreased.

To this extent the programme is sustainable and is clearly focused on the employment market in Lithuania. The review team have made their recommendations in this context and in summary believe that the programme will increase its relevance and significance by introducing more systematic links with employers and alumni, both to strengthen the practical component of the programme and ensure the currency and future proofing of programme learning outcomes; by systematically ensuring that teaching and learning approaches support the acquisition of cognitive and practical skills required by employers and by improving in programme evaluation of the student experience.

II. PROGRAMME ANALYSIS

1. Programme aims and learning outcomes

The review team considered the programme aims and learning outcomes and concluded that they are generally well defined, clear and publicly accessible. Programme aims and learning outcomes are published on a number of websites. In addition dissemination of programme aims and learning outcomes takes place at a number of events.

The review team reviewed the programme aims and learning outcomes and concluded that they are generally based on the academic and/or professional requirements, public needs and the needs of the labour market. In discussion with labour market representatives and graduates from the programme the review team heard that there is some dissonance between the knowledge and skills attained by graduates and those needed on entry to the labour market. For example, social partners indicate that newly employed graduates undertake a period of training on employment in order to familiarize them with the requirements of the job. Both students and employers suggested that these requirements could be included in the programme. The SER acknowledged that suggestions on curricula improvement from Alumni and employer representatives is considered as a valuable input to quality improvement. In discussion, the review team concluded that in both cases feedback could be gathered more systematically.

Employers summarised that they want graduates who can identify a problem and solve it. The review team heard that employers are able to feedback their thoughts informally and more formally when a student is on placement. As noted above, social partners have an opportunity to

make comments both on the skills obtained during practice placements and the skills required on employment. The review team felt that this approach was fairly informal and may not gather feedback consistently or from all partners and additionally may not proactively identify changes in skills required by the employment market. The review team recommend that there should be a more systematic relationship with employers and regular planned meetings, using a structured agenda to gather feedback in order to plan development of the programme including soft skills required by employers, such as team working, critical thinking, reflective practice etc.

The review team concluded that more formal links with alumni, with a view to gathering their feedback and strengthening involvement in programme development would help close this gap. The review team recommend that a member of staff is responsible for gathering information and feedback in order to develop the programme and build further links with employers.

The review team were satisfied that the programme aims and learning outcomes are consistent with the type and level of studies and the level of qualifications offered. The name of the programme, its learning outcomes, content and the qualifications offered were considered by the programme team to ensure that they are compatible with each other. The review team were told that the programme name is related with the State Food and Veterinary Service and has a special meaning within Lithuania. They advised that maybe the title will be changed in future because of the changes in the national classification of study fields and branches, however the Ministry is still discussing the changes so nobody knows when the changes will be approved. The team concluded that the name of the programme means more to the faculty and Lithuanians than it does to those outside the country and this may be a barrier to internationalisation of the programme.

2. Curriculum design

The review team is satisfied that the curriculum design meets legal requirements.

The considerable work that had been undertaken in terms of curriculum development since the last review was noted. The review team were satisfied that study subjects and/or modules are spread evenly, their themes are not repetitive and that the content of the subjects and/or modules is consistent with the type and level of the studies. It was noted that graduates reported some repetition between the content of this programme and the Masters programme, specifically around the food chain, which the programme team may wish to address.

The review team concluded that the content and methods of the subjects/modules are appropriate for the achievement of the intended learning outcomes however it is anticipated that many of the comments and recommendations in this report will lead to revision of learning outcomes and further development of learning methods. For this reason both the learning outcomes and learning methods should be kept under review and revised in line with feedback from employers, alumni and students.

The scope of the programme is generally sufficient to ensure learning outcomes however the review team's comments concerning practice placements should be noted. This is mentioned later in the report and it is anticipated that some changes may be required following a review of the practical period.

The previous review highlighted that the curriculum needs major revision: topics as epidemiology (especially the epidemiology of food-borne diseases), public health, human pathophysiology (especially immune and endocrine responses to nutrients, food additive, and contaminants), health policy, health management, risk assessment and communication have to be

represented. The programme team responded by explaining that topics suggested by experts were highlighted in the curriculum: the epidemiology of food-borne diseases, public health, pathophysiology, health policy, health management, risk assessment and communication. The review team noted that whilst there was still a preponderance of veterinary topics, they were satisfied that the content of the programme reflects the latest achievements in science, art and technologies.

