



STUDIJŲ KOKYBĖS VERTINIMO CENTRAS

VYTAUTO DIDŽIOJO UNIVERSITETO  
**STUDIJŲ PROGRAMOS**  
*SOCIALINĖ POLITIKA (valstybinis kodas – 612L40001)*  
**VERTINIMO IŠVADOS**

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**EVALUATION REPORT**  
*OF SOCIAL POLICY (state code – 612L40001)*  
**STUDY PROGRAMME**  
At VYTAUTAS MAGNUS UNIVERSITY

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Išvados parengtos anglų kalba  
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## DUOMENYS APIE ĮVERTINTĄ PROGRAMĄ

Studijų programos pavadinimas	<i>Socialinė politika</i>
Valstybinis kodas	612L40001
Studijų sritis	socialiniai mokslai
Studijų kryptis	socialinė politika
Studijų programos rūšis	universitetinės
Studijų pakopa	pirmoji
Studijų forma (trukmė metais)	nuolatinės (4), iššęstinės (6)
Studijų programos apimtis kreditais	240
Suteikiamas laipsnis ir (ar) profesinė kvalifikacija	socialinės politikos bakalauras
Studijų programos įregistravimo data	2011 m. kovo 31 d.

## INFORMATION ON EVALUATED STUDY PROGRAMME

Title of the study programme	<i>Social Policy</i>
State code	612L40001
Study area	Social Sciences
Study field	Social Policy
Type of the study programme	University studies
Study cycle	First cycle
Study mode (length in years)	Full-time (4), part-time (6)
Volume of the study programme in credits	240
Degree and (or) professional qualifications awarded	Bachelor in Social Policy
Date of registration of the study programme	31 March 2011

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The Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education

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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 the 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 SKVC. Along with the self-evaluation report (hereafter – SER) and annexes, the following additional documents have been provided by the HEI before, during and/or after the site-visit:

No.	Name of the document
1.	Methodology for final theses
2.	Term papers written by current students

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

BA programme in Social Policy at Vytautas Magnus University (hereafter – VMU) was for the first time offered to students in 2011, therefore this 2014 evaluation is the first one in the

history of the programme. Also, there are no graduates of the programme yet, therefore in some respects, the assessment of the quality of the whole programme is based on predictions. Both teaching staff and management stressed during meetings that this is one of two BA programmes in Social Policy in the country, which speaks for its uniqueness.

BA programme in Social Policy was formed in the context of the whole university defining itself as “classical university of Liberal Arts based on common beliefs and values of freedom, openness, and dialogue (...) with a core emphasis on studying broadly themed subjects ensures that studies offered at VMU are not narrow, or restricted to specialty-bound, pre-defined subjects” (SER paragraph 2). VMU is also labeled by the self evaluation team as “an International University” (paragraph 4). This is stressed in SER, but it was pointed out by teaching staff, senior management and administration staff as well. All those statements are important since they create context for the offered BA in Social Policy.

#### ***1.4. The Review Team***

The review team was assembled in accordance with the *Expert Selection Procedure*, approved by Order No 1-55 of 19 March 2007 of the Director of the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education, as amended on 11 November 2011. The Review Visit to HEI was conducted by the team on 23 September 2014.

- 1. Prof. dr. Turo Virtanen (team leader)**, *Adjunct Professor at the Faculty of Social Sciences, Department of Political and Economic Studies, University of Helsinki, Finland.*
- 2. Prof. dr. Pamela Abbott**, *Senior Researcher and Honorary Professor at the University of Aberdeen, Professor Emeritus at Glasgow, Caledonian University, United Kingdom.*
- 3. Dr. Hanna Mamzer**, *Assistant Professor at the Sociology Department, Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznan, Poland.*
- 4. Mr. Rimantas Dumčius**, *Director, Research & Policy Advice, at the Public Policy and Management Institute, Lithuania.*
- 5. Mr. Eimantas Kisielius**, *student of International Business second cycle study programme at the Kaunas University of Technology.*

## **II. PROGRAMME ANALYSIS**

### ***2.1. Programme aims and learning outcomes***

According to the information gathered during the meeting with senior management and administration staff, the new programme of BA in Social Policy was based on analysis of the situation of the educational market, social demand and interest of prospective students (data analysis from the Ministry of Education and Science and NGO's, there were also direct contacts with NGO's and other institutions – social partners, who have expressed interest in working with graduates having skills and competences offered by the programme). The management has also indicated that the programme was inspired by similar programmes abroad (UK and Germany). Based on this assessment, the proposal of the programme was formed, followed by formal agreements between the department and the faculty, leading to the opening of the programme.

