



STUDIJŲ KOKYBĖS VERTINIMO CENTRAS

Lietuvos edukologijos universiteto
STUDIJŲ PROGRAMOS "SOCIALINIS DARBAS"
(valstybinis kodas – 6121JX013)
VERTINIMO IŠVADOS

EVALUATION REPORT
OF "SOCIAL WORK" (state code -6121JX013)
STUDY PROGRAMME
at Lithuanian University of Education Sciences

Review' team:

1. **Damien Courtney (team leader)** *academic,*
2. **Doc. dr. Marju Medar,** *academic,*
3. **Prof. dr. Skaidrite Gutmane,** *academic,*
4. **Saulius Davainis,** *representative of social partners'*
5. **Evelina Kripaitė,** *students' representative.*

Evaluation coordinator -

Ina Marija Šeščilienė

Išvados parengtos anglų kalba
Report language – English

Vilnius
2017

DUOMENYS APIE ĮVERTINTĄ PROGRAMĄ

Studijų programos pavadinimas	<i>Socialinis darbas</i>
Valstybinis kodas	6121JX013
Studijų sritis (studijų krypčių grupė)*	Socialiniai mokslai (<i>Socialiniai mokslai</i>)*
Studijų kryptis	Socialinis darbas
Studijų programos rūšis	Universitetinės
Studijų pakopa	Pirma
Studijų forma (trukmė metais)	Nuolatinė (3,5); ištęstinė (4,5)
Studijų programos apimtis kreditais	210
Suteikiamas laipsnis ir (ar) profesinė kvalifikacija	Socialinio darbo bakalauras (socialinių mokslų bakalauras)*, Socialinis darbuotojas
Studijų programos įregistravimo data	2014-06-27

* skliaustuose nurodomi nauji duomenys, kurie pasikeitė nuo 2017 m. sausio 1 d. įsigaliojus Studijų krypčių ir krypčių grupių, pagal kurias vyksta studijos aukštosiose mokyklose sąrašui bei Kvalifikacinių laipsnių sąrangai.

INFORMATION ON EVALUATED STUDY PROGRAMME

Title of the study programme	<i>Social work</i>
State code	6121JX013
Study area (Group of study field)*	Social sciences (<i>Social sciences</i>)*
Study field	Social work
Type of the study programme	University studies
Study cycle	First (Bachelor)
Study mode (length in years)	Full-time – 3.5 years, part-time – 4.5 years
Volume of the study programme in credits	210
Degree and (or) professional qualifications awarded	Bachelor of social work (Bachelor of social sciences)*, Social worker
Date of registration of the study programme	27-06-2014

* in brackets new data provided, valid from 1 January, 2017 after List of study fields and groups of study fields Framework of qualification degrees came into force.

© Studijų kokybės vertinimo centras

The Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education

CONTENTS

I. INTRODUCTION	4
1.1. Background of the evaluation process	4
1.2. General.....	4
1.3. Background of the HEI/Faculty/Study field/ Additional information.....	5
1.4. The Review Team.....	6
II. PROGRAMME ANALYSIS	6
2.1. Programme aims and learning outcomes	6
2.2. Curriculum design	9
2.3. Teaching staff.....	11
2.4. Facilities and learning resources	14
2.5. Study process and students' performance assessment	15
2.6. Programme management.....	18
2.7. Examples of Excellence	20
III. RECOMMENDATIONS	21
IV. SUMMARY	23
V. GENERAL ASSESSMENT	26

I. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the evaluation process

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

The evaluation is intended to help higher education institutions to constantly improve their study programmes and to inform the public about the quality of studies. The evaluation process consists of the following main stages: 1) *self-evaluation and self-evaluation report prepared by Higher Education Institution (hereafter – HEI)*; 2) *visit of the review team to the higher education institution*; 3) *production of the evaluation report by the review team and its publication*; 4) *follow-up activities*.

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

The programme is **accredited for 6 years** if all evaluation areas are evaluated as “very good” (4 points) or “good” (3 points). The programme is **accredited for 3 years** if none of the areas is evaluated as “unsatisfactory” (1 point) and at least one evaluation area is evaluated as “satisfactory” (2 points). The programme **is not accredited** if at least one of evaluation areas is evaluated as "unsatisfactory" (1 point).

