STUDIJŲ KOKYBĖS VERTINIMO CENTRAS

KAUNO TECHNOLOGIJOS UNIVERSITETO EDUKOLOGIJOS PROGRAMOS (62407S116 (621X20004)) VERTINIMO IŠVADOS

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EVALUATION REPORT OF EDUCATIONAL SCIENCE (62407S116 (621X20004)) STUDY PROGRAMME AT KAUNAS UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

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DUOMENYS APIE ĮVERTINTĄ PROGRAMĄ

Studijų programos pavadinimas	**Edukologija**
Valstybinis kodas	62407S116 (621X20004)
Studijų sritis	socialiniai mokslai
Studijų kryptis	edukologija
Studijų programos rūšis	universitetinės studijos
Studijų pakopa	antroji
Studijų forma (trukmė metais)	nuolatinė (2), ištęstinė (3)
Studijų programos apimtis kreditais[1]	80
Suteikiamas laipsnis ir (ar) profesinė kvalifikacija	edukologijos magistras
Studijų programos įregistravimo data	1997 m. gegužės 19 d.; 2001 m. rugpjūčio 2 d.

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[1] – vienas kreditas laikomas lygiu 40 studento darbo valandų

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INFORMATION ON EVALUATED STUDY PROGRAMME

Name of the study programme	**Educational science**
State code	62407S116 (621X20004)
Study area	social sciences
Study field	education science
Kind of the study programme	university studies
Level of studies	second
Study mode (length in years)	full-time (2), part-time (3)
Scope of the study programme in national credits[1]	80
Degree and (or) professional qualifications awarded	master of educational science
Date of registration of the study programme	19 May 1997; 2 August, 2001

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

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Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education

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I. INTRODUCTION

The first self-assessment of the second-level study programme 'Educational Science' was prepared on December 8, 2000 and presented to the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education for external assessment and the programme was fully accredited until next external assessment.

The documentation currently acquired, which relates both to the SAR and the documents in the annexes, as well as the interviews and meetings with the staff, the students and the stakeholders, allowed us to appreciate the existence of a well structured programme whose objectives are clearly stated and shared with the community.

Some slight concerns attain to the existence of some perceived rigidity in the management of the programme. This is possibly due to the visible enthusiasm in presenting the activities, the senior management and senior academic staff almost monopolized the conversation reducing the possibility to appreciate the work and the contribution of other staff members. The senior academic staff tend too project themselves as over zealous and potentially overprotective of their programme.

The second-level study programme of 'Educational Science' (further – the Programme) is provided at Kaunas University of Technology (further the University, KTU), which consists of 13 faculties, 11 institutes, 5 centres, and the library. The University Council, Senate, Rector and University Strategic Planning Committee determine strategic guidelines of the university activity. Vice Rector for Studies administers and coordinates the activity related to study issues.

The programme is provided by the Department of Educational Systems, the Faculty of Social Sciences. The Department of Educational Systems is the subdivision of the Institute of Educational Studies.

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

In Lithuania, Master degrees in Education Sciences are programmes that provide graduates with relevant opportunities for employment both inside and outside the school system. Graduates of the programme specifically get employed in the structures of education administration, institutions of non-formal education, cultural organizations performing educational activity

(museums, libraries, etc.); some are also employed as school principals or in higher education institutions, or else furthering their studies at doctoral level.

The students of the Programme, when choosing alternative subjects, can individualize their study plan and deepen their studies in the areas of social pedagogy or education management. It should be noted that some study subjects ('Learning in Knowledge and Information Society', 'Management of Educational Innovations', 'Management of Educational Projects') are delivered only at the Institute of Educational Studies, but nowhere in Lithuania. Another peculiarity of the study programme 'Educational Science' is the development of the research abilities is especially stressed, and this feature can be specifically appreciated when looking at the quality of the coursework and the final dissertations, which are examined in greater detail further down in the report.

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

In a national perspective, the aim of the Programme is directly related to the Decree of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania No. 670 'On Implementation and Coordination of Lisbon Strategy in Lithuania', June 20, 2005 (Žin., 2005, Nr. 78-2823). The document points out that '*Lithuania aims to develop the knowledge society, to develop knowledge-based economics and to move towards sustainable development, to create and develop modern, dynamic, competitive economy.* <...> Creation of new comparative advantages will be determined by the ability of all sectors of the economy to use and create new technologies, to develop innovative activity, employees' ability to develop and change qualification'.

The aims of the Programme also complement the mission of KTU, its goals and activity, which is based on the principles of higher education modernization. The aims of the Programme are compatible with the vision and the aim of the Faculty of Social Sciences (KTU) and the aims and objectives of the Department of Educational Systems devoted to the development of life-long-learning competences for all society members (individuals or organizations employees).

As specified in the table below, these aims are consistent with the Bologna Process, especially in terms of the Dublin Descriptors.