In paragraph 16 of the SER there are listed intended outcomes of education provided within the programme and those are “1) to gather data, using either existing information or generating new data through research; 2) to uncover social problem origins or study how well current policies are working and recommend changes; 3) after identifying solutions, to examine the results of a new policy, determining whether or not the solution worked and at what cost; 4) to communicate findings and promote solutions” (SER para. 16). Competencies expected from graduates are: “Have scientifically – based knowledge about social policy; Master professional skills of social policy analysis and possess awareness of relevant current affairs and analytical thinking; Master professional skills of social research methods and analytical thinking; Conduct himself/herself within the changing requirements of environments and conditions of social policy” (SER para. 18). Intended learning outcomes could be specified in more precise way. There are several formulations about aims on pages 8-9 and 11 of the SER. It is not clear which of them is the core aim or mission of the programme. The interviews emphasized the need for evidence-based social policy and the importance of social change in Lithuania. The core aim of the programme needs further reflection.

Staff, when asked about the biggest challenge for the programme had, mentioned: that a biggest challenge is to increase number of students and internalization process as a whole, as well as a necessity of inviting social partners and strengthening their contribution.

The students gain skills in life-long learning and employability skills – in other words, students are prepared for graduate employment in the labour market as well as demonstrating graduate level competencies in social policy. Part of the basis for this claim is the breadth of a liberal arts degree. Students also learn practical skills on the core social policy element of the

degree and have two placements. As the degree has not yet produced graduates we cannot test this claim against graduate employment but seems like the curriculum and assessment methods that students will gain confirm these skills.

**In conclusion:**

- The programme aims and learning outcomes are publicly accessible through webpages and internet resources, direct meetings with prospective students (high schools) and their parents. However intended learning outcomes could be specified in more precise way. Also the core aim of the programme needs further reflection.
- The programme aims and learning outcomes are rooted in the academic requirements, public needs and the needs of the labour market.
- The programme aims and learning outcomes correspond with BA level of expected competencies.
- The name of the programme, learning outcomes, content and the qualifications offered fulfil basic expectations towards BA programmes, as they do correspond with the Study Cycle Descriptor requirements for this level of studies.

**2.2. Curriculum design**

During the meeting with staff preparing SER it was stated that Sheffield University and Bremen University are partner universities in consulting curriculum, which staff considers attractive. Similar opinion was expressed by students during the meeting. The design of the Curriculum of studies follows the whole VMU strategy, therefore education is divided into 2 stages: “In the first stage, students in Social Policy study Common Subjects (25 % of the programme, or 60 ECTS)“ (SER para. 38). And in the second stage they study Field Subjects (75%, or 180 ECTS). „This stage is divided into three parts: Basic Subjects of the study field (90 ECTS), Special (Professional) Subjects (60 ECTS), Internships and Final Thesis (30 ECTS)“ (SER para. 38). Division of subjects into four types also reflects internal policy at VMU. Therefore subjects are divided into categories: Group A - subjects obligatory for all students of the university; Group B introductory courses to various fields of study areas; The Group C subjects make up the core of the programme (subdivided into C1, C2, C3 and C4 categories); Group D- subjects freely chosen by students. There are practical internships incorporated into this programme (as C3). Curriculum design meets legal requirements in terms of providing education corresponding with the cycle of studies.