1.2. General

The Application documentation submitted by the HEI follows the outline recommended by the SKVC. Along with the self-evaluation report and annexes, the following additional documents have been provided by the HEI before, during and/or after the site-visit:

No.	Name of the document
1	Bachelor Theses of students
2	Information about Quality Management Systems of LUES

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

The study programme is being implemented in a higher education institution, i.e. in Lithuanian University of Educational Sciences, which has been functioning since 1935. The study Programme was registered following the Order of the Minister of Education and Science No. ISAK -986 of June 27, 2014. The efficiency of the study Programme is ensured by the Faculty of Social Education, a structural unit of Lithuanian University of Educational Sciences, which was established on February 1, 2014 following Decision No. 18 of the University Council (November 25, 2013) on joining the Institute of Social Communication and the Faculty of Social Sciences (SER p. 4).

The Bachelor study Programme is implemented by three departments and two centres of the Faculty of Social Education: Department of Social Work and Sociology, Department of Economics and Entrepreneurship Education, Department of Social Education and two centres: Centre for Learning Resources and Information, Centre for Research on Social Inclusion and Entrepreneurship. Formally, the Bachelor in Social Work Study Programme belongs to the Department of Social Work and Sociology (SER p. 4).

The Self-Assessment team was formed to analyse the implementation of the Programme and to prepare the self-evaluation report.

The present review has been carried out under the guidelines and procedures of SKVC. Conducting evaluation of the Study Programme, the External Evaluation Team has acted in compliance with the “Methodology for Evaluation of Higher Education Study Programmes” (Order No 1-01-162 of December 20, 2010 of the Director of the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education) and the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area.

The initial stage included the preparation of the self-assessment report by the University. This was read and commented on by a team of experts, after which the team visited the University on 4th December 2017. During the visit, the evaluation team had the opportunity to discuss the Programme with faculty administrators, teaching staff, students, alumni and employers. The

evaluators visited the library, offices, teaching spaces and facilities related with the Programme.

After the visit, the expert group held a meeting for discussing and amending the content of the evaluation report to represent the opinion of the whole group. They subsequently communicated extensively during a protracted period using modern media to complete the Report, having considered the comments of the SKVC Commission. LUES did not make a submission about the draft Report.

1.4. The Review Team

The review team was assembled according to the *Description of experts' recruitment*, approved by order No. V-41 of Acting Director of the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education. The Review Visit to HEI was conducted by the team on 4th December 2017.

1. **Mr. Damien Courtney (team leader)**, *Fellow Emeritus CIT, Former Head of Faculty, Business and Humanities, Cork Institute of Technology, Ireland.*
2. **Prof. dr. Skaidrite Gutmane**, *Professor, Rector, Latvian Christian Academy, Latvia.*
3. **Doc. dr. Marju Medar**, *Associate Professor, School of Governance, Law and Society, Tallinn University, Estonia.*
4. **Mr. Saulius Davainis**, *Head of Social Activity Department, Republican Hospital of Kaunas, Lithuania.*
5. **Ms. Evelina Kripaitė**, *Student, Sociology and Criminology Study Programme, Vilnius University, Lithuania.*

II. PROGRAMME ANALYSIS

2.1. Programme aims and learning outcomes

The Bachelor Study Programme of Social Work has been developed taking account of the competencies and learning outcomes. The aims of the programme and the learning outcomes are based on the Dublin Descriptors, European Qualification Framework and Lithuanian National Qualification Framework, academic and professional requirements and are linked to the EU documents on social development (SER p. 7, 15).

The Study Programme has been developed considering the transformation of modern society and relevant development trends. The Study Programme takes into account, on one

hand, the demands for social workers with the strategies of social policy formation and, on the other hand, the priorities of the European Union and Lithuania. The aims of the Programme and the learning outcomes are related to the Lithuanian state strategies, societal and labour market needs. This knowledge and related activities were demonstrated in the evaluation report (SER p. 6, 8) and by the members of the administration, teaching staff, alumni and partners during the visit.

The Bachelor study Programme of Social Work has two specialisations – *Social Work with Youth; and Social Work with Persons with Special Needs* (SER p. 16; Annex 3.1.). Social partners have confirmed the demand for social workers in both specialisations during the peer-review visit.

The aim and the learning outcomes of the Study Programme have been formulated based on the contemporary understanding of social work and competencies of a social worker. The Study Programme takes into account the international strategy for social work developments. Since 2015, the Department of Social Work and Sociology has been a member of the European Association of Schools of Social Work (EASSW) and of the Lithuanian Association of Social Work Schools. The University has signed Erasmus agreements with different European universities (SER p. 5).