Table !: Comparison of the second-level results (Dublin's Descriptors) and aims of the study programme 'Educational Science'

Second-level results (Dublin's Descriptors)	Aims of the study programme 'Educational Science'
Qualification (master's) degree, indicating that **second-level studies** are finished, is awarded to the students who:	*Master of Educational Science*
Acquired knowledge based on the first-level knowledge, deepening and (or) strengthening it, making the basis or possibility to newly, originally create and (or) apply ideas, frequently in the context of researches.	*- will possess contemporary, actual knowledge of educational science and educational activity* *- will be able to research and reflect educational phenomena and on the basis of this to develop own knowledge*
Are able to apply knowledge and abilities of problem solution in new or unknown environment in wider (or multidisciplinary) contexts related to their study field.	*- will be able to reflect the acquired knowledge, to independently apply it in new situations*
Are able to integrate knowledge and solve complicated problems, to formulate decisions by possessing not all or limited information and taking social and ethical responsibility.	*- he / she will be able to develop transferable abilities and apply them subject to the context by taking social and ethical responsibility*
Are able to clearly and ambitiously convey their conclusions, knowledge and logic fundamentals both to specialists and non-specialists.	*- will be able to be a competent partner in common projects with experts / specialists of the fields of science and activity*
Have developed learning skills necessary for continuing absolutely independent studies.	*- will be able to research educational phenomena and on this basis to develop his / her knowledge, to plan and develop personal career in the fields of education and learning*

1.1.3. Relevance of the programme aims

Apart from meeting the requirements set forth by the State and the University in the paradigm of the Bologna Process, the aims of the Programme appear to be extremely relevant for the development of Kaunas city and region, especially as regards the idea of the development of a learning community, which appears to be the flagship motif for the university.

The aims disclosed in the self-analysis report are consistent with the requirements of second cycle university studies as they point to the need of educating the researcher in education, whose level of preparation shall equip them to cope with the changing and growing needs of the school world. These objectives provide a broad and embracing understanding of the type of educator and researcher that KTU would like to develop. Although there is evidence of substantial work done in all the areas, some slight concern still exists as regards the considerable width of such aims and the actual possibility of covering all these areas in sufficient depth.

1.2. Learning outcomes of the programme

1.2.1. Comprehensibility and attainability of the learning outcomes

When formulating the learning outcomes, it was aimed that their complexity level would match the requirements of the level, would be optimal and implemented during the period of the studies. The content of the learning outcomes coordinated to the aims of the programme involves the abilities suitable and the most important for one's activity. The graduates acceptably get ready for their future activity and can continue their studies at the third level. Specifically, the learning outcomes of the Programme are:

Knowledge and understanding:	
A1	knowledge system of educational science in the context of classical and contemporary learning paradigms;
A2	role of fundamental disciplines of the social sciences – philosophy, sociology and psychology – for educational theory and practice; the importance of interdisciplinary in educational science;
A3	qualitative and quantitative research in education and its cvombination with respect to specific ethical and methodological features;
A4	theories and concepts of educational science, education management, leadership and organization;
A5	concepts and models of educational innovations, change management and change management projects;
A6	development trends of educational systems in Europe and other countries; globalization processes and social, economic and cultural change influencing the development of educational systems.
Intellectual abilities:	
B1	define, analyse and evaluate the core terms of educational science, compare the national and European educational thesaurus;
B2	research, analyse, classify and evaluate educational phenomena and processes;
B3	generate ideas, make decisions and solve problems in the context of educational phenomena and processes;
B4	find information and acquire the knowledge relevant for educational theory and practice;
B5	reflect on the acquired knowledge and experience referring to their own system values and its development.
Practical abilities and skills:	
C1	carry out quantitative, qualitative and combined research on educational systems and social phenomena, prepare and modify valid and reliable research instruments, collect, analyse and generalize the research data; focus on different context and act independently or in teams;
C2	improve educational practice with reference to contemporary requirements of life and work, global and European tendencies as well as national needs.
Graduates of Management of Education will have abilities:	
C3	use the knowledge at the interface of educational science and management science in order to solve problems of educational systems;
C4	evaluate the system of education and its functioning;
C5	plan the activity and educational process of school or other educational institution;
C6	function the head of the school: be the school leader, analyse and develop the organizational culture, implement innovations, prepare, implement and evaluate projects of institutional development, carry out school audit;
Graduates of social pedagogics will have abilities:	
C7	use the acquired knowledge of siocio-educational work in institutions of formal and non-formal educational institutions, working with people of different age groups;
C8	identify community needs and plan socio-educational activity in a community;
C9	use the knowledge of socio-educational work for the development of socio-educational worker's professional competence and for conflict management in individual's social environment;
C10	use a variety of socio-educational activity for individual's social empowerment.
Transferable abilities and skills:	
D1	meta-learning;
D2	systemic and critical learning;
D3	self-motivation;
D4	creative and problem solving;
D5	analytical and research skills;

D6	communication and presentation;
D7	using information communication technologies (computer literacy and using databases);
D8	cooperation (with a person, in team, in learning partnerships);
D9	mathematical (statistics);
D10	career planning;
D11	work in organization;
D12	leadership.

1.2.2. Consistency of the learning outcomes

As mentioned before, there is a slight concern regarding the balance between breadth of aims and possibility of analyzing the topics in sufficient depth. Indeed, the time constraints and the fact that the senior staff intervened broadly in most of the dialogues allowed only limited possibility to interview other faculty members so to get a more precise and possibly realistic picture of the programme.