The content of the programme is based on the newest research (especially from abroad), as exemplified by the recommended reference material of the course descriptions. Subjects proposed are relevant in terms of social policy as a research field and discipline. Courses like perspectives of Social Policy, Social Inequality and Social Division, and Social Policy Process and Analysis deliver core ideas of social policy and their connections to social theory. The scope of subjects seems to be sufficient. Research methodology is offered to students with sufficient depth and scope, especially if the courses include Methods of Social Research, Qualitative and Quantitative Social Science Methods and Analysis of Quantitative methods (the descriptions of the courses available differ between the updated Annex 1 and Annex 4). Also division to compulsory and optional classes is mostly adequate, but it could be reconsidered at the same time as the mission of the programme is under reformulation. For example, why the course of the Organization and Delivery of Welfare is optional, but the course of Regional Policy and Organization is compulsory.

The SER claims that the contributing discipline subjects (economics, politics, law, sociology) are designed to meet the needs of social policy students, which indeed is the case and looking at the subject descriptors these courses are designed to meet the needs of social policy students and some are focused on social policy (e.g. Social Psychology). The SER claims that the curriculum is a well designed one that teaches core subjects and offers option subjects that one would expect on an undergraduate social policy degree: which is confirmed by the structure of curriculum. The compulsory subjects cover the main theories and issues as well as enabling students to gain a necessary understanding of contributing disciplines and students have a range of optional social policy courses from which to choose. The learning outcomes are well summarised on P13 of the SER. They also claim that the programme enables students to understand global social policy issues and social policy in Europe. Subjects cover these in sufficient depth and breadth: there are a number of core subjects that cover these topics e.g. Demography and Population Policy, EU Economics and Social Policy, Comparative Social Policy and Poverty, Social Exclusion and Social Policy.

In the opinion of senior staff and administration, the department has complete freedom of decision in terms of Group C classes, which are core classes for the programme. In terms of organization, the programme is based on general rules applied to the whole VMU.

Teachers, students have confirmed that there are no courses in English in Social Policy, and as far as the teaching staff claims – there are no plans to conduct such courses. Students can choose Group A, B and D subjects taught in English (as general university offer), but not C courses.



The adequacy of course descriptions should be revised. They include tables about study programme learning outcomes compared to course outcomes that are further linked to the criteria of learning achievement evaluation. However, learning assignments (exams, seminar papers etc.) are not linked to assessment criteria that would be originating from intended learning outcomes. Another aspect that is worth to be concerned is the reading list – it is important to take care of the balance between English and Lithuanian study materials. It may be a challenge in terms of updating materials but special importance should be given to making sure that reading materials in English are understandable to students.

**In conclusion:**

- The curriculum of studies at BA in Social Policy follows logic of Liberal Arts type of schools. Study subjects are spread properly, they are not repeated and workload expected from students is even as well. Number of hours allowed for various forms of education (seminar, lecture, internship etc) is properly divided (this opinion is based on documentation, but also on direct conversations with students. Also in the opinion of the teaching staff this division is done properly). Course objectives, learning outcomes, achievement evaluation, need further consideration as well as links between course outcomes and content.
- The area that is worth to be improved is to consider offering to students classes in English – this is based on students’ expectations (expressed during the meeting with students, reflected also in the SER as demand for professional English language courses). During the meeting students (4 persons present) have explained this need: they claim that teachers give a lot of literature in English, but there are no English professional language courses and students have problems understanding vocabulary. It is also challenge that they do experience during classes conducted in English by visiting professors. It is worth to admit, that the level of spoken English of students present at the meeting was not very advanced, which would indicate the need for more instruction in this language. This would also suggest attention in holding balance between English and Lithuanian textbooks for students, in order to make sure that they can fully understand provided material.

**2.3. Teaching staff**

The staff listed as teaching within the BA programme demonstrates a big variety of skills and experience, which ranges from academic achievements to practical experience in the field, education and active role in agencies, institutions and authorities playing role in social policy

creating and implementation. The quality of the staff is assured by annual assessments. During the meeting, senior staff expressed the opinion that in terms of human resource management the department has some freedom in prizing the most active and effective teachers: the Faculty provides some budget to the Department to be distributed according to the needs. Rewarding may happen not only by financial compensation but also by reduction in the amount of teaching hours.