Programme objectives and intended learning outcomes correspond to the type and cycle of studies and the level of qualifications. Learning outcomes comply with the requirements set for a professional Bachelor degree, are relevant for professional activities and are focused on achieving the aims of the Programme (SER p. 9). Alumni of the Study Programme are working at the top level in the social work field.

Programme objectives and intended learning outcomes are well defined, clear, complement each other and are publicly accessible. Programme objectives and intended learning outcomes described in the evaluation report correspond to the mission, the operational objectives and to the strategy of the higher education institution. The organizational structure allows LUES to plan, organize and control the Study Programme implementation as well as achieve intended learning outcomes. A student representative is always included in the activity of Study Programme implementation at all levels (SER p. 4, 8, 29). These documents and related activities have been presented during the meetings and the

discussions with the administration and teaching staff members, social partners and alumni. During the visit, teaching staff, students and alumni expressed a good understanding of the “learning outcomes” of the Social Work study Programme (Meetings with administration and teaching staff members, social partners, students and alumni).

The title of the programme, the intended learning outcomes, the content of the programme and the qualification are described in the documentation of the university and the monitoring of the programme is carried out by the administration. During the different meetings with members of administration and teaching staff, also with the students, alumni and social partners it was confirmed that dissemination of information about the Programme aim and intended learning outcomes is carried out systematically according to the requirements of the university (SER p. 2, 4; Meetings with administration and teaching staff, students, alumni and social partners). **The aim and the intended learning outcomes of the Study Programme is announced publicly** on official websites of institutions (Open Information, Counselling and Guidance System/ AIKOS), Association of Lithuanian Higher Education Institutions for General Admission/ LAMA BPO, Lithuanian University of Educational Sciences, and the Faculty of Social Education. **The teachers together with the students of the Study Programme disseminate information on the Study Programme,** including its content, goal and learning outcomes, to pupils from schools during their teaching practice, career days and meetings with pupils and social workers in public spaces, exhibitions and study fairs. General information on issues related to studies is available in specialised publications (e.g. “Where to study?”) and in informal social networks (e.g., “Facebook”). Additional information regarding studies is provided during individual consultations, face to face, by email or by phone (SER p. 8; Meetings with administration and teaching staff, students, alumni and social partners).

During the different meetings with members of administration, teaching staff, alumni and social partners, it was confirmed that the **Programme aim and intended learning outcomes comply with academic and professional requirements, as well as with social and labour market demands.** Consequently, cooperation agreements were signed with 22 organisations of 13 regions regarding the possibilities of employment (not financing) of 55 specialists of social work that studied in years 1-4 in the Study Programme of Social Work. Social partners confirmed that the demand for social work specialists in different municipalities is high. Administration and teachers mentioned in the evaluation meeting that the university has good

relations at Ministry level for doing research in youth, social security and social work groups. (SER p. 9; Meetings with administration and teaching staff, students, alumni and social partners).

However, despite the efforts, the evaluation showed **lack of English language skills**: BA Study programme has two courses for studying foreign language: “*Professional foreign language 1*” and “*Professional foreign language 2*”, but these are insufficient for fluent communication in the English language. This was apparent during the evaluation visit, when students, alumni and teachers needed the support from an interpreter. Only a few students and some of the teachers were able to communicate in English (SER p. 22; Annex 3.1.; Meetings with teaching staff, students, alumni).

The evaluation showed also lack of internationalization. BA students have the possibility to take part in the ERASMUS mobility. The main reasons why the students do not use this opportunity frequently are personal reasons, such as work and family related obligations. Students need more support for going to study abroad. The University has no strategy for the development of internationalization (SER p. 5, 20, 27; Meetings with teaching staff, students, alumni).

The evaluation team concludes in the evaluation report that information regarding the outcomes and results of the Study Programme is not sufficiently disseminated and the statistical data of Labour Exchange is not sufficiently used. Connections with Labour Exchange specialist need to be more developed (SER p. 9).

2.2. Curriculum design

The Programme Structure: is based on and is in line with Lithuanian higher education legislative requirements. The Programme has been developed within the Lithuanian qualifications’ framework and fully complies with the European Bologna process requirements. The study content and the awarded qualification corresponds to the title of the study programme. Practical training corresponds to and is closely related in its content of theory courses. Academic staff’s scientific research work is closely related to the study courses they teach. The connection between the scientific research work and the study Programme is evident.

Curriculum design includes a clear understandable rationale. It contains explicit course descriptions, clearly articulated scope and sequence. Curriculum design supports the process and contents of the Lithuanian State legislative standards through appropriate objectives, instructional activities, instructional field work and assessments.

