



STUDIŲ KOKYBĖS VERTINIMO CENTRAS

**ŠIAULIŲ UNIVERSITETO
MENINIO UGDYMO IR TIKYBOS PROGRAMOS
(61207S132 (612X10010))
VERTINIMO IŠVADOS**

**EVALUATION REPORT
OF ARTISTIC EDUCATION AND RELIGION (61207S132
(612X10010))
STUDY PROGRAMME
AT SIAULIAI UNIVERSITY**

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DUOMENYS APIE ĮVERTINTĄ PROGRAMĄ

Studijų programos pavadinimas	Meninis ugdymas ir tikyba
Valstybinis kodas	61207S132 (612X10010)
Studijų sritis	socialiniai mokslai
Studijų kryptis	pedagogika
Studijų programos rūšis	universitetinės studijos
Studijų pakopa	pirmoji
Studijų forma (trukmė metais)	nuolatinė (4)
Studijų programos apimtis kreditais ¹	160
Suteikiamas laipsnis ir (ar) profesinė kvalifikacija	pedagogikos bakalauras, mokytojas
Studijų programos įregistravimo data	2003 m. gegužės 29 d.

¹ – vienas kreditas laikomas lygiu 40 studento darbo valandų

INFORMATION ON EVALUATED STUDY PROGRAMME

Name of the study programme	Artistic education and religion
State code	61207S132 (612X10010)
Study area	social sciences
Study field	pedagogics
Kind of the study programme	university studies
Level of studies	first
Study mode (length in years)	full-time (4)
Scope of the study programme in national credits ¹	160
Degree and (or) professional qualifications awarded	bachelor of education
Date of registration of the study programme	29 May 2003

¹ – one credit is equal to 40 hours of student work

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I. INTRODUCTION

The main purpose of the present self-assessment report is to describe the results of the assessment of the Bachelor's degree programme in philosophy and public science offered by the Faculty of Education and the Department of Philosophy and Anthropology of the Faculty of Humanities at the Šiauliai University.

The assessment process consisted of an in-depth analysis of the self-assessment report produced by the self-assessment group and evaluation visit. During the visit, the assessors were able to inquire into all the aspects that compose the programme.

The Department of Art Education is responsible for the study programme *Artistic Education and Religion*. In 2008 international experts assessed the study programme, and it was given conditional accreditation. Given that feedback the Faculty of Education and the Department of Philosophy effected the following major improvements:

- the module *World Religions* (2 credits) was introduced and while implementing the separate modules of religion more attention was paid to inter-religion contexts of Catholic Religion studies;
- Given that the institution was asked to reconsider the integration of various fields in order to strengthen the interdisciplinary part of the programme, to establish greater coherence between theory and practice, and improve the quality of the preparation of the Bachelor theses the course of educational research was expanded in both volume and study schedule (in the 3rd semester an additional module *Educational Researches 1. Term Paper* (3 credits) was introduced, which is extended in the 4th semester (2 credits)). In order to strengthen the relationship between theory and practice, the pedagogical practice placement has been introduced as from the 1st semester: the volume of pedagogical practice placement was increased to 23 credit points and consists of the observation practice, assisting practice and professional or autonomous practice;
- The choreography lessons have been transferred to the aerobics hall within the sport complex, where the floor surface corresponds to the requirements for such kind of activities;
- ŠU Science Fund has been established. It supports various scientific events, secondments, trips to international scientific conferences, etc.

The administration team has also introduced a number of developments, including re-designing the programme according to ECTS methodology, employing new methods of studies (case studies, foreign language learning programmes) and improving infrastructure by opening three new laboratories.

II. PROGRAMME ANALYSIS

1. Programme aims and learning outcomes

1.1. Programme demand, purpose and aims

1.1.1. Uniqueness and rationale of the need for the programme

The need for the study programme is justified by the research carried out in relation to the demand of the labour market. The need for the study programme *Artistic Education and Religion* is motivated by the shortage of the teachers of these subjects in Šiauliai district as well as in Lithuania. According to the data provided by the Šiauliai Diocese, 132 Religion teachers and catechists work in catechists centres and schools. 10% of them do not have teacher's professional qualification and 43% of them do not have corresponding special qualification. 25% of them have higher pedagogical education, 23% - have university pedagogical education.

All the stakeholders confirmed that the uniqueness of the programme lies in the way art, as a discipline, is used for the teaching and learning of religion education. At the same time, the Ministry of Science and Education also recommended that while preparing teachers to teach Religion as a subject they also take into account their additional role within educational institutions. Therefore, this programme prepares graduates who are also able to work as non-formal educators in the field of art education. On the other hand, the title of the programme does not give clear indication that artistic education is considered as a method of preparation for the additional role at schools while the main demand of the programme is focused on the part of religion education.