All teachers are active in terms of conducting their own research which is also open for students to participate, although it is not very often that students do it. Staff also has a wide range of options (that are used) for increasing their competencies: possibilities to attend international conferences, have chance to publish in international journals. Teaching is based on the lecturers' own research and is enriched by obtained results.

Teaching and teaching methodology is differentiated: teachers are free to apply their own ideas in teaching in order to make it more interesting (for example field work, visual sociology methods, participating observation, group or individual work, practical tasks to be solved in the field etc.). Teachers claim they do get support on this issue if they need it. There is no one standard excellence course set (learning package) which teachers could use, but if they feel they want to develop in a certain area they are free to apply for certain courses, ask for assistance, etc. Teaching staff expressed awareness of the fact that the teachers are evaluated by students and university administration as well, and they are provided feedback on this.

There is sufficient staff teaching on the programme and they have relevant expertise in social policy as evidenced by research, qualifications in terms of the knowledge necessary to provide quality teaching – this is an important issue to address as this is the first undergraduate degree to be offered in Social Policy in Lithuania. There is sufficient expertise among the staff teaching on the programme to deliver the degree (as can be seen by looking at their CVs). It is important however to stress that staff needs to be matched with the courses to make certain that proper teaching is delivered and also need to make certain that too much reliance is not being placed on visiting lecturers to contribute the social policy expertise. On the whole, the teaching staff meets the legal requirements and the turnover does not risk the adequate provision of the programme.

**In conclusion:**

- The teaching staff is properly selected, based on adequate qualifications.
- The number of the teaching staff is sufficient to ensure learning outcomes and adequate provision of the programme.
- The institution offers conditions for the professional development of the teaching staff.

- Although teaching staff is actively involved in research related to the study programme it is worth to encourage stronger international cooperation of staff in order to attract international experts to teach at VMU (stressed also in SER par. 76).

#### ***2.4. Facilities and learning resources***

The programme uses facilities owned by VMU. These include classrooms, computers and electronic equipment, laboratories etc. There is standard equipment available for teaching (beamers, speakers, laptops) but not all of the classrooms are equipped with electronic equipment – beamers and laptops specifically. Both students and staff can use library. The actual teaching of the BA programme in Social Policy is conducted in a recently built building, which is in a very high standard. Actual visit in the building proved that hygienic, aesthetic and functional standards of the building are very high. There are paths and lifts for disabled persons, wide door sizes allow comfortable access to the premises of department. There is new furniture and there is plenty of equipment provided for teaching. Wi-fi is accessible for students and teachers. The department also possesses equipment necessary for professional language teaching (which includes cabins for consecutive translation). The meeting with librarian proved willingness to accommodate needs of users from both students' and teacher's groups. It was evident that the library is interested in the utilisation of the feedback from academics and students. Library resources are adequate to the needs of the programme (enough hard copies of books and handbooks, sufficient variety of journals and databases). The practical aspect of teaching is conducted in a proper way by providing students with wide range of employers offering internships.

#### **In conclusion:**

- Conditions of studying are adequate to the programme requirements in terms of size and quality.
- This refers to the rooms and space arrangement, but also equipment and library resources.
- It was explained during the meetings that the new building of the department was finished approximately a month ago, so teaching of BA in Social Policy will be conducted in completely new conditions: the building is well equipped, user friendly and inspiring to work.

#### ***2.5. Study process and students' performance assessment***

Admission to the BA programme in Social Policy is organized in a proper way, which is not questioned neither by teaching staff, neither by administration, nor students. The best students are offered state-funded positions. The number of applying students remains on the same level so far — reaches approximately 20 students per year which allows forming proper size groups for studying.

In the opinion of the students expressed at the meetings, the programme is interesting, and corresponds with personal interests of the students. Students claim they like classes because of their personal interests, they like the combination of various teachers' experiences as well as the variety of teaching methods.