Study Subjects (modules): The aims and tasks of the Curriculum design are clear, attainable and verifiable, the study content of the Curriculum corresponds to the awarded qualification and the title of the study Programme. It is oriented towards the development and training of specialists. The Curriculum is planned, including a development perspective. The content and implementation of the Curriculum ensures its sustainable development and meets the four main aims of higher education (solution of problems related to personality, democratic society, development of research, and meeting labour market demands). The Programme is structured so that subjects are not overlapping.

The contents of subjects and study methods: Curriculum design contains several principles which takes into account: 1) high aspirations and ambitions for the profession, 2) progression – each stage is built upon earlier knowledge so that students are able to progress, 3) coherence – clear links between different aspects of subjects, 4) relevance – students can see the value of their profession and get inspiration for their profession, 5) personalization – persons studying different subjects should become as open and adaptable as possible for the labour market.

Curriculum design benefits students and helps staff to teach efficiently. Having a good sense of how a course will proceed and what will be taught makes the design of lectures and teaching much more straightforward, and aids the creation of good, clear assessments. It is extremely important to maintain flexibility for LUES students – many of whom are working whilst acquiring the subject knowledge demanded by the course.

The scope of the programme: A systematic approach to Curriculum design is a major element of the context of gaining learning outcomes so that students should be able to achieve a successful completion of the course units.

The content of the programme: More attention should be paid to the integrity of the course modules; more updated literature in English for Social Work studies is needed for the Programme courses

2.3. Teaching staff

The members of the teaching staff of the Bachelor study programme of Social Work meet the requirements provided in the legal acts of the Republic of Lithuania and in the requirements of the university. Teachers' qualifications comply with intended learning outcomes. The Bachelor Study Programme of Social Work is implemented by a team of 35 professional teachers, out of whom 19 teachers (65.5%) have doctorates (5 Professors, 9 Associate Professors, 5 lecturers), 10 teachers have acquired Masters' degrees and 3 teachers are PhD students. The age structure is balanced and trends are positive. Young specialists are acquiring experience while communicating with their senior colleagues and, thus, gradually experiencing change and enhancing their professional development (SER p. 16).

All the teachers implementing the Study Programme have experience of scientific research in the field of social sciences or of professional activity in social work institutions and non-governmental organisations. Teachers of the Study Programme are highly qualified researchers and have extensive experience of pedagogical work.

The teaching and research experiences of academic staff is sufficient for the attainment of learning outcomes. They are actively involved in research activities, develop their own professional qualifications and disseminate their research results. The teachers' experiences of pedagogical, scientific and practical activities are presented in the evaluation report and were demonstrated during the visit (SER p. 18; Meeting with Teaching staff and students).

Teachers' participation in scientific research complies with their scientific research areas.

The Study Programme teachers are active participants at national and international conferences, study trips, and are editorial board members of numerous scientific journals. The Study Programme academic staff regularly improve their professional qualifications and actively participate in social projects initiated by the Ministry of Social Security and Labour, and the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania. Whilst teachers

cooperate and establish relationships with the representatives of foreign universities, participate in different national and international projects and in the ERASMUS+ exchange programme it is insufficient. The results of teachers' scientific activities are regularly published in the journal of research papers "*Social Education*" and in the scientific journal '*Socialinio darbo tyrimai ir aktualijos*' (*Research on Scientific Work and Topical Issues*). Systematic development of qualifications and research activities is financially stimulated at the level of the Department, Faculty and University. €1608 were allocated for research activities of the Department in 2016; and €2278 in 2017. Information on qualification development programmes, projects, conferences, seminars and other events is stored, systematized and publicized on the University website (SER p. 18)

During the visit teachers mentioned that they are a good team who are conducting research together in a positive atmosphere. Organisational culture is motivating the academic staff to develop more projects and collaboration with social partners. Students are not only included but are also encouraged to participate. The teachers and students mentioned during the visit, that when students get involved in larger projects, they feel a moral satisfaction. Students and alumni stated in the evaluation meeting that teachers are high-level lecturers who are able to teach and supervise their BA thesis (Meeting with Administration and Teaching staff, social partners, alumni and students).