It can be summarised that the balance between religion education and artistic education is a challenge considering the consecutive model of the pedagogical degree programme while students are in favour of a concurrent model, which requires a different approach to the way the programme is currently conceptualised.

1.1.2. Conformity of the programme purpose with institutional, state and international directives

The study programme *Artistic Education and Religion* is based on a variety of local and international strategies and confirms a general development perspectives of state and especially the region of northern Lithuania. Development tendencies of European education are emphasized in documents (e.g. *Strategy of Social Cohesion* (2004), where the tolerance to cultural diversity, social responsibility, significance of active participation in the life of civic community, etc. are emphasized; *National Strategy of Harmonious Development* (2003), where the increase of the

roles of education and science in order to preserve the cultural peculiarity in Lithuania is regarded as one type of cultural field; *Strategy of Permanent Development of State for Years 2003-2012*, where special attention is paid in order to create the economy substantiated by knowledge, priorities of science and education, etc.; *Provisions of Strategies of State Education for Years 2003-2012*, where one of the fields is to ensure the succession of culture of nation state, permanent creation, preservation of identity as well as to uphold the open and dialogical manner of this culture, etc.; *National Report of Balanced Development Implementation (2002)*, where prominence is given to informal education and activities and whose aim is the development of free, independent thinking and active individuals within a civic and democratic society; *Development of National Lituanistics for Years 2009-2015 (2009)*, where the aim to develop national culture which would be open to the values of the nation, Europe and world, dialogue among cultures, the ability to preserve and strengthen national traditions under the conditions of globalization and socio-cultural integration is expressed.

However, these developments are more related to the general role that a teacher plays, but does not explain particular contribution of artistic education and religion teaching, especially considering religion pluralism.

1.1.3. Relevance of the programme aims

The aim of the programme is to prepare the bachelor of education, a teacher of non-formal artistic activities and religion, who is oriented towards ongoing personal development; the development of spiritual culture and one who has the necessary disciplinary and interdisciplinary knowledge for this professional activity; general and professional (special) capabilities, moral provisions and personal features necessary to reveal non-formal artistic education and the essence of Christian religion, organize and manage children's and young people's artistic reflection and insights as well as the reconstructions of the individual's value system, capable to carry out analytical research, and constantly developing and participating in the creation of civic society.

The aim of the programme here equally focuses on religion and artistic education in order to provide a degree in education science and to prepare a teacher of non-formal artistic activity and religion. On the other hand, religion education is dominating in a sense of active stakeholders and their impact. This confirms that programme has a strong focus on religion education. On the other hand, non-formal artistic education here is not considered as a method or approach to prepare teachers while this was indicated as the unique feature of the programme during the meetings with the different groups. There is concern that the artistic component per se

is not a means to an end, it is not used as a medium to teach religion but as a discipline in its own right.

1.2. Learning outcomes of the programme

1.2.1. Comprehensibility and attainability of the learning outcomes

The outcomes of studies are of sufficiently complex level that corresponds to the type of studies, e.g. competences, which correspond to education science and other related sciences as well as teacher's qualification. As Art Education and Religion is the programme of university studies, higher cognitive skills (analysis, synthesis, assessment) are emphasized while attention is also paid to the aims of lower cognitive skills (knowing, awareness, and especially application). The level of study outcomes also corresponds to European (6 level). In accordance to the inventory of competences of teacher's profession (2007) the intended activities are divided into 13 competences, each of which on average is differentiated into 5-7 capabilities or knowledge. Quantitatively the number of study outcomes is not low, but the level of their complexity corresponds to the type, trend and level of studies. During the set up period of studies students are able to achieve the learning outcomes in the programme.

The learning outcomes clearly express requirements for attainment of teachers' qualification. However, the learning outcomes in the field of artistic education consider artistic expression (*Musical (Self-) Development. Practical Placement 1; Choreographic (Self-) Development. Practical Placement 1; Visual (Self-)Development and Practical Placement 1;Theatrical (Self-)Development. Practical Placement 1*) rather than artistic education. Learning outcomes of this part are integrated in *Didactics of Art*.

1.2.2. Consistency of the learning outcomes

The main functions of the bachelor degree in education and teacher's qualification have been identified and they are the following: education, investigation, personal and professional development and activity in institutional community and society. Competences to implement these activities have been identified as well which can be divided into practical component (e.g. *the creation of educational environment for favourable spiritual (self-)education, management of subject content and teaching/learning process, educator's achievements, achievement assessment, educator's motivation and support*), cognitive component (*cognition of pupil's culture and his/her achievement acknowledgement, investigative analytical activity*) and transferable component (*communication and collaboration, civic and community activeness,*

development of organization and management of alterations, management of communication and information, self-reflection and awareness of how to learn, moral provisions and personal characteristics). Taxonomy of knowledge, capabilities and skills, values and personal characteristics is applied in each competence component. In accordance to them, intermediate aims of subject (module), which are divided into fields (cognitive and affective) and levels (e.g. cognitive – knowing, awareness, application, analysis, synthesis and assessment) are formulated.