Not only the best students are offered university's assistance: all students of the programme can express themselves through various activities: university seminars, meetings, research and workshops – which the university considers as forms of student support. Other forms of support available to all students include: some financial aid, getting feedback on students' progress as well as assistance in adjusting actual timetables of classes to other obligations that students have. Also the possibility of using the internet (including Moodle platform) is seen as such, although this seems to be standard form of teaching those days already. Usage of Moodle, all electronic means in communicating with teachers was confirmed by both groups: students and staff. During separate meetings Career Center offers support to students in terms of personal development. There is a number of types of scholarships offered to students. Student assessments methods are clear and in opinion of both staff and students they are transparent and proper, although the structure of course descriptions does not include assessment criteria per each study assignment. There is also applied at VMU anti-plagiarism system that prevents from cheating and limits dishonest practices. University Committee of Academic Ethics acts as a formal entity solving discussive cases. Students do participate in research of teachers – however, this is not very common and is based on individual interests. Students expressed also awareness of possibilities of studying abroad. From interviews with students and teachers it sounds like students do not use very often options of studying abroad and they do not participate in research activities of the teaching staff – students said they are informed during lectures that they can participate in research, but have not come across of students using this option of extra activity.

A very important part of the curriculum are internships. All interviewed parties (students, teachers and social partners) confirmed the process of assigning placements: based on the list of organizations provided by the department, students choose institutions of their interest. Students also can indicate another institution, which corresponds better with students' interests. Based on

their own choice and individual arrangements they can move internship to the third year of studies, although normally it is expected to be completed on the 4<sup>th</sup> year of studies.

It is necessary to emphasize that at the meeting with employers and social partners there were represented 7 different social partners: seniors association, political parties, municipal representatives, charity organizations, social services providers, business partners, youth organizations. This extensive representation of various bodies reflects strong social and institutional need for a graduates of BA programme in Social Policy: for having representatives among political elite, representing those organizations' interests. All of represented agents are very much interested in getting support of researchers, staff qualified in data analyzing, trained in delivering proper research findings. Two out of seven represented institutions had previous involvement into curriculum creation for the programme. The rest of the bodies are in touch in this or other way with university, but they have not really had a chance to offer internships to students yet. They do have experiences from having interns from different departments. Social partners will have a chance to introduce themselves face to face to students and promote their offer.

**In conclusion:**

- Admission requirements are properly created and followed.
- The studying process is properly organized and followed which is reflected in documentation provided, but also evident from meetings with students, staff and administration.
- Students are offered options for developing their own interests, also in terms of research, mobility programmes etc.
- Students are offered proper level of academic and social support.
- The assessment system of students' performance is adequate and available in the sense that students have easy access to teachers and they do receive feedback on their performance (confirmed independently by both students and teaching staff).

***2.6. Programme management***

The main administrative units responsible for programme management are the Study Programme Committee, the Department of Sociology and its administration, and the Faculty of Social Science (its administration and the Council of Faculty). Quality of the programme is ensured by control of the teaching process, staff annual assesment, collection of students opinions, evaluations and administrative staff opinions and some feedback from social partners. All those elements were mentioned by representatives of students, staff and administration. At

the end of each semester Study Programme Committee gathers together in order to analyze data and propose necessary changes for improvements. The implementation and evaluation of the programme is warranted by the VMU Internal Study Quality Assurance. The results of study programme quality evaluation are posted on the websites of the Department of Sociology. Especially during the meeting with senior staff and senior administration, the dean mentioned they do pay particular attention to maintaining the quality of the programme, for example, by following the performance of Study Programme Committee. In addition, the utilisation of students' feedback is continuous (which has not lead to any major changes due to the short existence of the programme, and because, according to the feedback, the programme seems to meet students' expectations). Extra contribution to the quality of the programme comes from fruitful collaboration with social partners and their involvement into developing curriculum, giving lectures etc. These examples show how stakeholders have been involved successfully. Teachers are led to communicate about their courses to make sure that there are no overlaps and that the heterogeneity of students' previous studies is addressed. This indicates that there is a working coordination mechanism in place.

