



STUDIJŲ KOKYBĖS VERTINIMO CENTRAS

ŠIAULIŲ UNIVERSITETO
STUDIJŲ PROGRAMOS *AUDIOVIZUALINIS MENAS*
(*valstybinis kodas - 612W61001*)
VERTINIMO IŠVADOS

EVALUATION REPORT OF *MEDIA ART*
(*state code - 612W61001*)
STUDY PROGRAMME
at ŠIAULIAI UNIVERSITY

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Išvados parengtos anglų kalba

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DUOMENYS APIE ĮVERTINTĄ PROGRAMĄ

Studijų programos pavadinimas	<i>Audiovizualinis menas</i>
Valstybinis kodas	612W61001
Studijų sritis	Meno studijos
Studijų kryptis	Fotografija ir medijos
Studijų programos rūšis	Universitetinės
Studijų pakopa	Pirmoji
Studijų forma (trukmė metais)	Nuolatinė – 4 metai
Studijų programos apimtis kreditais	240
Suteikiamas laipsnis ir (ar) profesinė kvalifikacija	Audiovizualinio meno bakalauras
Studijų programos įregistravimo data	2002-06-14

INFORMATION ON EVALUATED STUDY PROGRAMME

Title of the study programme	<i>Media Art</i>
State code	612W61001
Study area	Arts
Study field	Photography and Media
Type of the study programme	University
Study cycle	First
Study mode (length in years)	Full-time – 4 years
Volume of the study programme in credits	240
Degree and (or) professional qualifications awarded	Bachelor of Media Art
Date of registration of the study programme	2002-06-14

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I. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the evaluation process

The evaluation of on-going study programmes is based on the **Methodology for evaluation of Higher Education study programmes**, approved by Order No 1-01-162 of 20 December 2010 of the Director of the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education (hereafter – SKVC).

The evaluation is intended to help higher education institutions to constantly improve their study programmes and to inform the public about the quality of studies.

The evaluation process consists of the main following stages: 1) *self-evaluation and self-evaluation report prepared by Higher Education Institution (hereafter – HEI)*; 2) *visit of the review team at the higher education institution*; 3) *production of the evaluation report by the review team and its publication*; 4) *follow-up activities*.

On the basis of external evaluation report of the study programme SKVC takes a decision to accredit study programme either for 6 years or for 3 years. If the programme evaluation is negative such a programme is not accredited.

The programme is **accredited for 6 years** if all evaluation areas are evaluated as “very good” (4 points) or “good” (3 points).

The programme is **accredited for 3 years** if none of the areas was evaluated as “unsatisfactory” (1 point) and at least one evaluation area was evaluated as “satisfactory” (2 points).

The programme is **not accredited** if at least one of evaluation areas was evaluated as “unsatisfactory” (1 point).

1.2. General

The Application documentation submitted by the HEI follows the outline recommended by the SKVC. Along with the self-evaluation report (SER) and annexes, no additional documents have been provided by the HEI before, during and/or after the site-visit.

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

Šiauliai University is a state institution of higher education, positioned in the north of the country with a well-developed university structure, integrated into the urban environment, and the micro-region. The Faculty of Arts delivers the Bachelor’s study programme Media Art since 2002, the programme has since 2010 been supervised by the Department of Fine Art. In 2015, external evaluation of the study programme Media Art is being performed for the first time, based upon a full-day visit to the premises of the university, meeting all key stakeholders and reviewing the SER, including all annexes.

1.4. The Review Team

The review team was completed according *Description of experts' recruitment*, approved by order No. 1-01-151 of Acting Director of the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education. The Review Visit to HEI was conducted by the team on 25th November, 2015.

1. **Dr. Annie Doona (team leader)**, *President of Dún Laoghaire Institute of Art, Design and Technology, Ireland.*
2. **Mika Ritalahti**, *Silva Mysterium Oy producer and managing director, Finland.*
3. **Dr. Peter Purg**, *professor of University of Nova Gorica, SQAA evaluator, Slovenia.*
4. **David Quin**, *lector of Dún Laoghaire Institute of Art, Design and Technology, Ireland.*
5. **Vilma Samulionytė**, *photographer, curator- project manager and secretary of board of Lithuanian Photographers Association, Lithuania.*
6. **Julija Paulauskaitė**, *student of Kaunas University of Technology study programme Philosophy of Media, Lithuania.*

II. PROGRAMME ANALYSIS

2.1. Programme aims and learning outcomes

The programme aims and learning outcomes are defined very broadly, they are also partly unclear in terms of the graduate profile and the different specialization pathways; they are publicly accessible. The aim of the study programme Media Art is described as “*to educate specialists of media art*” (SER, p. 8), however the students criticized the programme for being “rather a chaos” in terms of the possible specialisation pathways. The Senior staff claimed that the broad perspective is a special strategy employed by the management of the programme in order to attract more students to Siauliai university. On the contrary, the alumni mostly agreed that the programme would be more valuable, if they could specialize earlier and more narrowly – even though some of them were happy about the breadth of the programme in years 1 and 2; which is a claim that the Review Team would agree with, as this would more clearly position the programme within the many emerging competitive academic programmes both in Lithuania, as well as in the near foreign countries, and also better link the graduate profile to the increasingly specialized employment sectors (see further below under 2.5). While the study programme claims to be and is advertised as “entrepreneurial and innovative” (SER p. 6) the Review Team found that none of the study subject descriptions mention “entrepreneurship” as such, or relates explicit skills of this kind

to the outcomes. “Innovation”-related words are not mentioned in any of the course unit outcomes, but are mentioned in course unit descriptions three times only (in summaries of subjects Typography, Project of Interdisciplinary Art, Art Project in Public Spaces). No alumni (interviewed) would recommend the programme explicitly – unless it was modernized, with more business-skills and entrepreneurship inserted, explicitly marketing was mentioned several times. The Review Team noted that the audio-visual realm dominated the programme outcomes to an extent not compatible with the aims pertaining to the realm of media art as currently understood, which probably pertains to the fact that ever since their initial conception in 2002 the outcomes have not been thoroughly revised or updated.