Still, from what was presented together with what was provided in the SAR (see Table 2) is an excellent instrument that allowed us to grasp three main points:

- the learning outcomes are clearly conceptualized;
- there is a consistent sequencing of such outcomes, and
- such plan is available and comprehensible for everybody, which facilitates the attainment of the objectives.

Table 2: Relations of study subjects and learning results

Semester	Study subject Code	Study subject Title	Knowledge and understanding A				Intellectual abilities B				Practical abilities and skills C				Transferable abilities and skills D					
1	S211M810	Scientific Research and Statistical Methods in Education	A3				B2				C1				D5	D8	D9			
	S270M800	Philosophy and Theories of Educational Science	A4	A5			B5				C1				D2	D3	D5			
	S272M004	Management of Educational System	A4				B3	B5			C4				D2	D5	D8			
	S280M002	Learning in Knowledge and Information Society (W) Research Work 1	A1	A2	A4	A6	B1	B3	B4	B5	C1	C2			D1 D5	D2 D6	D3 D7	D4 D8	D10	
	S000M022	Social Pedagogy	A1	A4											D6	D7				
2	S000M023	Methodology of Social Work	A3				B2	B3	B4		C1	C2			D4	D5	D6	D7		
	S270M006	Scientific Research and Statistical	A5				B2	B3	B4	B5	C2				D1 D3	D2 D8	D4 D11	D5	D6 D12	D7

Year	Code	Subject	A	B	C	D
		Methods in Education				
	Electives 1 (4 kr.)					
	S283M001	Management and Educational Psychology	A2, A4	B3, B4, B5	C3, C6	D2, D3, D4, D5, D6, D7, D8, D10, D12
	S283M811	Management and Educational Psychology	A2	B2, B3, B4, B5	C3	D1, D2, D3, D4, D5, D6, D7, D8, D10
	Management of Education					
	S189M815	Organizational Behaviour in Educational System	A2, A4	B3, B4, B5	C3, C4, C6	D2, D3, D4, D6, D8, D11
	S272M002	School Management (W)	A2	B3, B4	C1, C3, C5, C6	D5, D7, D9, 10, D11
	Social Pedagogy					
	Electives 2 (8 kr.)					
	S214M002	Theory of Social Work (W)	A6	B4	C7, C8, C9, C10	D2, D5, D6
	S285M805	Social Pedagogy	A2	B1, B2, B4	C7, C10	D2, D3, D6, D7, D8, D10
	S285M822	Methodology of Social Work	A5	B3, B4	C7, C10	D1, D2, D3, D4, D7
	S000M024	Research Work 3	A3	B2, B3, B4	C1, C2	D4, D5, D6, D7, D9
	S282M804	Comparative Education	A6	B1, B2, B3, B4	C1, C4	D2, D4, D5, D6, D7, D8
	S189M021	Management of Educational Projects (W)	A4, A5	B3, B4, B5	C2, C3, C6, C8	D2, D3, D4, D6, D7, D8, D11, D12
	Management of Education					
	Electives 4 (8 cr.)					
3	S189M103	Education Management Information System (W)			C4, C5	D5, D7, D9, D11
	S189M818	Human Relations	A2, A4	B3, B4	C3, C6	D3, D4, D6, D8, D10
	S263M827	Leadership	A4	B5	C2, C6	D4, D8, D12
	Social Pedagogy					
	Electives 3 (8 cr.)					
	S214M003	Management of Social Work (W)	A4, A5	B3, B4	C7, C9	D2, D3, D4, D5, D8, D11
	S270M808	Education in the Family	A1, A2	B3, B4	C2, C7, C8, C10	D1, D2, D3, D6
	S285M001	Social Work in Community	A5	B1, B2	C7, C8	D1, D2, D5, D7
4	S000M021	Final Degree Project	A1, A3	B2, B3, B4, B5	C1, C2	D2, D4, D5, D6, D7, D9

1.2.3. Transformation of the learning outcomes

The learning outcomes are revised by reviewing study programmes according to the order determined at the University. At the beginning of each academic year they are regulated by discussing them together with teachers, social partners and students in order to improve the study programme.

It is also notable that the assessment of the curriculum (the content of each study subject) is carried out by comparing the content of a subject to the latest achievements of the science field as well as analogous study subjects at other Lithuanian and foreign higher education institutions.

2. Curriculum design

2.1. Programme structure

2.1.1. Sufficiency of the study volume

The study volume complies with the requirements of legal acts in fact the overall volume of the Programme is 80 credits (one credit equals to 40 contractual hours of student's work (contact hours, self-study, etc.), i.e. it is one week of a student's work). In order to give a student the possibilities to deeper study the matters of social pedagogy or management of education, elective and deepening study subjects (making 16-20 credits - 25%) are provided. The Programme has three research projects, the aim of which is to develop students' research abilities. They contain 12 credits (15%). Final degree Project has 20 credits (25 %). Such structure of the Programme and indicated number of the credits is proper for the students' successful attainment of the learning outcomes.

Looking at the specifics of the courses, it is mentioned that the main outcome of the studies is to train an educator-researcher and the logical sequence and content of the courses confirms this approach.

2.1.2. Consistency of the study subjects

The list of subjects is rather comprehensive and is designed so that every subsequent subject would refer to the knowledge and abilities of previous subjects. As said before, some slight concern still exists on the fact that the programme is interesting, but it appears to be a bit too varied at this level.