During the meeting, teaching staff explained their level of involvement into teaching: teaching in BA Social Policy is a part time job for majority of the teachers in a sense, that teachers are affiliated to some other departments, considered as main affiliation units. If academics are willing to teach in other programmes, they are free to do it, after fulfilling basic requirements in teaching in "home unit". The priority is to teach in "mother" department but they do get extra hours to teach in BA in Social Policy as well. In those terms it may be sometimes challenging to adjust level and methodology of teaching to differentiated level of the students, but according to what teaching staff says (and what students do confirm), there are no major problems in this area, especially since learning outcomes and learning achievements are openly discussed and communicated in order to fulfil organizational expectations.

Students do evaluate teachers. Focus Group Interviews are conducted with students in order to collect feedback on the quality of teaching and quality of the programme itself. It is expected that results will be visible to prospective students.

It is worth to develop a system of monitoring career paths of those graduating from BA in Social Policy for future monitoring of effectiveness of the programme. This could be used as a very effective tool of feedback on the adequacy of teaching the programme, learning outcomes and its application to the labour market needs, especially because the programme is new.

**In conclusion:**

- There is clear allocation, division and responsibility for decisions and monitoring of the implementation of the programme.
- Necessary information and data on the implementation of the programme are regularly collected and analysed. (e.g. focus groups evaluations and regular annual evaluations based on questionnaires available on the internet)
- The outcomes of evaluations conducted in different forms are taken into consideration.
- On the basic level the evaluation and improvement processes involve stakeholders.
- The internal quality assurance measures are clear.

### **III. RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. The area that is worth to be intensified is international cooperation to be connected also with professional English language courses (related to Social Policy). It also would be beneficial to students if they are offered C type courses in the English language. English should be taught also in relation to the aim of the programme and the university defining itself as an international university.

### **IV. EXAMPLES OF EXCELLENCE (GOOD PRACTICE)**

The development of the curriculum and the study programme on the whole together with relevant international partners, University of Sheffield and Universität Bremen, and social partners from Lithuania. Those practices are worth to be shared with other institutions as they significantly enrich the programme. This is related to both academic, more theoretical approach as well as practical aspects of studying. The cooperation with social partners must be outstanding: judging by their presence at the meeting and willingness to share their comments and feedback.

### **V. SUMMARY**

*Social Policy* is a first cycle study programme in the field of Social Policy, implemented at Vytautas Magnus University in Kaunas. The programme does not have any graduates yet and this is its first external evaluation. The programme was offered for the first time to students in 2011 and was a result of wider research on labour market. The programme team consulted with German and British universities to ensure the quality in teaching. The main strengths and weaknesses of the programme are as follows:

#### **Programme aims and learning outcomes**

In the context of the whole programme as it is offered and learning outcomes as they are designed, it is clear that a broad spectrum of educational goals following the Liberal Arts concept of studies is definitely a strength of the programme. An attempt of connecting this broad approach with learning outcomes of a specific field – Social Policy – is also evident, which also should be considered positive.

Further consideration should be given for a more consistent specification of the aims the programme, as there are now several competing formulations. Clarification in this area is instrumental to more transparent justification of which courses are compulsory and which are optional.

### **Curriculum design**

The curriculum of the study programme is properly designed and adequate to expectations towards BA programmes. There is clearly demonstrated interest in innovative teaching methods, interactive, creative, inspiring, technology based techniques, which can be used as an important element to attract prospective students. This is a strong asset which may be used in order to attract and motivate students.

Among aspects worth further consideration there is maintaining balance between general education and classes focused specifically on Social Policy. The challenge of maintaining this balance is visible for example in the fact, that it may seem unclear how division between compulsory and optional courses was made (so it would be worth to clarify this). It is particularly important to offer optional courses which are designed to increase competencies of students of this particular programme.

### **Teaching staff**

An asset of the programme is properly selected staff, qualified in an adequate way in terms of experience necessary in order to provide proper quality teaching. Staff has experience in research related to teaching subjects, international cooperation and is willing to develop their teaching skills.

It is worth to consider, however, even stronger cooperation with international institutions. This cooperation exists, however, in the context of self-definition of the university (which classifies itself as an international one), it is worth to strengthen this field of activity. Particularly it is worth to look at options of inviting more international staff to visit VMU (this is stressed also in SER).