The programme aims and learning outcomes are based on the academic and/or professional requirements, public needs and the needs of the labour market; When asked how the breadth of subjects affects the graduate profile, a possible business-card description of the graduate was discussed with the teachers; their responses named "Media Artist" twice and "Audiovisual Creator" once. The social partners (coming mainly from the cultural sector, only two could be related to creative industries) agreed consensually this would be "Media Artist" and expressed a strong need for such a broadly educated graduate – however with a note that in each area certain specialization is needed, and that the programme should provide that. The students and alumni (mostly agreeing on „Media Artist“) were generally happy with the initial breadth of the programme in year 1 and partly 2, and with the subsequent fast convergence into specialization – even if this would demand a more narrow professional qualification in terms of the graduate profile.

The programme aims and learning outcomes (LOs) are consistent with the type and level of studies and the level of qualifications offered. The duration of studies is 4 years, the total ECTS volume is 240 credits and the study form is full-time studies. The Review Team noted that the LOs hold very little area specific descriptions, but quite a lot of soft/transversal skills – even if this was not confirmed in the interviews with students or alumni (see below) as implemented thoroughly enough. The workload calculations and specialization vs. generalization distributions of LO's and course units are clear.

The name of the programme, its learning outcomes, content and the qualifications offered are mostly compatible with each other, however some revision is needed. Programme aims are in general clearly articulated, but defined in an overly broad way. Some programme-level learning outcomes are not articulated clearly, and were found not to be consistent with the course unit descriptions, or even not understood correctly by most stakeholders; those are particularly (all below quotes from SER, p.8):

1. (ad 2) „to apply obtained knowledge and abilities in **interdisciplinary studies**“ as there is a very limited opportunity across course unit descriptions as well as in the actual implementation of the programme (with one case mentioned only – cooperation with Liepaja) that would support interdisciplinary research, even though the social partners confirmed this need. The teachers could not prove enough international and interdisciplinary collaboration in the research realm, the student work reviewed did not reflect such quality either, students could not confirm any inclusion in such processes.

2. (ad 4) „to creatively apply recent information in implementation of projects of media and **interdisciplinary art**“ as current trends or responsiveness to the development of the media art realm is articulated neither in the course unit descriptions, nor in the found implementation of the programme. There is also a very limited opportunity across course unit descriptions that would support interdisciplinary (production) collaboration, even though the social partners confirmed this need. The Review Team were of an impression that the programme is implemented in a way that individual sub-disciplines such as sound, video, photography or graphic design do not interact with each other sufficiently.

3. (ad 7) „to independently **plan the process of learning and creation**“ as alumni claimed that soft-skills in the realm of entrepreneurship were not given to them within the programme, even though they needed them. Career-planning support appeared to be weak, especially after speaking to the students and the alumni. Some social partners mentioned that more business skills would be expected, and students agreed they would like to see them articulated in a more consistent way across the study programme.

In general terms, the programme aims seem to mention much more specific art-area competence than the programme outcomes can deliver .

2.2. Curriculum design

The curriculum design meets legal requirements with 240 ECTS credits planned to present a workload of 6400 hours in 4 years. According to the SER (p. 9) 576 hours are allocated for theoretical lectures, 80 hours for practical classes and 1480 hours for laboratory work. The Review Team confirmed that such a small portion of practical classes was not found to be adequate by the alumni, nor by the social partners, also students expressed they would need much more practical experience, especially outside of the school environment – however this would need to be properly mentored on both sides and followed up.

Study subjects and/or modules are spread mostly evenly, their themes are not repetitive. Students specialize in a number of areas from Year 3 onwards, but the Review Team is

of the view that clearer pathways need to be defined earlier in the programme to support a relevant range of specializations. The Review Team were concerned that too broad an approach in the aims and outcomes may lead to students not gaining enough skills and knowledge to become competent professionals in their chosen field. The breadth of modules in the Media Art programme was found to be otherwise well regarded by students, graduates and social partners, and in tune with the claim that *“the study programme Media Art mostly involves an interdisciplinary approach to video, audio, photography and computer graphics, aims at coherence of the mentioned fields”* (SER p. 9). Students were satisfied to have a very diverse *“possibility to select alternatives in the study field: Sound Technologies, Script Writing, Typographics, Branding and Communication, Packaging Design, Applied Advertising Graphics, Visual Advertisement, Advertisement Animation, Art Project for Public Spaces, Pinhole Photography, Alternative Photography – Cyanotype, Photomontage, Directed Photography, Thematic Photography, Video Installation, Video Performance, Career Portfolio.”* (SER, p. 26), even though the actual choices seemed to be dominated by video and especially photography. The latter was also found to be reflected both in the articulation of the curriculum (esp. optional subjects) and the selection of the social partners, especially considering their actual presence and discursive dominance in the interviews.

The content of the subjects and/or modules is by and large consistent with the type and level of the studies; however the Review Team could confirm the weakness found already in the SER, which is that *„insufficient attention“* was being paid to the *„mastering of interactive video, audio and computer graphics technologies”* (SER, p. 14), this was confirmed by most students and alumni. Even if this may be in line with the predominant traditional audio-visual character of the programme (see above), it conflicts with the general trends found in a vast majority of this type of programmes elsewhere, and in the professional practice. Two students agreed that sound (as an area, across the programme) is unpopular due to being too demanding, and complicated.