The general teacher's professional competences of bachelor of education, artistic education and religion are specified while studying both general subjects of education, psychology, philosophy and specific subjects (art and religion).

On the other hand, artistic and religion context is hardly identified in the cognitive, practical and transferable components of the teachers' competences. Priority is given to general pedagogical activities rather than contextualizing them for artistic and religion education. As religion and artistic education is considered as content fields of teaching activities these fields should be clearly expressed in learning outcomes while the programme promotes concurrent model of teachers' qualification. Present programme is strongly focused on learning outcomes for teaching competences while learning outcomes of content fields (arts and religion) are not consistent in general scope of programme learning outcomes.

1.2.3. Transformation of the learning outcomes

While analyzing the correlation between the programme and the outcomes of studies, several units can be distinguished (e.g. the unit of educational studies, the unit of philosophy subjects that justify scientific, artistic and religious cognition).

On the other hand, transformation of the learning outcomes is related to the catholic faith. Thus, the permission of bishop canon is needed in order to teach religion at schools. This situation is rather critical and requires deep discussion as one of the stakeholders has a biased influence to developing and running the religion education component in the programme.

2. Curriculum design

2.1. Programme structure

2.1.1. Sufficiency of the study volume

The total volume of the study programme is 160 credits: general university education subjects – 14 credits (9%), general basics of the study area – 64 credits (40%), special education of the study field – 82 credits (51%). Due to the fact that the study programme is *Artistic*

Education and Religion is aimed to prepare teachers, its structure has to correspond to *Teacher Training Regulations (2008, 2010)*. While analyzing the programme according to its essential provisions concerning the volume of educational studies (i.e. it has to be no less than 40 credits), it is seen that the study programme *Artistic Education and Religion* corresponds to this document regulating the studies as well. , i.e. 72 credits are allocated to pedagogical studies, 47 credits of them make the theoretical part (*Basics of Education Studies. Didactics. Practical Placement 1; Introduction to Psychology; Developmental and Pedagogical Psychology. Practical Placement 1; Educational Researches*, etc., as well as the didactics of art and religion subjects – *Systems of Artistic Education; Non-Formal Artistic Education. Practical Placement 1; Christian Pedagogy. Practical Placement 1*, etc.), 25 credits make the practical part (12 credits are allocated to integral (continuous) practical placement: 6 credits in 6 semester and 6 credits in 7 semester and 11 credits are integrated into separate subjects, e.g. *Basics of Education Studies. Didactics. Practical Placement 1; Didactics of Art. Practical Placement 1; Didactics of Religious Instruction*. Furthermore, in study programme, as it is recommended in the *Regulations of Teacher Training (2008, 2010)*, there are general university education subjects: *Basics of the Philosophy of Education, Foreign Language for Specific Purposes*. The elective subjects offered for the students are also aimed at developing the competences necessary for teacher's professional activity of religion and non-formal artistic education, deepening and elaboration, and the preparation to conduct additional teacher's roles.

The programme expanded the unit of pedagogical subjects and introduced a subject of education research. In the composition of placement credits it is evident that general education subjects integrate 11 credit points as the relation between these credits and credits of artistic education (6 credits) as well as religion education (6 credits) is not balanced. Credits for placement of general education subjects needs to be more related or integrated into artistic and religion education. This justifies need for a concurrent model rather than consecutive. In this programme consecutive model emphasizes firstly education foundations as well as teachers' qualification and later in the programme studies in specific education fields are introduced.

2.1.2. Consistency of the study subjects

The logics of subject distribution could be explained by the following essential provisions: the studies are started with general university education subjects, which are intended to develop the general competences necessary for a teacher of non-formal artistic activity and religion (e.g. *Philosophy of Antiquity and the Middle Ages; Introduction to Art Studies*). However, in the first semester they are integrated into basic knowledge and capabilities of education science (e.g.

Basics of Education Studies. Didactics. Practical Placement 1) and at the same time relate to other science fields (e.g. *Basics of the Philosophy of Education, Foreign Language for Specific Purposes, Information Management*). This means that learning outcomes in the field of artistic education are developed in contextualised educational way rather than professional artistic way. Therefore, it confirms again that artistic education is considered in a very ambitious way while the programme stresses on non-formal artistic activities. During the whole programme, the studies are ranged from conceptual basics, general basic subjects to bigger specialization in the separate fields of artistic education and religion and again relating them during the blocks of study alternatives (*Church Art; Religions of the World; Multi-Cultural Artistic Education; Professional Ethics; Ethics and Aesthetics*).

The assessment team in 2008 recommended to the programme introducing students with more exposure to world religions. This has been done through the provision of an optional course or subject of 2 credit points.