3. Staff

The review team were impressed by the positive, enthusiastic teachers who reported positively on the development of the programme and on the merger of the universities. The review team were similarly impressed by the initiatives that many teachers had taken both to improve their teaching methods and the learning gained from both in house and external events. The review team concluded that the study programme is provided by the staff meeting legal requirements and that the qualifications of the teaching staff are adequate to ensure learning outcomes.

The review team considered that the number of teaching staff involved in the programme was relatively large and whilst on one hand they concluded that the number of the teaching staff is adequate to ensure learning outcomes, on the other hand they noted that the positive initiatives and developments were not exhibited by all. For example one teacher mentioned that the problems and issues faced in teaching were the same as they were fifteen years ago. Whilst not wishing to generalise from this one example, the team felt that improved internal feedback and quality processes, together with a clear teaching and learning strategy would help disseminate positive approaches more readily and evenly.

Nevertheless the review team were confident that teaching staff turnover is able to ensure an adequate provision of the programme and the teaching staff of the programme is involved in research directly related to the study programme. This impression was gained through examination of the SER, which demonstrated a high level of scientific and methodological activity, with 78.9% of the staff actively engaged in research and many others engaged in industry related activity.

The review team learned from the SER that professional development opportunities are created for all teachers and that they can participate in the conferences, internships and study visits under exchange programmes. A high proportion (37 teachers) improved their qualification at foreign universities and it was obvious from discussions with teachers that this had been beneficial. The review team concluded that the higher education institution creates conditions for the professional development of the teaching staff necessary for the provision of the programme.

4. Facilities and learning resources

An extensive description of teaching and learning equipment was detailed in the SER. This, coupled with a tour of the facilities enabled the review team to conclude that the premises for studies are adequate both in their size and quality and that the teaching and learning equipment (laboratory and computer equipment, consumables) are adequate both in size and quality.

The review team considered whether the higher education institution has adequate arrangements for students' practice. It learned from both the SER and in discussion with teachers and the management group that, following the previous review, steps had been taken to improve the organisation of practice placements. The review team noted the work that has been undertaken to strengthen practical placements and following discussion with students, alumni and graduates

concluded that further development is required to maximise the learning impact and future employability of students.

The University library provides an excellent source teaching materials (textbooks, books, periodical publications, databases) which are adequate and accessible of for students. Considerable resource has been directed towards upgrading this facility. A regular annual review ensures that the library stock and subscriptions remain up to date and relevant.

In 2007 a modern LUHS Library and Information Centre was opened. Their facilities and services ensure attainment of learning outcomes and create a positive learning environment. A wireless network is set up in the Library premises. The majority of publications required for the students of the programme are available at the LUHS Library. The teachers of the FPH constantly renew and prepare new methodological publications and textbooks on various issues of public health. New books according to needs are permanently purchased. The LUHS Library subscribes all Lithuanian medical journals and the main international periodicals and databases. However for some students reading books and other materials in English are rather complicated due to insufficient language knowledge

5. Study process and student assessment

Admission of students is conducted in accordance with general provisions of the rules for general admission to undergraduate/first cycle studies at Lithuanian higher education schools. High school graduates are admitted to VFS program according to the admission rules and competitive score. The competitive score is calculated summing scores of competitive educational subjects multiplied with respective weigh coefficients and additional points. The competitive disciplines are: biology, chemistry or mathematics and Lithuanian language. The average competitive score in the period 2008 -2012 was 18.8, which compares with an average of 16.8 in the last review period. The programme team advised that this system does not ensure that most motivated students are accepted to study program. Nevertheless, even though there is high competition for places a high dropout rate during the first year is accepted as normal.