The content and methods of the subjects/modules are appropriate for the achievement of the intended learning outcomes in most of the realms of the contemporary media art practice, with some deficiencies in the areas of animation and sound, as well as soft-skills development (particularly entrepreneurship) and artistic research. It was found through the interviews across the stakeholder groups that the particular soft or transversal skills mentioned among the outcomes (self-presentation, self-directed learning, autonomous career planning etc.) were not reflected in the curriculum, nor were they being sufficiently developed through the implementation, e. g. by properly articulated tasks, guest lectures, concrete projects outside college. According to the SER, the dominant assessment methods are the following: *“discussion (abilities to clearly express an artistic idea); reflection on performance; case analysis; analysis of literature, analysis of video*

material; and individual consultations; individual project“ (SER, p. 12) which could be confirmed with all relevant stakeholders. The artistic-research skills would demand better sequencing and a stronger emphasis on relevant assessment methods (seminar work, research papers etc.), perhaps in line with the practical projects related to the programme (such as e.g. the “Enter” festival, project “Motherland” etc.).

The scope of the programme is sufficient to ensure learning outcomes, however when pathways are to be more narrowly defined, it might need broadening in general terms. As shown above in relation to programme outcomes, artistic research competency could be ensured in the programme only if a greater variety of courses developed these competencies with the students in a focussed and sequenced way; this could not be confirmed in the review of students work or when speaking to graduates. Furthermore, it would be beneficial to balance out the predominance of photography both on the level of curriculum as well as the programme implementation, since the students agreed that the visiting professors come mainly from within the realm of photography and that this was a dominant paradigm in the programme – while the Review Team found that the course unit descriptions are dominated by this realm too. It was also found that sound was under-represented in both curriculum and actual study programme implementation, which does not accurately reflect the aims of the programme as specified.

The content of the programme reflects the latest achievements in science, art and technologies only in a very limited way, and is not designed in a way to be responsive to trends in the media art realm. The specific profile and distinctive quality of this programme according to the management is the emphasis on the audio and the visual together (photography, communication design, video). While in Vilnius- (VAA) and Kaunas-based (VMU, with whom they also collaborate in terms of programme development) programmes they are oriented more towards the progressive new media in terms of informatics, the internet, and also animation. It needs to be noted that this however, is not in line with the opinion of alumni, who all agreed that if the programme is lacking in information technologies and particularly internet-relevant topics and artistic as well as non-artistic practices, it will be less attractive to younger students. The management claimed that in Siauliai they want to offer rather „general knowledge and skills“ related to media art, esp. „video, photography and graphic design“, so that later on the students can specialize at Masters level, or in professional practice in these fields. They also claimed that a transversal rejuvenation process of the staff (average age 47 currently) is in progress, that will help to balance out the current professional specialisation deficiencies. The SER team described the strong aspects of the programme to be „photography and stop motion graphics“, but not installation art or performance „as in other academies“. Due to the fact that speciality diversification in the media art realm is currently

happening at a very high speed, the Review Team are of the view that the curriculum needs to be thoroughly refreshed to include or respond to new trends in the media arts realm and in emerging specialist areas, such as contemporary web design and applications, mobile media, trans-media, etc. When asked for the reasons for the predominantly traditional, audio-visual orientation of the programme, the teachers explained that they started in 2002, when such an orientation was very innovative, as it meant opening a new field in Siauliai and Lithuania, and they were thus responding to a clear trend in the arts. They stressed that the programme was (and still is) oriented towards following a „tradition of searching“ in the media art realm, which explains why it was currently not immediately responding to the new and emerging trends. Instead they agreed the core team of the programme should rather deepen the traditional qualities of media art, while the innovative character and following of trends are still secured with the external HEI institution collaborations (they named Norwich, Liepaja, Cologne, Groningen), which also supports their research. However the Review team are convinced such a programme would need a strategically formulated, internal responsiveness to recent and emerging trends – some of which (like bio-tech art, robotics, code-art, internet-based art, multimedia performance or cyberformance, wearable tech, mobile-tech art, trans-media etc.) are already dominating the international realm of media art, but are not to be found among the topics of this programme or the concerns of its teaching team.

2.3. Teaching staff

The study programme is provided by staff meeting legal requirements; the Review Team found that the staff composition was fully compliant with the regulations and that their qualifications were relevant. The students recognized the teachers to be good artists, also they gave positive feedback on teachers' proactive character, finding out about the new subjects and topics the students are interested in and familiarizing themselves with them, so they can later teach those topics.

The qualifications of the teaching staff are adequate to ensure learning outcomes; however there is room for assuring a better coverage of the many different competency areas to be covered by the programme according to its many possible specializations. Support by management for the current generation change would be welcome. According to presented CVs, the staff are adequate, however the Review Team could not find any one among the CVs who would have considerably excellent qualifications in video or film, which however appeared to be the major focus of the overall programme. Similarly there were no teachers to be found with relevant references in the realms of new (interactive) media. Staff development is mainly taking place through short projects or seminars, e. g. they were invited to a seminar on innovative teaching

methods, to one about integrating the in-service method, and one in problem-based teaching. About half of the interviewed teachers have attended such training in the last year. The teachers claimed to be „forced to change by the students“, but also that the faculty provides these opportunities. International students were said to be particularly demanding in this respect, which is in line with the SER showing a clear ambition to increase the international profile of the programme. The Review Team hold that the opportunities for staff development in terms of pedagogical skills and international mobility should be developed and suggests the introduction of appropriate incentives for teachers to engage in these processes. The Review Team agreed that the currently tolerated maximum of an Erasmus leave for a teacher should be increased, as now this is 5 days, however the faculty noted a big demand and many applications, so they drew up an internal „waiting list“ for the mobility programme.