2.2. Programme content

2.2.1. Compliance of the contents of the studies with legal acts

The study programme *Artistic Education and Religion* is meeting regulations of teachers profession (directive 2005/36/EB), its mission is substantiated by international directives, the documents of strategic development of Lithuanian Republic and European Union, international provisions. Specific mission of informal artistic education is regulated by the *Conception of Non-formal Children's and Young People's Education (2005)*, *Conception of Children's and Young People's Cultural Education (2008)*, *The Strategy of Development of Ethnic Culture in Educational Institutions (2009)* and by the direction of other documents. As the teachers of Catholic religion are prepared, the specific mission of religion studies is substantiated by the *General Programme of Religion (Catholics)* (approved: 2005 09 20-21, the *Report of the Plenary Meeting of Diocese in Lithuania* No. 4; 13th July 2006, No. ISAK – 1484), *The Conception of Lithuanian Catholic School (2003)*, The Agreement between Saint Throne and the Republic of Lithuania “On the Relationship between Catholic Church and Aspects of State Rights” (2000); and other documents regulating the preparation of teacher of religion in Lithuania.

2.2.2. *Comprehensiveness and rationality of programme content*

The subject themes are harmonized with outcomes of studies, content and level (knowledge, awareness, application, analysis, synthesis, assessment). The harmonization is performed on lecturer's, department's, study programme quality supervision group's, programme of studies committee's levels. The descriptor of subjects (aims, study outcomes, themes, literature, etc.) are annually reviewed and every three years (freely chosen subjects – every year) are reassessed.

In the subject programme, 144 credits (90%) are allocated to compulsory subjects, 8 credits (5%) are allocated to elective subjects and 8 credits (5%) are allocated to freely-chosen subjects. This corresponds to *Basic, Special Vocational and Integrated Study Programmes (2005)*. Students of this study programme have an exceptional opportunity to opt for a desirable trend of artistic activity within the framework of compulsory subjects (the modules in a volume of 15 credits – *Art Studio 1-4*) and in order to elaborate the experience of socio-cultural expression, they individually opt for the activity in one of art societies (clubs) within the university.

Theology curriculum is still dominating and comprehensiveness of the programme has to be balanced taking into account world religions.

3. *Staff*

3.1. **Staff composition and turnover**

3.1.1. *Rationality of the staff composition*

34 lecturers implement the study programme *Artistic Education and Religion*. 94% of them are permanent staff, 56% of them have scientific degree, and 9% are engaged in doctoral studies. It should be noted that a large part of lecturers implementing professional activities also demonstrate considerable experience in practical activities (artistic, theological) and alongside with the educational activities in the university they implement practical activities in other institutions and workplaces. They are well-known and respected artists.

On the other hand, a language policy is still an issue as students are not exposed to the international literature as much as they should be at this level. It is imperative that the matter is addressed and that students are exposed to opportunities to improve their language skills, whilst at the same time help and encourage the lecturing staff that may need help so that they will introduce texts/ articles in English as part of the course material in their respective courses.

3.1.2. Turnover of teachers

The shift of the academic staff implementing this study programme has practically not changed during the period of assessment.

3.2. Staff competence

3.2.1. Compliance of staff experience with the study programme

The lecturer's academic experience is sufficient, because many of them have been working with students for more than five years. A part of the lecturers, alongside with the work in university, work in schools, institutions of non-formal activities, and other institutions. The practical placement supervisors' professional activity is directly related to the teaching practice needs. Supervisors are working in various educational institutions and this ensures the achievement of study outcomes which are related to practical teaching/learning.

On the one hand the programme is emphasizing religion education by employing artistic means. On the other hand staff of religion education subjects does not demonstrate this experience. It is our opinion that this aspect needs to be strengthened both in terms of lecturers competence and bringing together religion and artistic education.

3.2.2. Consistency of teachers' professional development

The University has established a science fund which is used to support projects in professional development. One teacher defended PhD in education in the field of religion education. Peer review is also introduced; however this measure for professional development and quality assurance has to be more formalized as the system of quality evaluation is not introducing this measure in a systemic way.

4. Facilities and learning resources

4.1. Facilities

4.1.1. Sufficiency and suitability of premises for studies

The number of faculty rooms used in order to implement the programme *Artistic Education and Religion* is sufficient: contact classes, students' independent studies, to implement scientific, educational, tutorial activities for scientific and academic staff. The Faculty has 30 rooms, which seat 1095 students (classrooms, laboratories, methodological rooms). There are 5 classrooms for

theoretical, group work and the activities which require to be active in a physical way (2 classrooms have 80 work places each, one classroom has 320 work places, 1 dancing hall, 1 aerobics hall, sports complex). Other work places are displayed in practical centres (distance learning centre, the botanical gardens) and in library (in the rooms of individual and group studies). The rooms of independent studies are equipped with technical and methodological audio-visual resources.