The review team gained an impression in its discussions with students, teachers and the management group that teaching methods were changing to become more student centred, developing independent study skills and critical thinking. This was being achieved by individual teachers, on their own initiative, utilising different types of teaching and learning methods, reducing contact time, introducing more focused independent study. It was also noted that distance learning was in the early stages of development. The review team were impressed by these developments and felt that they were entirely consistent with meeting the requirements of employers for critically thinking problem solving graduates. The review team noted the work of individual teachers and that the management team had been supportive in providing training and education in these new approaches. The benefits of working with the Medical School and learning from their experience of problem based learning was also highlighted by teachers. The review team were satisfied that the organisation of the study process ensures an adequate provision of the programme and the achievement of the learning outcomes. Nevertheless, to consolidate and accelerate these improvements the review team concluded that an agreed Teaching Learning and Assessment Strategy with aims targets and actions would be helpful. Such a strategy should include a consideration of the resources needed for implementation, for example teachers need structured education and support whilst students highlighted that more spaces for group work would be beneficial. Additionally a plan to further reduce contact hours and promote independent study in a way that supports the move from teaching to learning and embraces the problem solving skills required by employers should be included. Furthermore the potential for distance learning, needs to be explored and developed so that it becomes an

alternative way for students to learn rather than an information point which stores lecture presentations and handouts.

LUHS provides opportunities to participate in both scientific and artistic activities in addition to the planned curricula opportunities and students are encouraged to participate in research, artistic and applied research activities.

Students do have opportunities to participate in student mobility programmes. Students voiced that mobility periods would be attractive however they had heard of students with negative experiences of recognition of academic credits earned in foreign countries. During the period 2008 -2015 there were no incoming students from foreign universities. The team conclude that as the student cohort is exclusively home based, students are not receiving much internationalised experience and the programme team my wish to address this either by more actively seeking incoming students and dispelling anxieties about credit recognition for outgoing students.

Scholarships are available for students in a range of circumstances, as well as adequate hostel accommodation. These contribute to ensuring an adequate level of academic and social support for students.

The assessment system of students' performance is clear, adequate and publicly available. Students are informed how many and for what indicators (consistency of theoretical knowledge, activity, independence, practical skills and etc.) scores can be received and how many scores must be collected in order to get a desired assessment. An appeal system is in place for dissatisfied students. Students have been surveyed to ascertain the quality of feedback they receive on their assignments and most (90%) of students are satisfied.

To ensure that professional activities of the majority of graduates meets the programme providers' expectations, every year information about students' professional activity and competences is received from students practice supervisors. About 85 % of practice supervisors evaluate students practical knowledge, activity, initiation and diligence evaluate perfectly. All graduates working by their specialty indicated that they possessed sufficient theoretical professional knowledge needed for their job. Whilst these results are favourable, students outlined diverse roles undertaken during placement and employers indicated that when employed, graduates needed a good deal of on the job training to bring them to a competent level. There appeared to be a discrepancy between the views of employers, who wanted critically thinking problem solving graduates and those of lecturers who felt that graduates do not have enough knowledge in applied research. Employers wanted graduates to be effective employees whereas some lecturers wanted to prepare graduates to work towards PhD and that BA graduates need further study to be managers and develop strategies. The programme team felt that with a more systematic scoping of need with employers many of these desired skills could be incorporated and acquired in the BA programme.

6. Programme management

Responsibilities for decisions and monitoring of the implementation of the programme are clearly allocated and these are clearly described in the SER as taking place regularly and systematically. It is clear that the programme is dynamic and responding to changing needs and this would be more clearly indicated by descriptions of programme changes which had taken place as a result of internal monitoring.

The previous evaluation noted that the opinion of students on training is not monitored and consequently the feedback system is missing. The monitoring and feedback systems have to be developed and implemented. The review team heard that online questionnaires for students that contain questions on the teaching quality, relevance of teaching methods, available infrastructure, availability of literature and textbooks in general had been introduced. The team further learned that subjects evaluated by 10 and more students are presented for further analysis. The review team concluded that although evaluation systems had been put in place to regularly collect and analyse information and data on the implementation of the programme, the uptake by students was limited and that the programme was not benefitting as much as it could from student feedback. For example, when asked if students were satisfied with the programme, the programme team advised that the review panel would have to ask the students. The review team believe that to offer effective input to the programme, the programme team should be aware of and act on areas of student satisfaction and dissatisfaction. The review team therefore recommend that the programme team should introduce more active means of seeking and acting on student feedback and that evaluation should be more systematic and involve more student views.