### **Facilities and learning resources**

VMU facilities are good, adequate and sufficient in terms of size and quality and they allow to provide quality studying in the programme. Particularly positive is an attitude demonstrated by library staff, who is interested in feedback from academics and students and who is willing to accommodate to their needs as much as possible.

### **Study process and students' performance assessment**

Among positives: admission to the programme is clear and students have the clear view of how their work is assessed. Moreover, they are provided feedback on their performance – both students and staff claimed that it is very easy for students to contact teachers, and they are accessible all the time, willing to comment on students' work. On the other hand, the process of teaching is assessed by students especially in forms of focus group interviews and regular annual evaluations.

### **Programme management**

A strong positive element is proper management of the programme, which includes transparency and organization. Important asset of the programme is in its practical strength: the cooperation with social partners is proactive, strong and close and it is certainly worth to continue to work this way, especially since there is a lot of interest of social partners in collaboration. This cooperation with external partners is an outstanding example of management excellence worth to be shared with other institutions.

## VI. GENERAL ASSESSMENT

The study programme *Social Policy* (state code – 612L40001) at Vytautas Magnus 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	3
2.	Curriculum design	3
3.	Teaching staff	3
4.	Facilities and learning resources	4
5.	Study process and students' performance assessment	3
6.	Programme management	4
	<b>Total:</b>	<b>20</b>

\*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:	Prof. dr. Turo Virtanen
Grupės nariai: Team members:	Prof. dr. Pamela Abbott
	Dr. Hanna Mamzer
	Mr. Rimantas Dumčius
	Mr. Eimantas Kisielius

**VYTAUTO DIDŽIOJO UNIVERSITETO PIRMOS PAKOPOS STUDIJŲ PROGRAMOS  
SOCIALINĖ POLITIKA (VALSTYBINIS KODAS – 612L40001) 2014-11-17  
EKSPERTINIO VERTINIMO IŠVADŲ NR. SV4-553 IŠRAŠAS**

&lt;...&gt;

**VI. APIBENDRINAMASIS ĮVERTINIMAS**

Vytauto Didžiojo universiteto studijų programa *Socialinė politika* (valstybinis kodas – 612L40001) vertinama **teigiamai**.

<b>Eil. Nr.</b>	<b>Vertinimo sritis</b>	<b>Srities įvertinimas, balais*</b>
1.	Programos tikslai ir numatomi studijų rezultatai	3
2.	Programos sandara	3
3.	Personalas	3
4.	Materialieji ištekliai	4
5.	Studijų eiga ir jos vertinimas	3
6.	Programos vadyba	4
	<b>Iš viso:</b>	<b>20</b>

\* 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)

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**V. SANTRAUKA**

*Socialinė politika* yra pirmosios pakopos socialinės politikos krypties studijų programa, įgyvendinama Vytauto Didžiojo universitete Kaune. Dar nėra šios programos absolventų, o šis išorinis vertinimas yra pirmasis. Pirmą kartą ši programa studentams buvo pasiūlyta 2011 m., išsamiau ištyrus darbo rinką. Programos rengimo grupė konsultavosi su Vokietijos ir Didžiosios Britanijos universitetais, kad užtikrintų mokymo kokybę. Pagrindinės programos stiprybės ir silpnybės yra šios:

**Programos tikslai ir numatomi studijų rezultatai**

Atsižvelgiant į visą programą ir numatomus studijų rezultatus, akivaizdu, kad neabejotina šios programos stiprybė yra daugybė švietimo tikslų, suformuluotų vadovaujantis *artes liberales* studijų koncepcija. Be to, aiškiai pastebimos yra akivaizdžios pastangos šį platų požiūrį susieti su

konkrečios krypties, t. y. socialinės politikos, numatomais studijų rezultatais, ir tai taip pat reikėtų laikyti teigiama šios programos savybe.

Dar reikėtų labiau suderinti programos tikslus, nes šiuo metu yra kelios formuluotės. Didesnis aiškumas šioje srityje padėtų aiškiau pagrįsti, kodėl vieni dalykai yra privalomieji, o kiti – pasirenkamieji.