The research focus is indeed supported by the existence of three Research Project subjects that help the student to identify the topic of research, develop the relevant research methodology, and carry out the research work, which then results in the final dissertation.

2.2. Programme content

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

The contents of the study are consistent with the relevant legal requirements such as the laws of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania – No. ISAK-1551 'On General Requirements for Study Programmes', July 22, 2005 (Žin., 2005, Nr. 93-3461); No. ISAK-1152 'On the Change of General Requirements for Study Programmes', June 12, 2007 (Žin., 2007, Nr. 67-2635).

During the period of the programme's self-assessment the new documents regulating the preparation and implementation of study programmes were confirmed (the Decree of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania No. 1749 'On Enactment of the List of Study Fields and Branches, According to Which Studies at Higher Education Institutions Take Place and the List of Qualification Degrees', December 23, 2009 (Žin., 2009, Nr. 158-7135), the law of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania 'On Enactment of the Descriptor of General Requirements for Master's Study Programmes' (Žin., 2010, Nr. 67-3375)). The SAR report and the interviews confirmed that these acts are being properly taken into account when getting ready for the academic year of 2011-2012.

2.2.2. Comprehensiveness and rationality of programme content

As indicated in the SAR report, the peculiarity of the study programme is that great attention is paid to the research work, which shall enable the graduates to become researchers, to continue their studies at doctoral level and / or develop the ability to support their own decisions with empirical research data. Consistently, 36 credits are aimed to develop research abilities:

Scientific Research and Statistical Methods in Education (Semester 1, 4 credits)	The aim of this subject – to understand the essence of educational research methodology and be able to perform independently various types of theoretical and empirical research where different research methods, instruments are applied and combined as well as presented research-based evidences are presented.
Research Project 1 (Semester 1, 4 credits)	Having finished the subject 'Research Project 1' a student is able to formulate the strategy of information search, to perform information search in the Library's catalogue, on the Internet, subscribed and free-access databases; he / she is able to select and critically evaluate information and data, relevant for formulation of a research problem, as well as is able to legally and ethically use the obtained information when preparing assignments. The aim of this stage – is to make a student ready to independently perform a research, to acquire the knowledge necessary for the research and master necessary abilities as well as to highlight a preliminary problem of his / her final degree project and to formulate its topic.
Research Project 2 and Research Project 3 (Semesters 2 and 3; 4 credits each)	Supervisors of the final degree projects supervise these research stages, which are focused to preparation of the final degree project (its theoretical and methodological parts); however a master student can also consult with other teachers, the specialists of the fields necessary to him / her.
Master's studies are finished with Final Degree Project (Semester 4, 20 credits)	It is independent work when preparing the final degree project (the empirical part of the project as well as writing the text and getting ready to defend the project are stressed). Final degree projects are prepared by referring to *General Descriptor of First- and Second-Level Study Programmes* (the order of the KTU Rector No. A-879, December 29, 2006).

Such articulation is rational and rather comprehensive and provides a backbone that sets the way and keeps together the other subjects.

Indeed, initiatives such as the mini conferences organized around Week 14-15 of the semester are indeed laudable that go in the direction of strengthening the student skills in sharing results with peers. In fact, in these events, students publicly present the results of their course papers to education practitioners, officials, and researchers who could benefit from the work

presented and who could give feedback to the students. This engagement allows students to gain feedback that may give new insights to their own studies and hence lead towards better research work being carried out.

3. Staff

3.1. Staff composition and turnover

3.1.1. Rationality of the staff composition

The staff composition meets the legal requirements, but further possibility to talk to staff members would have been desirable in order to appreciate their specific expertise above and beyond the data provided in annex 4.3 of the self assessment, which suggests the need of broader international exposure and CPD programmes.

3.1.2. Turnover of teachers

Some concern exists in terms of the ability of the university to attract expertise from outside. Although there is evidence of some exposure of the students to the lectures of the short-term visiting teachers is given for the students (in 2009 Prof. Dr. Ronald Barnett, Institute of Education, University of London, delivered the lectures "The Coming of the Ecological University", "University Challenge: Pitfalls and Possibilities" and Prof. Lars Ryden, Uppsala University (Sweden), delivered the lecture "Sustainable City Development"), these events are still very sporadic.

Moreover, the current staff appears to be mostly coming from KTU itself. The quality of the faculty preparation is not under discussion, indeed there is evidence that KTU professors find positions in other Lithuanian academic institutions (e.g. the SAR report states that at the end of academic year 2008-2009, Prof V. Žydžiūnaitė and Assoc. Prof. D. Lepaitė went to work at other universities). Still, if the staff experience reverts around the KTU reality, it is necessarily limited and, in the longer run, this fact poses a potential problem in terms of possibilities of generating new ideas and methodologies, which is a necessary feature if the university wants to maintain the leading position that it currently occupies. This is a critical point and the Faculty Dean needs to consider how to provide students at this level with input = potentially even external – that would bring new views and perspectives to the areas of study being provided. Visiting professors can be used to provide electives or optional credits.