It is clear, through the description in the SER, from discussion with the management team and through observation of changes which have taken place since the last review that the outcomes of internal and external evaluations of the programme are used for the improvement of the programme. As mentioned previously, it is clear that the programme has undergone a period of dynamic change and the review team are confident that the programme team is seeking continuous improvement and have the mechanisms in place to achieve this. The evaluation and improvement processes involve stakeholders and the recommendations in this report intend to further strengthen this through more systematic gathering and action on feedback from students, employers and graduates. The review team conclude that, although improvement is possible, the internal quality assurance measures are effective and efficient.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

1.
The review team recommend that there should be a more systematic relationship with employers and regular meetings to plan development of the programme including soft skills etc.
2.
The review team recommend that a member of staff is responsible for gathering information and feedback in order to develop the programme and build further links with employers.
3.
The team felt that improved internal feedback and quality processes, together with a clear teaching and learning strategy would help disseminate positive approaches more readily and evenly.
4.
To consolidate and accelerate these improvements (in teaching, learning and assessment), the review team concluded that an agreed Teaching Learning and Assessment Strategy with aims, targets and actions would be helpful. Such a strategy should include a consideration of the resources needed for implementation.
5.
The review team recommend that the programme team should introduce more active means of seeking and acting on student feedback and that evaluation should be more systematic and involve more student views.

IV. SUMMARY

The review team heard from generally satisfied students who have a good experience and benefit from facilities of high quality. The review team reviewed progress on the recommendations in the previous report and concluded that considerable effort has been directed towards curriculum development. Students also indicated that there are positive changes, citing improvements in facilities, laboratories and the library. The previous review identified that the unification of Kaunas Medical University and the Veterinary Academy gives unique opportunity to restructure and rationalize the program. The review team heard from staff, management and students that the unification had been both welcomed and beneficial for the programme.

LUHS is the only higher education establishment in Lithuania educating specialists in food safety. BSc Veterinary Food Safety is a niche specialist programme that caters exclusively for the Lithuanian employment market and consequently is not internationalised and has little potential to attract non Lithuanian students. However, the review team heard of a study of Lithuanian Ministry of Education and Science, which concluded that the biggest potential growth and demand of specialist is in the sector of Food and Veterinary Control. Demand for the programme remains high from potential students and drop out rates have decreased.

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V. GENERAL ASSESSMENT

The study programme *Veterinary Food Safety* (state code – 612A64001) at Lithuanian University of Health Sciences is given **positive** evaluation.

Study programme assessment in points by evaluation areas.

No.	Evaluation Area	Evaluation Area in Points*
1.	Programme aims and learning outcomes	3
2.	Curriculum design	3
3.	Staff	4
4.	Material resources	3
5.	Study process and assessment (student admission, study process student support, achievement assessment)	3
6.	Programme management (programme administration, internal quality assurance)	3
	Total:	19

*1 (unsatisfactory) - there are essential shortcomings that must be eliminated;

2 (satisfactory) - meets the established minimum requirements, needs improvement;

3 (good) - the field develops systematically, has distinctive features;

4 (very good) - the field is exceptionally good.

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**LIETUVOS SVEIKATOS MOKSLŲ UNIVERSITETO PIRMOSIOS PAKOPOS
STUDIJŲ PROGRAMOS *VETERINARINĖ MAISTO SAUGA* (VALSTYBINIS KODAS –
612A64001) 2014-05-28 EKSPERTINIO VERTINIMO IŠVADŲ NR. SV4-263 IŠRAŠAS**

<...>

V. APIBENDRINAMASIS ĮVERTINIMAS

Lietuvos sveikatos mokslų universiteto studijų programa *Veterinarinė maisto sauga* (valstybinis kodas – 612A64001) vertinama **teigiamai**.