The number of the teaching staff is adequate to ensure learning outcomes, with a possibility to better optimize teaching across programmes. A total of 13 teachers currently work on the programme, however only 2 of them could confirm they teach in this programme only (as full-time): *„1 professor (9.1 %), 6 associate professors (54.5 %) 2 lecturers (18.2 %) and 2 assistants (18.2 %). 2 teachers holding Doctor’s Degree in Social Sciences (Education) work in the Programme. 9 teachers work in the Department of Fine Art, 1 in the Department of Design, 1 teacher is invited from the Department of Management of the Faculty of Social Sciences. ”* (SER, p. 14). The SER already found that *„when forming teaching load it appears that the same person is allocated different study subjects in the study field to deliver,”* (SER p. 19) and throughout the interviews it was noted that one teacher has to teach two or more courses (some within the same period), which might present a serious workload issue. A teacher thus delivers specialized courses to different students and programmes, which on the other hand assures a good orientation among programmes, but it evidently impedes the international mobility of teachers.

Teaching staff turnover is able to ensure an adequate provision of the programme for now, even if the average age of teachers is 47 years and very few changes were made to the teaching team in the 12 years of the running of this programme. It is also to be noted that in future teachers with a richer experience in the relevant sectors of the creative industries as well as those with an excellent record in entrepreneurship would need to be attracted. An up-skilling strategy should be instigated with the existing teaching team. The SWOT analysis confirms that *„teachers insufficiently participate in Erasmus and other activities related to projects and internships abroad“* (SER p.19), however the management was found not to be implementing solutions to address this known weakness. Similarly there were no consistent solutions to be found to solve the lacking of *„ways to be chosen by teachers for development of qualification, e.g.: qualification*

development apart from pedagogical work, on personal initiative during unpaid vacation, research vacation, creative vacation (sabbatical leave) etc.“ (ibid.).

The teaching staff of the programme is by and large involved in research (art) directly related to the study programme being reviewed. The project and scientific research references reviewed are very good, notwithstanding the above mentioned deficiency in the new and emerging media segments, in both the cultural and the industry sector. One teacher in the programme team graduated from this programme some time ago, and seems to be the only one with a highly relevant profile, directly related to the media art realm as such (even if he mostly teaches animation). Other teachers however display strong-enough references in individual artistic disciplines, which is positive. Overall, these may be not diversified enough to ensure good coverage of the many different competency areas to be covered by the programme according to its many possible specializations.

2.4. Facilities and learning resources

The premises for studies are adequate both in their size and quality, however a clear strategy for sustainability needs to be established and followed up. The learning facilities pertaining to the programme were greatly enhanced by „*investment projects ART-HOUSE and HUMMER.*” (SER, p. 20). The size of the premises is adequate, they were refurbished completely in 2007. It can be confirmed that „*all premises are equipped with multimedia and the Internet. The area of one work place in training premises varies from 1.6 m² to 3.8 m², i.e. 2.9 m² on the average (according to ergonomic recommendations, one work place should be allocated 1-2 m²). In-class lectures are held from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m.*” SER, p. 19) The new library (a short walk from the main college premises) is of excellent quality and presents a great asset also for the particular programme needs, as it offers students opportunities to work in a well-equipped media lab (workplaces with editing software, study cabins) as well as offering students relevant exhibition opportunities.

The teaching and learning equipment (laboratory and computer equipment, consumables) are mostly adequate both in size and quality; however a clear strategy is to be devised to assure the updating of both hardware and software in the long-term. Given the centrality of sound and video editing within the programme, investments will need to be planned well ahead, and the sources of financing diversified. Since increasing enrolment is a major priority of the programme, the current sufficiency might become questionable, when more students enrol. Students can borrow cameras and other equipment from the school, the quantity is sufficient, however the pool might need considerable investment in near future. The quality of the animation

studio in the basement was of a questionable level, particularly in terms of assuring sufficient ventilation, which to a lesser extent applies also to other studio facilities reviewed. The total of 27 computerized workplaces should suffice the current student intake and needs, including a possible slight increase in enrolment. Recording equipment was of good quality and well maintained, but was old which may not be industry standard.

The higher education institution has adequate arrangements for students' practice, with a need for a more proactive approach and diversification of these employment-relevant opportunities. „Students are provided with a possibility to find a place for practical placement themselves” (SER p. 20), however the Review Team are of the view that they should be directed to and more consistently followed along the placement process. The social partners confirmed that they are interested in providing placement opportunities for the students of this programme. The only concrete project mentioned by both students and teachers was „Motherland“ presenting a good-practice example of cooperation with the town gallery. Trilateral formal agreements for study practice and other collaborations are in place, as confirmed by all social partners and some students. Alumni and students reported that they got practice „offered by teachers“ or they could „choose from a list“, while a few found it themselves. According to students, first contact with social partners is organised the second day of their first year of study and then continues regularly through all the years, even if actual placement and extensive feedback with social partners takes place in the final two years.

Teaching materials (textbooks, books, periodical publications, databases) are adequate and accessible, even if the SER mentions the problem of “*lagging behind with purchasing recent literature publications. There is lack of possibilities for the timely updating of software*” (SER, p. 21) which was confirmed both by the management and the students as well as teachers, but was not found to be seriously impeding the study process. The new library offers excellent possibilities for book and database access. On programme coordination level, a more consistent use of the in-house VLE (Moodle) and a clarification of the channels along which the teaching materials are communicated to students would be of great benefit.