3.2. Staff competence

3.2.1. *Compliance of staff experience with the study programme*

Having studied the curriculum vitae of the academic staff and the data presented in the Self-Assessment Report, it is acquired that the programme avails itself of 5 full professors and 13 associate professors. They are all at various stages of their career, but generally rather senior.

One is 70, two in their early sixties, two 2 are in their fifties, and the other in their forties; consistently, they have varied pedagogical experience. The pedagogical experience of four teachers exceeds 25 years, two teachers have worked from 10 to 20 years, and the experience of the other teachers is less than 10 years. What is evident is that the teaching staff is involved in publishing work both nationally and internationally. We found the staff extremely enthusiastic with their work, highly dedicated, professional in their outlook and willing to improve.

As indicated in the SAR, "teachers are appointed by the order of public competition. The University makes terminal work agreements with them for five-year tenure. ... The teachers working in the Programme are accredited every five years. The accreditation takes place by referring to the Inventory of the Accreditation of teachers, Researchers and Other research Workers as well as the Order of the Contest to Take Positions, confirmed by the KTU Senate's decree No. 267 (October 25, 2009)."

3.2.2. *Consistency of teachers' professional development*

As can be seen through a review of the curriculum vitae provided for each of the lecturing staff what particularly stands out is that each individual member pursues her career in very much their own singular way. Whilst it is evidently clear that most of the staff has published in a number of national and international journals it has to be acknowledged that most of these are Lithuanian publications. There is a move to participate in various conferences abroad and involve themselves in foreign projects.

At the same time it has to be noted that the professional development component is still limited. Nonetheless, a positive aspect presented in the SAR is the existence of clear guidelines for staff continuing professional development. Indeed, the SAR indicates that: "Teachers, research workers, administration and other employees must constantly develop their qualification and less than once per five years to use one of the forms of qualification development determined in the Regulation that set the order and requirements of professional qualification development: an internship at foreign science and study institutions; work of an associated

researchers at foreign science and study institutions; an internship at industrial enterprises and organizations; researches, development of scientific and (or) professional qualification when having retired from his / her pedagogical work; courses, seminars and other events to develop his / her qualification; qualification development on personal initiative by taking the leave of absence; creative vacation. The defended doctor's dissertation, a published monograph or textbook, an accredited e-study subject is also equalled to qualification development."

This is an area that the Faculty can and needs to work on.

4. Facilities and learning resources

4.1. Facilities

4.1.1. *Sufficiency and suitability of premises for studies*

The existing premises are of good quality and sufficient for the studies. They include auditoriums, computerised auditoriums, and a Laboratory of Educational Innovations with 14 computers and a laser printer plugged into the local network and connected to the Internet network.

4.1.2. *Suitability and sufficiency of equipment for studies*

The equipment and materials of the lab rooms is suitable and sufficient for the implementation of the study programme.

The Department of Educational Systems possesses portable computers digital video projectors, a video camera; so teachers have all necessary technical media to work effectively. In order to accomplish self-study assignments, the students can use computers present in different locations as well as a reading room with 174 work places (among them 32 are computerised).

Given local standards, the computer hardware is up-to-date. The software is suitable to address existing needs.

4.1.3. *Suitability and accessibility of the resources for practical training*

The Programme can count on sufficient premises for the practical training as these are suitable for the aims and learning outcomes of the study programme and are in line with the number of students.

No problems were observed regarding the selection of sites of practical training outside the university (school, day care centres, social organisations).

The number of publications available - textbooks and journals (national and international) - is sufficient, and they are appropriate for attaining the learning outcomes.

4.2. Learning resources

4.2.1. *Suitability and accessibility of books, textbooks and periodical publication*

A sufficient number of printed publications is available and accessible in order to get the programme aims realized. The content of the publications is suitable, and there is evidence of a sufficient use of English literature, which shall certainly ease the students' acquisition of an European dimension.

4.2.2. *Suitability and accessibility of learning materials*

The research methodology publications are available and, according to international standards, suitable for masters students, although a lot of the materials are still meant for bachelor classes. Some of these materials (and surely the journals) are available via the internet and databases like EBSCO and there is some evidence of their use in the courses.

5. *Study process and student assessment*

5.1. Student admission

5.1.1. *Rationality of requirements for admission to the studies*

Persons who have the diploma of university first-level studies are admitted to the master's studies. The admission is held by the competition order according to the competition point, which consists of the weigh average of the first-level study grades multiplied by the coefficient 0.8 and the evaluation of scientific activity of a candidate in ten-point system multiplied by the coefficient 0.2. The expert evaluation of the scientific activity according to presented documents (publications, conference programmes, the documents of the won professional and other contests, etc.) is performed by the selection contest commission at its precedent meeting before the mandate commission.

The admission points (weighted average points) to the master programme are presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Competition points of the admitted students to the study programme (full-time study form) in 2006–2010[*]

Year	Competition point		
	Highest	Lowest	Average
2010	9.62	7.05	7.00
2009	9.26	6.51	7.74
2008	9.63	5.31	7.99
2007	8.9	5.57	7.05
2006	9.19	6.16	7.20

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

As indicated in the SAR, in order to strengthen the motivation of the admitted students to purposefully start their studies and to plan their successful completion, the Department of Educational Systems coordinating the Programme organizes meetings for the students with the Programme alumni, who work at the public and private business sector and who are invited to share their experience when striving for a successful career. The interviews with graduates and the SAR point out the importance of their studies at the master's study programme 'Educational Science', recommend the students to fully use the possibilities given by the study programme and the excellent team of teachers, as well as stressing the importance of systemic work during their studies. Also, the graduates point out the specificity of their competence in comparison with the graduates of similar programmes at other universities: the essential difference is in deep understanding life-long learning paradigm and the ability to implement it in activity directions chosen by educational organizations (management of education, socio-educational work).