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

* 1 - Nepatenkinamai (yra esminių trūkumų, kuriuos būtina pašalinti)

2 - Patenkinamai (tenkina minimalius reikalavimus, reikia tobulinti)

3 - Gerai (sistemiškai plėtojama sritis, turi savitų bruožų)

4 - Labai gerai (sritis yra išskirtinė)

<...>

IV. SANTRAUKA

Ekspertų grupė susitiko studijomis iš esmės patenkintus studentus, kuriems aukštos kokybės infrastruktūra tinka ir yra naudinga. Ekspertų grupė išanalizavo, kaip vykdomos ankstesnio vertinimo išvadose pateiktos rekomendacijos, ir padarė išvadą, kad įdėta nemažai pastangų programos turiniui plėtoti. Studentai taip pat pažymėjo, kad įvyko teigiamų pokyčių, paminėjo infrastruktūros, laboratorijų ir bibliotekos patobulinimus. Ankstesniame vertinime buvo nurodyta, kad Kauno medicinos universiteto ir Veterinarijos akademijos sujungimas suteikia unikalią galimybę pertvarkyti ir racionalizuoti programą. Ekspertų grupė, išklausiusi darbuotojus, vadovus ir studentus, sužinojo, kad sujungimas buvo sveikintinas ir programai naudingas žingsnis.

LSMU yra vienintelė aukštojo mokslo institucija Lietuvoje, kurioje rengiami maisto saugos specialistai. Veterinarinės maisto saugos bakalauro studijų programa yra unikali programa, rengianti specialistus išskirtinai Lietuvos darbo rinkai, taigi ji nėra sutarptautinta ir turi mažai galimybių pritraukti ne Lietuvos studentus. Tačiau ekspertų grupė susipažino su Lietuvos Respublikos švietimo ir mokslo ministerijos tyrimu, kuriame padaryta išvada, kad didžiausiomis augimo galimybėmis ir didžiausia specialistų paklausa pasižymi maisto ir veterinarinės kontrolės sektorius. Potencialų studentų susidomėjimas programa išlieka didelis, studijas nutraukusių studentų skaičius sumažėjo.

Taigi, šiais aspektais programa yra tvari ir aiškiai orientuota į Lietuvos darbo rinką. Atsižvelgdama į tai, ekspertų grupė parengė savo rekomendacijas ir iš esmės mano, kad užmezgus sistemingesnius ryšius su darbdaviais ir absolventais, taip siekiant sustiprinti praktinę programos dalį ir užtikrinti, kad programos studijų rezultatai būtų aktualūs ir atitiktų būsimus poreikius, taip pat sistemškai užtikrinus, kad mokymo ir mokymosi metodais būtų padedama įgyti darbdaviams reikalingų kognityvinių ir praktinių įgūdžių, o vertinant programą labiau atsižvelgiama į studentų patirtį, programa taps dar aktualesnė ir reikšmingesnė.

<...>

III. REKOMENDACIJOS

1.

Ekspertų grupė rekomenduoja palaikyti sistemingesnius ryšius su darbdaviais ir rengti reguliarius susitikimus programai plėtoti, taip pat socialiniams emociniams įgūdžiams ugdyti.

2.

Ekspertų grupė rekomenduoja, kad kuris nors personalo narys būtų atsakingas už informacijos rinkimą ir už atsiliepimus, siekiant plėtoti programą ir toliau megzti ryšius su darbdaviais.

3.

Ekspertų grupės manymu, geresnis grįžtamasis ryšys ir kokybės procesai bei aiški mokymo ir mokymosi strategija padėtų lengviau ir tolygiau skleisti pozityvų požiūrį.

4.

Ekspertų grupė priėjo prie išvados, kad suderinta Mokymo, mokymosi ir vertinimo strategija su tikslais, uždaviniais ir veiklos sritimis padėtų užtikrinti, kad šie (mokymo, mokymosi ir vertinimo) patobulinimai būtų tvirtesnis ir spartesni. Šioje strategijoje turėtų būti numatyti jai įgyvendinti reikalingi ištekliai.

5.

Ekspertų grupė rekomenduoja programos vykdytojams diegti aktyvesnes priemones, kuriomis būtų renkami studentų atsiliepimai ir į juos reaguojama, siekti, kad vertinimai būtų sistemiškesni ir būtų daugiau atsižvelgiama į studentų nuomonę.

<...>

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

Vertėjos rekvizitai (vardas, pavardė, parašas)