2.5. Study process and students' performance assessment

Admission requirements are well-founded, however the management and the students pointed out a serious problem of the state-governed enrolment policy that includes a national ranking of students according to secondary-school achievements. That keeps lower-achieving students from entering the programme, even though they might be presenting particular artistic interest and a high quality portfolio. The „target state funded places” (SER, p. 23) seem to be

insufficient to meet the needs of this programme. According to the SER and the claims of the management, drop-out reasons and progressions are being tightly monitored (Table 11 of SER, p. 24), and actions strategically taken to ensure reduction of drop-out – however with a questionable effect. Even though „a common demographic situation of Lithuania” (SER p. 24) can be blamed, the Review Team found it hard to assign the severe drops in 2011 and 2013 to such a reason – the interviewed students mentioned that years ago a number of students withdrew because some teachers left the programme. The programme management claimed that the declining trend of enrolments is primarily due to the general admission system, as the actually interested (potential) applicants rarely pass these examinations. This is why they put a special effort into promoting the programme in the Siauliai region, offering 3 courses to prepare for the examination, and consistently visiting secondary schools. The alumni however assumed that two most important reasons for the drop-out were the leaving of „strong lecturers“ from the programme (which they mentioned happened several years ago) and because Siauliai is not an attractive location for those interested in media art; one mentioned that the programme was „not for the lazy kind“, and one that dropout is perhaps due to the recent rise of the study fee.

The organisation of the study process by and large ensures an adequate provision of the programme and the achievement of the learning outcomes, with some important issues to be addressed: The use of the virtual learning environment (VLE; which in case of the university is Moodle, „officially“) should be transversally encouraged with the teachers, across the course, as students described a rather inconsistent practice of using online media to support teaching and learning (one teacher using a Facebook closed group to discuss problems before lectures, the Marketing course is using Moodle specially for art students; one teacher uses Google docs). Teachers claimed that they are trained in Moodle and would use it, but that students prefer to use „Facebook or email“, as students can refuse the use of Moodle if they want. Still, they „could use Moodle“ if students would agree. Lecturers do „not really“ communicate with the groups through the internet other than by e-mail (consensus of all teachers interviewed), as live contact suffices. Teachers are available to students for personal contact after scheduled contact classes. The „free attendance“ option is given only to some students and for a maximum of one semester – which the Review Team found to be not sufficiently supported with solutions to assure student progression and assesment. All interviewed students came from Siauliai or from nearby, they had no problems with travel or subsistence during their studies, which was confirmed also by the alumni.

Students are encouraged to participate in artistic and production activities, but not in research or applied research activities. Students are encouraged to exhibit at the Zubovai Gallery in the building of the Faculty of Arts as well as in the Siauliai University Art Gallery. Students’

exhibitions in public spaces (in libraries, schools, galleries, squares etc.) are encouraged by the social partners; these events occur often and are viewed as an asset to the town's cultural scene. Students obtain knowledge on project activities, collaborating with the social partners and students from other programmes. While educational and cultural partnering that supports academic experience can be confirmed, the Review Team could not find sufficient evidence of “advertising and mass media institutions” (SER p. 26) being involved in this realm. The alumni claimed that the real value of this programme was the communication with the teachers and the networking opportunities they enjoyed, many have spent more time at school than needed just because they were a „good academic community“.

Students have opportunities to participate in student mobility programmes, but they do not use them enough, as outgoing mobility keeps dropping below 10 %. Erasmus practical placement is used, as students believe that this kind of competency development is particularly needed (3 in 2012, 2 in 2013). The Erasmus programme is adequately promoted by the school, but the teachers of the programme could, and should, do more to motivate students to use it more often.

The higher education institution ensures an adequate level of academic and social support which however overly relies on good personal relationships of teachers and students, without a suitable level of formalisation. *Students are claimed to be „counselled in career opportunities by the University Career Centre”* (SER, p. 28), which could not be confirmed in the interviews. Other aspects of student care seem to be very good, however a tutoring system should be put in place when student numbers rise (confirmed by the SER, p. 32). The psychologist, chaplain and lawyer mentioned in the SER p. 30 as strength of the programme were not mentioned by students, however they mentioned depending on each other and on the teachers, with whom they have very good and close relationships. The programme should introduce solutions to formalize individual student support and student guidance as well as gathering of student feedback in the programme both in qualitative and quantitative terms.

The assessment system of students’ performance is clear, adequate and publicly available. All students agreed that at the start of semester they get tasks presented well and assessment criteria are clearly outlined, against which they will be assessed, which confirmed the SER p.31 claim that this is a strength of the programme. „Collegial assessment” (peer assessment) as mentioned is related to 3 courses of the programme, and was positively recognized by students, and also stressed by teachers to be one of the most relevant methods for the media art realm. However the Review Team found that the teachers were not trained or consulted to use these delicate pedagogical methods effectively.

2.6. Programme management

Responsibilities for decisions and monitoring of the implementation of the programme are clearly allocated, however the Review Team would recommend an improvement in the ownership of the programme by both programme and university management to ensure sustainability and strategic management. It will be necessary to devise a clear strategy to address declining student numbers, predominantly by actively promoting the programme to a defined set of target groups. The University has a good quality cycle in place including the provision of a quality month (in May) that also involves IT-relevant up-skilling, but the key stakeholders of the programme of Media Art could not clearly articulate their involvement in this process. During that month many seminars and a conference (they are not compulsory) are held, this time is also used to lead informal conversations with students about the quality of the programme. The Dean could not benchmark the programme to any international programme, not even potentially. The Review Team holds that one of the major problems of this study programme is the lack of strong support from the university management.

Information and data on the implementation of the programme are regularly collected and analysed, but the methods should be optimized and expanded to capture relevant information by all stakeholders. The programme's linkage to the university-level quality assurance process should be improved, as this is an important KPI of the programme. The students currently fill in surveys, but are not informed on the measures taken in response to their input. Small numbers of students on this programme indicate the need to use supplementary methods like focus groups and meetings with student representatives that are more formalized than the current informal practice. The SER is regularly presented to the student group representatives, however they are not involved in the making of it (apart from the student who is a part of the QA committee or SER preparation group). The SER group was allocated parts of the SER report by the Head of Department, the student member just reviewed it all and made comments according to student opinion that he gathered. Students confirmed they actively fill out surveys and later the representative of each study programme group acquaints them with the results, but that the main way to gather feedback was by informal conversations. Students said that if they encounter a problem they will talk to the lecturer and if s/he does not help they would go to a person with a higher position in the institution. They were also not aware about the options provided for them in terms of psychological, social and other support provided on the level of the university (as mentioned above in 2.5). They were not aware of possible representative processes and organs in the university such as round tables, SPC etc. They can also feedback to the local university student union, if there is a serious problem.