5.2. Study process

5.2.1. *Rationality of the programme schedule*

During 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010 candidates wishing to study were enrolled only in the full-time (day-time) study programme. This element helps understanding the SAR indication that "Work load in individual study plans per week and semester is rationally distributed – duration of contact hours does not exceed 8 hours per day and 36 academic hours per week." Indeed, it would otherwise be difficult to understand how students would be able to cope with such load of contact hours.

This set up does certainly bring about positive results as it can be appreciated from the quality of the master theses, and it is certainly helpful that the request for the Programme is high

so that it is possible to handpick the students invited to attend. Yet, this structure does also bring about some elements that may require further consideration.

First, the students attending the Programme are younger and younger, and this could partially be due to the requirements in terms of physical presence at the university. Yet, by its nature, the programme should possibly be targeted to professionals who already have acquired some experience in the field and the characteristics of the current student population may require some rethinking of the contents. Given that one of the specialisations is Leadership, and this is a programme that the top management is proud of, one has to acknowledge that such a programme requires at least a few years of experience and therefore should require some teaching experience after graduating at bachelors level.

Second, the rates of dropout are consistent and one possible reason could be that "most of the students start to work or have already worked and they are not able to combine their work with their studies."

5.2.2. *Student academic performance*

As indicated before, although variable, the dropout rates tend to be consistent, but it's mainly due to student personal reasons and difficulties in combining work schedule and attendance requirements. Evidence exists of support provided to weaker students so to enhance their motivation and hard work.

Weighted assignments of self-study (colloquiums, seminars, group home works, individual home works, etc.) are used for assessment of learning results (knowledge and skills) of each particular subject. The assignments are composed and formulated so that all learning results expected in a subject would be considered.

Teachers give their students feedback on their achievements by acquainting them with their evaluations of self-study assignments and examinations in written form, as well as they present oral comments. Criteria for evaluation are presented for students in the beginning of a semester by explaining subject's aims, objectives, as well as content and assessment system.

Students are also encouraged to take part in research projects not necessarily limited to the local community also as a means for acquiring funding and opportunities for international mobility.

5.2.3. *Mobility of teachers and students*

Students intending to take part in the activity of mobility according to the ERASMUS programme participate in the selection process carried out yearly at university level. Alternatively, and as indicated above, students are encouraged to take part in research projects not necessarily limited to the local community also as a means for acquiring funding and opportunities for international mobility. The fact that the University puts a heavy accent on the development of international collaborations and partners with multiple institutions in 31 countries is certainly of help in such process.

Yet, mobility rates are still low (in 2007 one student went for the studies abroad – Hungary – according to the ERASMUS programme). This fact could partially be related to the expense involved for mobility and to the difficulties in combining periods abroad and their personal work schedules.

One positive element is that there is evidence of incoming mobility. Indeed, students from ten foreign higher education institutions (Poland, Germany, Korea, etc.) have spent some time studying in KTU.

Some evidence exists also with regard to teacher mobility and details are presented in Table 4 below.

Table 4: Teachers outgoing for academic work

Academic year	Number	Percent from all regular teachers for the Programme	Institution (country)[*]
2009	2	7,2	University of Applied Sciences FH Campus Wien (Austria); Non-governmental Organization of Elderly People Care (Denmark)
2008	1	3.6	University of Applied Sciences FH Campus Wien (Austria)
2007	3	10.7	Debrecen University (Hungary), University of Applied Sciences FH Campus Wien (Austria); Nijmengen University (Netherlands)
2006	3	10.7	Sankt Petersburg's State University of Engineering Economics (Russia), University of Applied Sciences FH Campus Wien (Austria), Katholieke Hogeschool Zuid-West-Vlaanderen, Kortrijk (Belgium)
2005	3	10.7	Lille University, Rennes University, etc. (France), Katholieke Hogeschool Zuid-West-Vlaanderen, Kortrijk (Belgium); Malardalen University (Sweden)

[*]Institutions (countries), to which the teachers of the programme went most frequently

5.3. Student support

5.3.1. *Usefulness of academic support*

It is observed that the information about the programme (e.g. funding of studies, aims and learning outcomes, achievement assessment, elective subjects, schedules) is well known and sufficiently spread. Students have adequate possibilities to consult the teachers of the programme.

Career prospectives are discussed during lectures, seminars and individual consultations. There are contacts between people from the programme and employers to foster information about employment possibilities.

Students can repeat subjects and retake examinations according to the University regulations.

Students who didn't defend their master thesis can do this in the following year.