4.1.2. Suitability and sufficiency of equipment for studies

There are 12 specialized classrooms in the faculty: religion (1), arts (3), Internet reading room (1), nature, geography (2), children's rights (1), didactics of mathematics (1), physical training and sports (2), language policy (1).

4.1.3. Suitability and accessibility of the resources for practical training

The students of the programme *Artistic Education and Religion* use the classrooms of religion, artistic education, dancing hall, aerobics hall, and the botanical gardens. The students use the methodological classroom of artistic education, where they can use modern audio-visual equipment, accumulated educational literature and to develop their competences.

4.2. Learning resources

4.2.1. Suitability and accessibility of books, textbooks and periodical publications

ŠU has one of the most modern libraries in Lithuania. The independent learning basis has been expanded: the renowned library accommodates about 200 computerized workstations (120 of them work in terminal mode), there are more than 400 non-computerized workstations, 5 workstations for group learning and seminars and 9 rooms for independent learning with all the necessary technical equipment. The building of the Faculty of Education borders with the library, so there are especially good conditions for the students and academic staff and administration to use the library resources.

Information service has also been modernized: reading room and periodical reading room, and the fiction department, the department of phonogram records with computerized workstations and specialized equipment. In all the library, the service of wireless Internet is provided. The conditions to study for disabled students with kinaesthetic problems are established as well. The spectrum of the library's direct and distant service has been developed. The conditions to

deliver educational, in a form of consultations, informational services have been created as well as to implement social projects: 3 modern conference halls have been established (one of them has 140 seats with the system of simultaneous translation), 3 computerized classrooms. The sessions for students are coordinated on the level of all university in order to have enough workplaces in the library.

There is an inter-library delivery room. In library's archives there are about 400 000 units (about 50 000 – from education field at the time of self-assessment period. In the fund there are – 263 370 units of fiction and non-fiction in English, in German – 7 314, in French – 4 896, in Russian – 112 339; manuscripts – 3346 units; cartography – 7 units.; 7442 units of audio-visual documents; 2590 units in physical media of databases.

4.2.2. Suitability and accessibility of learning materials

The main books, textbooks and other printings necessary for the programme are available in the libraries, reading rooms, methodological rooms of the faculty, and laboratories.

The lecturers and students are provided with the conditions to access the databases from ŠU library, from the computers in the faculty or from personal computers. The community of university access the multidisciplinary databases of scientific information, which allows them access to scientific journals, summaries, monographs, reports, publications of statistics, the publications prepared on the bases of scientific conferences, data of information centres, law legislations, dictionaries, manuals, encyclopedias: subscribed databases (e.g. Education Research Complete, Emerald Management e-Journals, ERIC, Oxford Journals Online, Oxford Reference Online and others), termed access to databases (under testing) (e.g. The Scientist, EBSCO Research Starters – Sociology, EBSCO Publishing Opportunities Database).

5. Study process and student assessment

5.1. Student admission

5.1.1. Rationality of requirements for admission to the studies

The admission of the students to the study programme *Artistic Education and Religion* was conducted with the following competitive point (further in accordance to the year of entrance the highest and the lowest competitive point and the mean of competitive point are indicated): in 2005 - 14,94 and 11,35 (mean -13,15); in 2007 - 15,1 and 11,25 (mean -13,18); in 2008 -13,72 and 10,53 (mean- 12,13). Thus, in years 2005-2009 the highest competitive point of the entrants of full-time studies was 15,1, and the lowest – 10,53.

The competitive points of the admitted entrants for years 2005-2009 show their sufficient preparation for studies, and fixed minimal requirements are appropriate to accept prepared students to study.

5.1.2. Efficiency of enhancing the motivation of applicants and new students

In the conditions and rules of the admission, it is pointed out that recently the entrants to the programme *Artistic Education and Religion* have to pass History, the Lithuanian language and Foreign language exams of secondary education. Besides, in the competitive point, the mark of Mathematics final exam was included. Since 2010, the essential corrections are provided for the admission to higher education institutions. Furthermore, a conversation test to check the motivation is to be undertaken as this will help in future to select motivated students to study this programme.

The special requirements are not proposed to enter the study programme *Artistic Education and Religion*.

5.2. Study process

5.2.1. Rationality of the programme schedule

Contact theoretical lectures and practical seminars are given 40% in a form of full-time studies of all the time intended for modules. The volume of mentioned study form is 40 credits per study year. During the semester, the classes (lectures, seminars, classes in groups, classes in sub-groups, etc.) are distributed gradually in relation to the calendar of full-time study semester (20 weeks, four of which are for examination sessions) and in relation to a week of 40 student's work hours.

5.2.2. Student academic performance

The system of students' achievement involves the quantitative and qualitative analysis of academic results and on that basis further activities are related to the encouragement of students' achievement. In the quantitative analysis of academic results academic informational system of university is used while qualitative analysis is conducted at the level of study subject, study programme, lecturer, department, faculty, and university.