### **Programos sandara**

Šios studijų programos sandara gera, atitinkanti bakalauro studijų programoms keliamus reikalavimus. Akivaizdus dėmesys pažangiems mokymo metodams, interaktyviems, kūrybiniais, technologijoms pagrįstiems metodams, kurie gali būti patrauklūs būsimiems studentams. Tai vertingas dalykas, galintis pritraukti ir motyvuoti studentus.

Dar reikėtų suderinti bendrojo lavinimo ir konkrečiai socialinei politikai skirtus dalykus. Šios pusiausvyros užtikrinimo būtinumą rodo tai, kad galbūt ne visai aišku, kaip nustatyti privalomieji ir pasirenkamieji dalykai (reikėtų tai paaiškinti). Ypač svarbu pasiūlyti laisvai pasirenkamus dalykus, kurie yra skirti šios konkrečios programos studentų gebėjimams ugdyti.

### **Personalas**

Šios programos turtas – tinkamai atrinkti darbuotojai, kompetentingi ir turintys patirtį, reikalingą kokybiškam mokymui užtikrinti. Darbuotojai turi patirtį su dėstomais dalykais susijusių mokslinių tyrimų, tarptautinio bendradarbiavimo srityse, jie noriai tobulina savo pedagoginius gebėjimus.

Tačiau reikėtų stiprinti ryšius su tarptautinėmis institucijomis. Nors su jomis ir bendradarbiaujama, bet, atsižvelgiant į tai, kaip universitetas save apibūdina (priskiria save tarptautiniams universitetams), būtų tikslinga stiprinti šią veiklos sritį. Ypač reikėtų kviestis daugiau užsienio dėstytojų į VDU (tai pabrėžiama ir savianalizės suvestinėje).

### **Materialieji ištekliai**

VDU patalpos ir įranga yra tinkamos, pakankamos ir užtikrina kokybiškas sąlygas studijuoti šiai programai studijuoti. Ypač pozityvus yra bibliotekos darbuotojų požiūris – jie suinteresuoti, kad dėstytojai ir studentai teiktų grįžtamąjį ryšį, ir yra pasirengę kuo labiau prisitaikyti prie jų poreikių.

### **Studijų eiga ir jos vertinimas**

Iš privalumų būtų galima paminėti tai, kad studentų priėmimo į šią programą sąlygos yra aiškios, studentai gerai žino, kaip vertinamas jų darbas. Be to, jie gauna grįžtamąjį ryšį apie savo mokslo rezultatus; ir dėstytojai, ir studentai tvirtino, kad studentai gali labai lengvai palaikyti ryšius su dėstytojais – dėstytojai yra visada pasiekiami ir noriai komentuoja studentų darbą. Antra vertus, mokymo procesą vertina studentai, ypač tikslinių grupių apklausų ir metinių vertinimų forma.

### **Programos vadyba**

Didelė šios programos stiprybė yra tinkama jos vadyba, skaidri ir gerai organizuota. Svarbus programos privalumas yra jos praktinis stiprumas – iniciatyvus, tvirtas ir glaudus bendradarbiavimas su socialiniais partneriais, kuri, be abejo, reikia ir toliau stiprinti, ypač dėl to, kad socialiniai partneriai taip pat labai suinteresuoti šiuo bendradarbiavimu. Bendradarbiavimas su išorės partneriais yra puikus geros vadybos pavyzdys, ir šia patirtimi reikėtų pasidalinti su kitomis institucijomis.

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### **III. REKOMENDACIJOS**

1. Vertėtų sustiprinti tarptautinį bendradarbiavimą, susieti jį su profesinės anglų kalbos dalykais (susijusiais su Socialine politika). Dar būtų naudinga, jei studentams būtų dėstomi C grupės dalykai anglų kalba. Be to, anglų kalba turėtų būti mokoma atsižvelgiant į šios programos tikslą ir į tai, kad universitetas laiko save tarptautiniu universitetu.

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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)