The Student Representative Body of the Faculty of Social Sciences represents students' interests; its representatives participate in distributing living places for students at KTU hostels, and their managing according to according to the Rules of Hostel Internal Order confirmed by the Senate Chairperson; they participate in distributing scholarships, loans, allowances by the order determined by the Senate; they participate in decision-making process of the Board of the Faculty of Social Sciences; they issue student's tickets, their duplicates, prolong their validity; they organize cultural and sport events, meeting of teachers and students, discussions, seminars, conferences, hold surveys on the issues that interest students.

Students have a possibility to participate in the activity of 20 teams in 20 sport branches and 15 art collectives functioning at the University. The Department of Psychology (KTU) provides psychological support. A psychologist consultant provides a free service to individuals and also provides group consultations.

5.3.2. *Efficiency of social support*

The resources for psychological, sports, health and cultural support seem to be sufficient and adequate. There is a system with three kinds of scholarship to meet the needs of the students: incentive scholarships, scholarship for academic achievements and social scholarships.

5.4. Student achievement assessment

5.4.1. *Suitability of assessment criteria and their publicity*

The assessment criteria (as far as made clear) are suitable at the level of individual courses in a subject-oriented curriculum. The division over the different parts of the total assessment is clearly described in the course descriptions. There is transparency with regard to the system to accumulate grades (which part belongs to formative assessment, which part belongs to summative assessment). The assessment criteria at the level of the individual courses are presented to the students at the beginning of the study subject.

The assessment is also quite suited to assess competences and facilitates the task of consistently aligning content competences, aims, and teaching methods.

Strong emphasis is put on the assessment of research projects conducive to the final dissertation.

5.4.2. *Feedback efficiency*

Teachers give their students the feedback on their achievements by acquainting them with their evaluations of self-study assignments and examinations in written form, as well as they present oral comments. Criteria for evaluation are presented for students in the beginning of a semester by explaining subject's aims, objectives, as well as content and assessment system.

5.4.3. *Efficiency of final thesis assessment*

The evaluation process and requirements for the final thesis are described in detail in the SAR and are reported below. This process and its requirements appear to be effective, and we have been pleased with the results of the theses.

In fact, we were able to appreciate in the dissertations a number of essential characteristics:

1. adequate selection of research themes and questions,
2. suitability of research methods, not necessarily limited to descriptive statistics of questionnaires,
3. discussion of the results, of (some) of the limits of the research and in a couple of cases suggestions for possible ways forward.

One interesting aspect related to the assessment of final theses concerns the fact that students are encouraged to present their work in seminars and workshops and the University edits a journal that allows students and junior faculty to share their results with the wider academic community in Lithuania but also, possibly, abroad provided that some of the articles are written in English.

Specifically, the SAR reports that:

1. "The final degree project of the second-level studies is an analytical project based on independent researches. The final degree project is constantly being prepared during all four semesters: the first three semesters are aimed to perform researches (corresponding Semester 1, 2 and 3) and the fourth semester – is aimed to the prepapration of the final degree project (20 credits). During the first research project a student gets deeper into the literature accumulated from catalogues and information databases as well as other sources and he / she has to formulate and substantiate the problem of the final degree project; the second semester is meant to deepen the understanding of the problem by

wide review of the works of different authors and preparing the theoretical part of the final degree project (which can still be improved in the future); during the third research project a student has to substantiate the methodology of the empirical research, research instruments are being prepared stages of the organization of the empirical research are predicted. If the students wish, the self-study assignments of other subjects being delivered during the first three semesters are given so that they would correlate with the topics of the final degree project. During the fourth semester the students perform empirircal researches, analyse and summarise the obtained data as well as interpret them, write the text of the final degree project and get ready to defend the project (this makes 20 credits) (Annex 4.4 presents the list of the second-level study final degree projects during the last two years).

2. The final degree projects of the second-level studies are defended in public. In order to assure reliability and validity of the assessment of the final degree projects, the defence qualification commission consists of eight members; the chairperson of the qualification commission is the person not working for the KTU, but he / she is a professor of the field in educational science. Seven members of the commission possess the academic title of a professor or associate professor. At least one member as expert-practitioner is invited to take part in the work of the commission. A supervisor of the project and a reviewer, appointed by the head of the Department by considering the topic of the final degree project and his / her researches, decide on suitability of the project for its public defence. Final degree projects are assessed considering the General Inventory of Requirements for Final Degree Projects at First- and Second-Level Studies and [6] the Order of Prepapration and Assessment of of Master's Final Degree Projects determined by the Board of the Faculty of Social Sciences.

3. The qualification commission of final degree projects of the second-level studies considering the qualityand the answers to the questions during its presentation evaluates the final degree project by grades. Annex 4.4 presents the lists of the final degree projects of the two last years, which indicate their authors, supervisors and assessment grades.

4. The requirements and procedures of reviewing and defence of the final degree projects of the second-level studies, their assessment, remarks, their strengths and weaknesses are annually discussed at the meeting of the Department of Educational Systems and the open meeting of the Board of the Faculty of Social Sciences; the results of the defence are analysed referring to the reports of the chair of the qualification commission. Chair-heads, secretaries and members of the commissions present their remarks and suggestions. These meetings induce constant improvement of the quality of final degree projects. It should also be pointed out that very high methodical and scientific quality of final degree projects is stressed in the conclusions of the report of the chairperson of the qualification commission every year (though it is always noted where one could improve as well).