The outcomes of internal and external evaluations of the programme are used for the improvement of the programme to a limited extent, but the strategic planning for this programme appears to be rather reactive to ad-hoc detections rather than being strategic and proactive. The Review Team could not find evidence of „round table discussions; focus groups, students and graduates” (SER p. 36) being involved into the process in an adequate way. Changes to the study programme are made under the coordination of the Dean, and according to a consensus among the teachers, including also two representatives of external stakeholders (gallery representative and photo-artists association representative). This process happens mostly in reaction to student feedback collected informally in the pedagogical process, and in contact with two external stakeholder representatives, however without an integrated procedure that would also include students and alumni, as well as making use of the university-level expert resources in the realm of QA. The present external evaluation is the first ever for this programme, and the SER team agreed that the report will be discussed very thoroughly.

The evaluation and improvement processes properly involve stakeholders, who all have a high opinion of the programme. One social partner (representative of a museum) got acquainted with the prepared SER, one was involved in the writing of it – the representative of the town's art gallery. The SER team claimed alumni are the most important source of feedback for programme improvement, however the Review Team found that alumni are not being managed in a sustainable and coherent way by the school, but still the representatives of ex-student cohorts are receiving formal information (per email). Feedback about the relevant competencies is not gathered from alumni in any formal or structured way. The programme collaborates especially with the „Enter“ media and contemporary art festival that started in the same year as the programme did in 2002/3, to get feedback on student benchmarking and competencies needed. External stakeholders are sometimes involved in reviewing final student work and giving their opinion to inform programme development.

The 7 social partners interviewed agreed on a positive need for such graduates in the region and beyond, they also reported positive experiences with graduates and with students on the programme. Examples that were presented to the Review Team include:

1. The **cinema art union** involves students in their projects, at first as assistants, later as artists. They would benchmark the graduates in terms of film/video as follows: The programme provides the fundamentals in video production; but in Lithuania there are not many of such artists – these are equal to Vilnius graduates. In terms of international competition, there are only a few graduates of this programme who are competing there, with a solid quality ("no reason to be ashamed").

2. The **regional TV station** representative said the graduates in their case work in teams with TV-journalists, producing video works only. The graduates in their environment could be called "**Sound/Audio-Visual Director**", as they can work with camera, graphics, visuals etc.

3. The **museum** (with a special department for photography) representative claimed that they are a relevant basis for students' practical placement, who collaborate as assistants in exhibitions and education activities. There is a „mutual need“, as the museum is interested in "growing an audience", just as the school should be.

4. The **online radio** representative claimed that both students are placed and graduates get employed with them, and that synergies are evident. The graduates in their environment could be called "**Sound Operators**".

5. The **Art photographer's union** representative reported to have a lot of input into the development of the programme and in particular into the photography-specialisation. While admitting that all graduates of the programme cannot become acclaimed artists, they are successful competitors on national level – in some cases they are even better than graduates of Vilnius- or Kaunas-based programmes of similar character.

6. The **public library** representative said their institution offers practical placements to students in an active, pedagogical role, which they fulfil well.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The programme **learning outcomes** should be clarified, to more closely specify the profile of the graduate and enable a consistent assessment across the variety of courses.
2. **Clearer pathways should be devised** throughout the curriculum in order to support specialization in a way that allows the student to plan and follow progression towards a defined career.
3. The programme should be reviewed to better balance out the **predominance of photography** both on the level of curriculum as well as the programme implementation; and audio should be strengthened and promoted.
4. The curriculum should be revised in a way to allow **responsive to emerging trends** and speciality diversification in the contemporary **media art realm**.
5. **Diversify and expand staff** to ensure a good coverage of the many different competency areas to be covered by the programme according to its many possible specializations.
6. Opportunities for **staff development should be increased in terms of pedagogical skills and international mobility**, appropriate incentives should be introduced to enable teachers to engage in these processes.
7. Devise and follow up on a complete **strategy to improve and maintain facilities and equipment**, especially given the centrality of sound and video editing within the programme.
8. Introduce solutions to **formalize individual student support**, student guidance and gathering of student feedback in the programme, both in qualitative and quantitative terms.
9. Assure the systematic development of **business, entrepreneurship, career management and other soft skills** in the study programme.
10. Devise a clear strategy to **address declining student numbers**, predominantly by actively **promoting** the programme to a defined set of target groups, and by closing the feedback cycle through alumni.
11. Improve the **ownership** of the programme by both programme and university management to ensure sustainability and **strategic management** as well as the programme's linkage to the university-level quality assurance process.

IV. SUMMARY

The Review Team agreed this is overall **a good, sound programme**, which meets regional needs and prepares students for work in a broad range of media-based occupations.

The breadth of modules in the Media Art programme was found to be well regarded by students, graduates and social partners. Programme aims and learning outcomes are in general clearly articulated and well defined, while in a small number of cases the **learning outcomes were unclear**. Students specialize in a number of areas from Year 3 onwards but the Review Team is of the view that **clearer pathways** need to be defined earlier in the programme to support a relevant range of specializations. The Review Team were concerned that too broad an approach in the aims and outcomes may lead to students not gaining enough skills and knowledge to be professional in their chosen field.

In terms of curriculum design, photography has certain predominance in the programme of Media Art, while sound is under-represented, which does not accurately reflect the aims of the programme as specified. The Review Team were of the view that the **curriculum may need to be refreshed to include or respond to new trends in the media arts realm and in emerging specialist areas**, such as web design, mobile media, trans-media, etc.