During the time of assessment, changes in number of students of the study programme *Artistic Education and Religion* is the following: in 2005–2009, 39 students entered the

programme; in 2005–2009, 3 students dropped out; in 2005–2009, 30 students successfully finished the studies. The relationship between students' drop-out rate and the course shows the tendency that the students are dropping out in the first year. It shows that the programme team has to consider students' motivation and to review, if necessary, the type of support given in the early stages of the course.

5.2.3. Mobility of teachers and students

Mostly teacher mobility is related to the trend of lecturer's scientific and academic (artistic) interests. During the period of assessment, the most frequent forms of lecturers' encouragement to take part in mobility were the dissemination of experience, financial support, regulations for lecturers' assessment, etc. The increased mobility during the last few years proves that these forms of encouragement are sufficient enough. However, to look for more effective ways of encouragement would still be useful. During the period of assessment (2008/2009 m.) 58 visiting lecturers came from abroad.

On the other hand, students still require higher level of internationalization. During the period of assessment, while analyzing the ratio of the students' mobility, it is obvious that it is not very positive. The main aims of students' mobility are studies, practical placement, the English language, catechism summer camps, and pilgrimages. The dynamics of students' mobility is uneven, the main reason – the changed financial order, when students have to pay part of the money themselves (for some students because of their or their families' social and economic condition), alterations of social condition, access to employment. The same tendencies of mobility dynamics we can see while analyzing the data about the students who come to study. The students' mobility expands and elaborates their cognitive, general and professional competences. This has a direct impact on the study programme, e.g. the students participate more actively in academic and other extra curricula activities. The most frequent means used for students' mobility are: the ERASMUS programme, English language courses, catechism summer camps and pilgrimages.

5.3. Student support

5.3.1. Usefulness of academic support

The students' consultations relating to the study questions, according to the timetables prepared in the departments, are essentially conducted in a sufficient way, and if there is a need the consultations are organized individually for a student. Furthermore, the students also consult

their lecturers also via e-mail. The most sufficient ways of consultation are “face-to-face” consultation and e-mails.

The consultations for students about the programme, the meaning of compulsory and elective subjects, and further career perspectives are conducted on the levels of the department working in this programme (subject lecturers, study programme quality supervision group, supervisors of practical placements, etc.), faculty (dean’s office) and university (Career Centre).

The lecturers who supervise the students’ practical placement collaborate with employers. There are cases, when the students are offered opportunities to carry out their practicum and work in some institutions during the study years or after graduation.

5.3.2. Efficiency of social support

University foresees that the financial support for students is given by three types of grants. The social grant is given to the students who are from needy families or to everybody who has the right to get the financial support, bringing up a child or children; the students who are from families with 3 or more children who study in comprehensive, vocational and institutions of higher education. An encouragement grant is given to the students for their achievement results; a single grant – for the students’ achievements in science, culture, art, sport, social activity fields. The expediency of grant allocation is determined by the documents of legislation, where the requirements are presented about the appropriate grants, i.e. what support students can gain for a grant and of what type. The need of social grants among the students of the programme is sufficient.

5.4. Student achievement assessment

5.4.1. Suitability of assessment criteria and their publicity

The aims and criteria of assessment are known beforehand for all students. Also, the feedback is provided which is necessary to solve out all the study and learning problems in a constructive manner. Various ways of information presentation are used to present the elaborated information about assessment: files, descriptions, reviews, computer means. The students’ achievements are assessed by means of various methods and in different study stages, which provide the elaborated information about all the fields of studies under assessment. While assessing, by means of modern technologies of assessment, it is aimed, as much as possible, at the reliability and validity of the results. The relationship between the criteria and study outcomes are revealed also by the fact that the assessment is related to the aims of the study

programme and subject as well as measures the achievements of learning (e.g. if a study subject is oriented to creative process, then those methods are used which would assess the originality of a student's idea and the quality of the means to implement this idea; or the application of theoretical knowledge on the levels of expediency and validity are assessed as well (i.e. the standardized test is not applied, etc.)). The methods of assessment applied in the study process are an integrated part of all teaching/ learning. The information of assessment given to the students does not depend on the change of the one who assess (if during the study process he/she changes). The faculty has won the contest for the allocation of ES structural funds to develop the study process while implementing ECTS setup of modules. During the project, in the faculty, the system of module setup and ECTS transference system will be implemented, the training of study organization and the application of innovations in the study process will be held, the monitors to organize the implementation and assessment and students' independent work organization will be prepared. According to the project, the lecturers working in this study programme will participate in the training as well. It will also be possible to use the prepared monitors in the modernization of this study programme.

The lecturers introduce the students with the aims and criteria of the module during the first lecture. Furthermore, the students have the access to ŠU academic informational system where all the information about study programme, subjects, content, and assessment system is presented.