5. Members of the qualification commission assess the relevance of the final degree project topic, compatibility of the project's topic, objectives as well as the methods applied in the project; the reliability , relevance and originality of obtained results; the implementation of the requirements formulated in the objectives; clearness, consistency of material presentation and its relation to known

works; clearness and validity of conclusions; the quality of oral presentation; the ability to substantiate conclusions and to answer presented questions.

6. All members of the qualification commission participating at the public defence present the chairperson of the commission their assessment of the final degree project and its defence by two grades in ten-point scale considering evaluations of the supervisor and reviewer of the final degree project. After the defence of all final degree projects, if there is a need, the discussion, during which the commission members comment their presented evaluations. The final grade is the weighted average of the grades presented by the members of the qualification commission who participated at the meeting; it rounded down to a whole number [6]. The chairperson of the commission presents his / her report on the quality of final degree projects, the results of final degree projects' assessment, the compatibility of the topics to the Programme's aim as well as suggestions of further improvement of the quality of final degree projects and their defence. "

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

The system for evaluation and acknowledgement of competencies achieved non-formally or through self-education is not (sufficiently) developed. Given the importance of this area in nowadays higher education, and given the student intake, this should be improved.

At the moment there is no existing legislation to organise these procedures, so for the assessment that takes place now, this criterion is not applicable.

5.5. Graduates placement
5.5.1. *Expediency of graduate placement*

Initially, the programme was targeted to current school principals who needed further qualifications. Hence, most of the students of these cohorts were already part of the working force.

The most recent cohorts are made of younger students possibly in search of a position and it appears that graduates do not face any problems of their placement. During their studies most master students successfully combine the studies and the work (mostly at educational organizations).

6. Programme management

6.1. Programme administration

6.1.1. *Efficiency of the programme management activities*

As reported in the SAR, "Prof. Habil. Dr. P. Jucevičienė, the head of the Department of Educational Systems, and Assoc. Prof. Dr. G. Cibulskas, the coordinator of the Programme, guarantee proper implementation and improvement of the study programme."

We were indeed able to appreciate both the quality and the huge amount of work done to keep the master programme running on a track that makes it certainly comparable to other similar programmes implemented across Europe. Yet, as already pointed out in the report, the pervasiveness of the senior management's role in presenting the activities left us with some unanswered doubts on a couple of points.

First, one worry persists on how influential is the senior staff in the day-by-day management of the work. If a strong lead is certainly desirable, an excessive control may be detrimental in the long run both because the growing volume of activities may hinder the possibility of managing effectively all of them, and because it could limit the possibilities of professional growth for the younger staff. The SAR reports that some KTU faculty leave to other universities, but there is no evidence of any flux in the opposite direction and this fact could ring a bell.

Second, although KTU's numerous international partnerships certainly help maintaining a wide perspective on methodological and organizational developments across Europe and internationally, the fact that KTU is the alma mater of most of the current staff and the reduced rates of staff renewal may end up reducing the permeability of the university structures and staff to different interests and/or alternative methodological approaches.

Data related to the programme implementation (such as statistical data on student and teacher mobility, student progress and drop-out, lists of topics of the bachelor and master theses, graduates' contact details) are available.

6.2. Internal quality assurance

6.2.1. *Suitability of the programme quality evaluation*

Both in the SAR and in the interviews, we were able to collect evidence of the existence of a continuous and indeed suitable quality evaluation process leading to yearly revision of objectives and results.

Such revision is carried out on the basis of data collected through electronic questionnaires for the students on the various subjects and meetings of Commissions at different level.

6.2.2. *Efficiency of the programme quality improvement*

In the SAR and in the meetings we found evidence of continuous renewals of contents and activities aimed at maintaining the programme up to date, academically valuable, and responsive to student and employers needs and request.

These evidences, as well as the students positive assessment of teachers' didactic systems and level of interaction between teachers and students during the study process, allow us to appreciate that the process of programme quality improvement is efficient.

6.2.3. *Efficiency of stakeholders participation.*

Students participate in the process of quality evaluation and improvement. Students also give feedback to their teachers in an informal way.

The programme seems to be responsive to the requests of external stakeholders (graduates, employers) who appear to provide substantial cooperation. This interaction appears to have a positive effect on the evaluation and improvement of the quality of the programme.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

As pointed out along the report, and although the programme appears to be of sufficient quality to be currently awarded a full approval, a number of improvements appear necessary for the long term suitability and effectiveness of the program:

    3.1.   Further invest on student and staff mobility. In this sense, one possible avenue regards the organization of activities for furthering the command of the English language in students and staff;

    3.2.   Carefully evaluate the fine balance between leadership and direct management. A strong leadership has unquestionably meant the success of the programme, yet for the well being of the programme in the long run, it is important that such a supportive role does not hinder the motivation and entrepreneurial attitude of the other staff.

IV. GENERAL ASSESSMENT

The study programme *Educational science* (state code – 62407S116 (621X20004))

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	4
2	Curriculum design	4
3	Staff	3
4	Facilities and learning resources	4
5	Study process and student assessment (student admission, student support, student achievement assessment)	4
6	Programme management (programme administration, internal quality assurance)	3
	Total:	22

*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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