Teaching staff are well qualified and supportive of the students. However, teaching staff do need to more fully **embrace a range of trends in the media art realm** and need to be **offered opportunities to refresh their skills and practice**. The small number of staff teaching across a range of courses may be problematic, as staff need to be released to develop their practice or to travel internationally. The programme needs to be more ambitious in its **international outlook** in terms of research, teaching and artistic mobility, and benchmarking.

The programme facilities and learning resources are modest but adequate. Students have access to cameras as well as other equipment, and appear happy with their resources. The library facilities and gallery spaces are very good. A **strategy for updating of resources and equipment to ensure sustainability** will be needed for both hardware and software. The Review Team noted an emphasis in the programme on sound and video editing, but is of the view that **resources** in these areas are limited at present.

There is a good connection between the study programme of Media Art and its staff. Students were clear on assessment models and criteria. The Review Team noted strong relationships between students and individual staff, but many students did not appear to be aware of **broader university-level support possibilities**. If the programme is to grow the current approach based mainly on individual support by teachers would need to be revised. Student needs and opinions are

gathered by means of surveys, but a more **systematic approach to student feedback** needs to be developed. Alumni stated that they would like to see a more **systematic and ambitious approach to business and professional development skills**.

The University has a good quality cycle in place including the provision of a **quality** month, but the Review Team agreed that the key stakeholders of the **programme** of Media Art did not seem able to clearly articulate their **involvement in this process**. A system of effective management is in place, however a greater and **more proactive promotion of this programme** needs to happen at both faculty and University level. This promotion could help to address the worrying decline in student numbers.

Social partners are very supportive of and loyal to the Media Art programme, they appear satisfied with the breadth and the content of the programme as well as with its graduates. A good system of projects and collaborations with the social partners appears to be in place, however they, as well as the alumni, would welcome and be available for **more involvement in the programme**.

V. GENERAL ASSESSMENT

The study programme *Media Art* (state code – 612W61001) at Šiauliai university is given **positive** evaluation.

Study programme assessment in points by evaluation areas.

No.	Evaluation Area	Evaluation of an area in points*
1.	Programme aims and learning outcomes	2
2.	Curriculum design	2
3.	Teaching staff	2
4.	Facilities and learning resources	2
5.	Study process and students' performance assessment	2
6.	Programme management	2
	Total:	12

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

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

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

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

Grupės vadovas:

Team leader: Annie Doona

Grupės nariai:

Team members: Mika Ritalahti

Peter Purg

David Quin

Vilma Samulionytė

Julija Paulauskaitė

**ŠIAULIŲ UNIVERSITETO PIRMOSIOS PAKOPOS STUDIJŲ PROGRAMOS
AUDIOVIZUALINIS MENAS (VALSTYBINIS KODAS – 612W61001)
2016-02-03 EKSPERTINIO VERTINIMO IŠVADŲ NR. SV4-56 IŠRAŠAS**

<...>

V. APIBENDRINAMASIS ĮVERTINIMAS

Šiaulių universiteto studijų programa *Audiovizualinis menas* (valstybinis kodas – 612W61001) vertinama **teigiamai**.

Eil. Nr.	Vertinimo sritis	Srities įvertinimas, balais*
1.	Programos tikslai ir numatomi studijų rezultatai	2
2.	Programos sandara	2
3.	Personalas	2
4.	Materialieji ištekliai	2
5.	Studijų eiga ir jos vertinimas	2
6.	Programos vadyba	2
	Iš viso:	12

* 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 sutaria, kad, apibendrintai vertinant, ši **studijų programa yra gera ir sklandi**, atitinka regioninius poreikius ir parengia studentus darbui įvairiose su audiovizualine medija susijusiose srityse.

Nustatyta, kad studentai, absolventai ir socialiniai partneriai gerai vertina studijų programos *Audiovizualinis menas* modulių aprėptį. Iš esmės studijų programos tikslai ir studijų rezultatai yra aiškiai suformuluoti ir tinkamai apibrėžti, ir tik labai menkos dalies atvejų **studijų rezultatai** vertinimo grupei **atrodė neaiškūs**. Įvairių sričių specializacijas studentai renkasi nuo trečio kurso, tačiau vertinimo grupė laikosi nuomonės, kad, norint išlaikyti atitinkamą jų spektrą, aiškesnes **studijų programos specializacijas** reikia apibrėžti dar anksčiau. Vertinimo grupei kelia nerimą,

kad dėl pernelyg plačių studijų programos tikslų ir rezultatų studentai gali neįgyti pakankamai įgūdžių ir žinių, kurių reikia norint tapti pasirinktos srities specialistais.

Vertinant studijų programos *Audiovizualinis menas* sandarą, joje labiau dominuoja fotografija, o garsas – nustumtas į šalį, dėl to tiksliai neatspindimi nurodytieji studijų programos tikslai. Vertinimo grupė laikosi nuomonės, kad **studijų programos turinį reikėtų atnaujinti, atsivielgiant arba reaguojant į naujas audiovizualinių menų tendencijas ir besiformuojančias specializuotas sritis**, tokias kaip saityno dizainas, mobilioji medija, transmedija ir kt.

Dėstytojai – aukštos kvalifikacijos ir geranoriškai palaiko studentus. Tačiau dėstytojams būtinas platesnis **požiūris į įvairiausias audiovizualinių menų pasaulio tendencijas, todėl jiems reikia pasiūlyti galimybių atšviežinti savo įgūdžius ir praktiką**. Turint nedaug dėstytojų, kurie dėsto daug įvairių studijų dalykų, gali kilti sunkumų, kadangi dėstytojus reikia išleisti tobulintis praktiškai arba į tarptautines keliones. **Vertinant iš tarptautinės perspektyvos**, mokslo tyrimų, dėstytojų, menininkų judumo ir kokybės palyginimo požiūriu ši studijų programa turėtų būti ambicingesnė.