5.4.2. Feedback efficiency

The feedback about the students' achievements is presented in written and oral form, in common and distant way (partially this depends on the subject, the task under assessment, nature of studies, students' needs, etc.). If it is not regulated by the documents of legislation, a student can improve and correct his/her work according to the delivered remarks. The mode of feedback is essentially sufficient for the students to get the information about their achievements. However, in some cases, it would be useful to look for new ways of feedback.

One of the means of encouraging the students to react to the feedback given to them is the opportunity to correct the works. It is also strived, that for similar character works the requirements would be made, especially to formal parts. The students are often informed about the possibility of the continuity of tasks, etc. This helps to motivate them, so their skills of personally assessing their work are improved and their achievements enhanced.

It is to be noted, that the portfolio system as evidence of accumulative assessment is not introduced across all the subjects of arts and religious education.

5.4.3. Efficiency of final thesis assessment

In the faculty, *The Methodical Recommendations of the Preparation and Defense of Final Works* are prepared, which are placed in the website of the faculty. In these recommendations not only the essential requirements for students' final works are presented, but also the criteria of work assessment, involving all essential fields of educational research and qualitative parameters. In accordance with students' responses, it is possible to state that these requirements are essentially sufficient. Every year *The Methodical Recommendations of the Preparation and Defense of Final Works* are renewed and approved in the council of the Faculty of Education. As in the study programme *Artistic Education and Religion* the teachers prepared are capable of teaching in two different environments (non-formal artistic education and religion). In order to give them the most effective help while preparing the final thesis, i.e. a consultant is allocated according to the topic and students' needs. For example, if a student chooses an integral theme involving both non-formal artistic activity and religion, but his supervisor's scope of scientific interests is related to artistic education, a consultant is allocated whose scope of scientific interests is related to religious subjects and vice versa.

In the faculty, the order of the preparation, defense and assessment of final works is extensively described by *The Regulation of Preparation and Defense of Final (Bachelor, Special-Vocational, Master) Works (2009)* and *The Methodical Recommendations of Preparation and Defense of Final (Bachelor, Special-Vocational, Master) Works (2007, 2009)*. The structure of the committee assessing the final works is presented by the dean, and later is approved by the rector. It consists of 3 members, one of whom is a specialist of education and another – a psychologist. The head of the committee can be only a specialist of study type, i.e. a specialist of education. The supervisor of a final work cannot be a member of the committee in which his supervised students defend their works (there may be some exceptions). Such order of the defense of final works ensures the lucidity and objectivity and allows to strive for higher study quality and assessment of study achievements more objectively. The reviewer of the final works can be a specialist of study programme who represents the study trend, allocated by the head of the department. The assessment criteria of final works, as the recommendations themselves, are constantly reviewed (on average, once a year) and renewed in accordance to new scientific knowledge of education and new requirements of study quality, so the regulated criteria are sufficient to assess objectively the students' achievements.

5.4.4. Functionality of the system for assessment and recognition of achievements acquired in non-formal and self-education

Šiauliai University does not have the system of the assessment of achievements gained by means of non-formal way and by self-education. Nevertheless, the students are encouraged to take part in various cultural, artistic events and their participation is supported by the funds of non-academic activity support of Šiauliai University.

5.5. Graduates placement

5.5.1. Expediency of graduate placement

The graduates working according to profession make 48 per cent, i.e. they work as teachers of religion, teachers of non-formal education, organizers of children's events, etc. The graduates are also working in other professional fields and this makes 17 per cent of the total group.

Meetings with graduates and administration team also confirmed that graduates are employed as teachers of religion, educators of non-formal education sector.

In order to achieve the relationship between graduates' professional activity and the study programme it was decided to supplement the elective subjects with new subjects (e.g. *Artistic Education of Children with Special Needs, Basics of Art Management, Multi-Cultural Artistic Education*) as this would enable future graduates to be better prepared to teach in such contexts that require such additional teacher's role.

6. Programme management

6.1. Programme administration

6.1.1. Efficiency of the programme management activities

In accordance with *ŠU Regulations of Study Programme Quality Supervision Group (2009)*, the head and 4 members (2 lecturers and 2 social partners (a student and an employer) constitute the board of programme. In order to carry out some definite activities this group can be supplemented with lecturers and/or other social partners. Each member's and all group's functions, their activities, etc. are determined in the mentioned documents *Regulations of Study Programme Quality Supervision Group (2009)*.

6.2. Internal quality assurance

6.2.1. Suitability of the programme quality evaluation

The quality of the study programme is analysed by the programme management group members, teachers of the Faculty of Education and the Department of Philosophy and Anthropology of the Faculty of Humanities discussing if the goals, content, study methods, and assessment comply with the programme.

The results of study quality assessment are used for improving the study programme and study subjects, assessment, revision of the plan for actions of study quality, initiation of changes in teachers' research activities and professional development, improvement of facilities and learning resources of the Institute.