Studijų programos materialieji ištekliai – kuklūs, bet pakankami. Studentai gali naudotis filmavimo kameromis, fotoaparatais ir kita įranga ir atrodo turimais ištekliais patenkinti. Bibliotekos patalpos ir galerijos erdvės – labai geros. Reikalinga strategija, kaip **atnaujinti** kompiuterių aparatinę ir programinę **įrangą bei išteklius**. Vertinimo grupė pastebėjo, kad studijų programoje ypač didelis dėmesys tenka garso ir vaizdo montavimui, tačiau šiuo metu tam skirti **materialieji ištekliai** – riboti.

Ryšys tarp studijų programos *Audiovizualinis menas* ir jos darbuotojų įvardijamas kaip geras. Studentai aiškiai žino vertinimo modelius ir kriterijus. Vertinimo grupė atkreipė dėmesį, kad esama stipraus studentų ir kai kurių dėstytojų tarpusavio ryšio, tačiau daugelis studentų, atrodo, nežino apie **platesnes pagalbos universitetiniu lygiu galimybes**. Jeigu studijų programa bus plėtojama ir toliau, dabartinę metodiką, daugiausia grindžiamą dėstytojų individualiai teikiama pagalba, reikės peržiūrėti. Studentų poreikiai ir nuomonė išsiaiškinami rengiant įvairias apklausas, tačiau būtina sukurti **sistemiškesnį būdą, kaip gauti iš studentų grįžtamąjį ryšį**. Pasak alumnų, jiems norisi **sistemiškesnio ir ambicingesnio požiūrio į verslo įgūdžius ir profesinės kvalifikacijos kėlimą**.

Universitete rengiami geros kokybės užtikrinimo ciklai, įskaitant geros **kokybės** mėnesį, bet vertinimo grupė sutartinai pabrėžia, kad pagrindiniai **studijų programos Audiovizualinis menas** socialiniai dalininkai negali aiškiai suformuluoti, kaip **patys dalyvauja šiame procese**. Veikia efektyvi vadybos sistema, tačiau būtina energingiau ir **labiau proaktyviai populiarinti šią studijų**

programą tiek fakulteto, tiek universiteto lygiu. Šie veiksmai galėtų padėti išspręsti nerimą keliančią mažėjančio studentų skaičiaus problemą.

Studijų programos *Audiovizualinis menas* socialiniai partneriai aktyviai palaiko šią programą ir yra jai lojalūs, atrodo esantys patenkinti tiek studijų programos aprėptimi, tiek turiniu ir jos absolventais. Panašu, kad projektų ir bendradarbiavimo su socialiniais partneriais sistema veikia gerai, tačiau tiek juos, tiek alumnus būtų prasminga dar labiau **įtraukti į šios studijų programos** reikalus.

<...>

III. REKOMENDACIJOS

1. Programos **studijų rezultatus** būtina aiškiau išdėstyti ir tiksliau įvardyti absolventų profilį, kad, atliekant įvairių studijų kursų vertinimą, jų rezultatus būtų galima nuosekliai įvertinti.
2. **Reikėtų sugalvoti aiškesnius studijų sandaros dėstymo būdus**, atitinkančius specializaciją ir leidžiančius studentams planuoti numatomą profesinę karjerą ir jai ruoštis.
3. Studijų programos turinį ir patį įgyvendinimą būtina persvarstyti ir geriau subalansuoti, t. y. **sumažinti fotografijos dominavimą**, o su garsu susijusius dalykus – stiprinti ir populiarinti.
4. Studijų programą reikia pertvarkyti taip, kad ji leistų **reaguoti į besiformuojančias tendencijas** ir įvairias ryškėjančias specializacijas, kurios būdingos šiuolaikiniam **audiovizualinio meno pasauliui**.
5. **Suburti kuo įvairesnius darbuotojus ir išplėsti jų gretas**, kad, atsižvelgiant į galimą specializacijų gausybę, studijų programa pakankamai aprėptų kuo daugiau kompetencijos sričių.
6. **Dėstytojų kvalifikacijai, ypač pedagoginių įgūdžių ir tarptautinio judumo požiūriu, kelti reikia sudaryti kuo daugiau galimybių**, todėl būtina įgyvendinti atitinkamas iniciatyvas, leidžiančias dėstytojams dalyvauti šiuose procesuose.
7. Sukurti visa apimančią **strategiją, kaip pagerinti materialiuosius išteklius ir juos prižiūrėti**, ypač turint omenyje, kad garso ir vaizdo montavimas sudaro šios studijų programos esmę, ir šios strategijos laikytis.
8. Įgyvendinti sprendimus, kaip **formalizuoti individualią pagalbą studentams**, studentų orientavimą ir susirinkti studentų atsiliepimus apie studijų programą kokybiniu ir kiekybiniu požiūriu.
9. Užtikrinti, kad vykdant šią studijų programą, būtų sistemiškai lavinamos **verslo, verslumo, karjeros vadybos ir kitos socialinės kompetencijos**.

10. Parengti aiškia **reagavimo į mažėjantį studentų skaičių** strategiją, populiarinti studijų programą tam tikrose tikslinėse grupėse, palaikyti grįžtamąjį ryšį su alumnais.
11. Pagerinti su šia studijų programa susijusių šalių **bendradarbiavimą**, tam naudojant pačios studijų programos ir universiteto vadybos sistemą, kad būtų užtikrintas jos tvarumas ir **strateginis valdymas**, taip pat susieti studijų programą su universitetiniu lygiu vykdomu kokybės užtikrinimo procesu.

<...>

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)