The lecturers and students influence study programme developments through various surveys, opinion research, discussions of programme alterations in departments, faculty, etc. Students' suggestions and remarks concerning the development of programme are considered to be very important. On the one hand, this can influence introduction of changes in other supporting departments, on the other hand the system of internal quality assurance in this programme is functioning on the level of managing department.

For the internal assessment fields, subfields, criteria and rates are chosen in accordance to European and national regulations of quality guarantee of university education. During their implementation the appropriate strategies and plans are approved in the faculty and university. The development of study process, the development of encouraging environment to study and work, the development of study management system are chosen as the essential directions of quality supervision and assessment. The option and/or preparation of assessment methods and means are determined by proposed objectives and achievement indicators.

6.2.2. Efficiency of the programme quality improvement

In the Faculty of Education various data (term papers, final works, other research papers, mobility statistics, data of graduates' employment, etc.) relating to the study programme *Artistic Education and Religion* are accumulated, and those archive data is substantiated by the rules of documentation keeping by Šiauliai University and the faculty. The period during which the data are accumulated is different and depends on the need (e.g. the mobility statistics during 5 years, final works during 3 years, other works – 2 years, etc.). The amount of the data is sufficient to develop the quality of the programme.

Every year the lecturers carry out their activities (academic and scientific/ methodological) self-assessment and deliver the report to the head of department, who later provides the report to the dean of the faculty. The study process is assessed systemically and periodically, e.g. selection of students (in September), organization of practical placement (two times a year – after the end of the practice of autumn and spring semesters), preparation and defense of final works (in June), graduate employment (in September and October), etc. The appropriate stages of the study process motivate to review the process periodically (e.g. implementation of practice, the time of preparation and defence of final works, etc.).

Despite that attention is given to documentation of quality observation and accountability as well as the components of programme quality improvement are reviewed, follow up activities and evidence need to be presented in a systematic way at all levels of programme stakeholders.

6.2.3. Efficiency of stakeholders participation.

External social partners take part mostly by involving themselves in activities relating to the implementation of the programme. One of them is responsible about the need of study programme. Furthermore, the social partners eagerly collaborate while offering for the graduates places for practical placement, conducting the role of informal tutor during the practicum, assessing the students' preparation for practical placement and offering the opportunities of practical placement development. As a new thing while collaborating with social partners the opportunities are made to sign the tripartite agreement of scientific research when the research topic is suggested namely by social partners and the research becomes a part of student's final work. External social partners are also involved in organizing international scientific conferences (e.g. *The Dispersion of Spirituality in the Reality of Artistic Education; Let's Create the Childhood Together, etc.*), and by participating in the activities organised by the *Association of Research of National Character, etc.* One of the major initiatives the external social partners participated in – to provide the specialist under preparation with competences to conduct additional pedagogical role. External social partners are encouraged to pay particular attention to (self-)development of the competences required for working with children with special needs (a new module *Artistic Education of Children with Special Needs* was included in the programme). An important role allocated to external social partners is to disseminate information about the programme to the public through their parishes and others.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1. To develop foreign language policy and implementation measures in continuing professional development of staff in order to enhance internationalization of professionalism in the field of artistic education and religion.

3.2. To introduce the development of a student portfolio in the accumulative system of assessment in order to monitor students' progress in developing teaching competences.

3.3. To invite lectures from other countries in order to enrich the programme with international experience and different attitudes towards artistic and religion education.

3.4. To review the art education component as well as to find balance in consecutive model of preparing teachers of religion and artistic education. Students prefer concurrent model, therefore artistic and religion education components have to be integrated in to the general subjects of education science as those have to be more context based.

3.5. To introduce more project work, this leads to teamwork in order to equip students with variety of methods to organise non-formal education activities.

3.6. To address the ongoing improvement of the final papers by introducing the ethical issues of the qualitative research, a review that includes the international literature, and a discussion chapter of the results.

3.7. To change the title of the programme as artistic education is indicated as additional role for teachers of religion. Artistic expression was communicated as didactical approach preparing teachers or preparation for non-formal educational activities at schools. Programme is not considered to provide double degree in education; therefore, the programme does not have to consider artistic education and religion education as equal parts in the study programme, especially when artistic expression was indicated as method or didactical means for religion teachers. Changes of the title should affect the content of the programme in a way of reconsidering learning outcomes.

IV. GENERAL ASSESSMENT

The study programme *Artistic education and religion* (state code – 61207S132 (612X10010)) is given **positive** evaluation.

Table. *Study programme assessment in points by evaluation areas.*

No.	Evaluation area	Assessment in points*
1	Programme aims and learning outcomes	2
2	Curriculum design	2
3	Staff	2
4	Facilities and learning resources	4
5	Study process and student assessment (student admission, student support, student achievement assessment)	3
6	Programme management (programme administration, internal quality assurance)	2
	Total:	15

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

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

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

4 (very good) - the area is exceptionally good

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