The qualification of academic staff on the Programme is ensured by applying the University systems of competition and assessment. Candidates who take the position of a teacher are appointed in accordance with a publicly announced competition. Teachers are elected for a period of 3 or 5 years, after which they have to complete a process of assessment at the Recruitment and Competition Commission in the Field of Social Sciences and Humanities at LUES. During the assessment, teachers' pedagogical and research activities are evaluated taking account of their research output (publicly announced scientific articles and presentations), results of student surveys about teachers' abilities to teach a study subject, assessment by the chair and colleagues of the Department, as well as quality academic activity (SER p. 17; Meeting with Administration and Teaching staff). Teacher turnover is adequate for the provision of the Programme.

During the evaluation visit meetings the teachers, students and alumni stated that teachers use MOODLE in their teaching, which supports students' learning. All study materials are

available in Moodle. Teachers are good supervisors and give individual consultation and advise to students. Students can contact teachers via phone, email and have private Skype meetings (SER p. 29; Meeting with Administration and Teaching staff, social partners, alumni and students).

The academic work of the Programme teachers planned for teachers is in accordance with the principles of pedagogical workload of academic and research staff of Lithuanian University of Educational Sciences approved by the Senate. The total volume of the annual workload for a teacher is 1500 hours per FTE, which is divided into four groups of teachers' activities: 1) 700-1000 hours for their teaching workload; 2) Research activity ranges from 400 to 760 hours; 3) public activity ranges from 20 to 160 hours; and 4) organisational activity and qualification development – from 20 to 200 hours. Teachers plan their activities individually every year taking into account the volume of activities organized by the Head of Department. **The ratio between the academic staff and students is sufficient, which gives teachers the opportunity to deal with students individually and support them reaching their learning outcomes** (SER p. 17; Meeting with Administration and Teaching staff).

The teachers' professional development is discussed at Department meetings: teachers share their experiences gained in study trips, seminars and conferences, as well as annual reports summarising teachers' working experience are compiled by them and the Department at the end of each year. Social work competencies of the Programme teachers are presented in the teachers' curriculum vitae (Meeting with Administration and Teaching staff).

It is stated in the evaluation report that 85% of academic staff members have good knowledge of English (SER p. 18), but during the evaluation visit, teachers needed the support of the interpreter (Meeting with teaching staff). This shows the need for inviting foreign professors with different scholarship and competences, and participating in different professional organizations and networks. More activities and communication with foreign colleagues supports the staff in their development of foreign languages skills.

In the evaluation report it was also stated that the teachers of the Study Programme are not actively involved in the international sphere of Social Work (SER p. 19). The international mobility of teachers needs to be developed further, which can engender a common understanding of Social Work as a profession and develop foreign language skills.

During the visit it was mentioned that there are no standards for supervisors. This needs to be developed in the future (Meeting with teaching staff).

During the evaluation visit teachers stated they are working more than teachers are paid for. Teachers stated that they are not satisfied with the low salary and are seeking changes in university and state level financing policy (Meeting with teaching staff).

2.4. Facilities and learning resources

Teachers and students have good facilities and equipment that is appropriate for the attainment of the learning outcomes of the programme. The Bachelor study Programme of Social Work is implemented in the Faculty of Social Education in the Central Building of LUES. There are classrooms equipped with computers, software (e.g. Microsoft Office, SPSS), overhead projectors, scanners, printers, photocopiers, smart boards, audio and video equipment. It was mentioned during the meeting that furniture and facilities comply with hygiene requirements (SER p. 19-20; Visiting classrooms, lecture halls, libraries, other facilities; Meetings with Administration, Teaching staff and students).

Students have good learning conditions, suitable classrooms, laboratories and practice places. Students have access to the Study and Information Centre in the Faculty of Social Education, which stores scientific and methodological literature on social issues for students' independent work. The University has an Academic Information System (AIS) and the virtual learning platform, Moodle. However, the Moodle system is not fully utilized by the students and teachers (SER p. 19-20; Visiting classrooms, lecture halls, libraries, other facilities; Meetings with Administration, Teaching staff and students).

The Library and classrooms are equipped according to the required standard. The quantity, quality and relevance of reading materials matches the needs of students. Classrooms for students are equipped with computers together with software programmes (e.g. SPSS, Kokybis). Students have free access to the electronic databases of the LUES Library. The Study and Information Centre offers students periodicals on social work in Lithuanian and in other languages (English, German and Russian). Teachers and students can access free Wi-Fi. The LUES Library in the Central LUES building provides free access to the databases. Students and teachers have the possibility of using more than thirty subscribed

databases where they can read articles and electronic books. The Library stocks are constantly renewed using LUES and ISC funds. It is important to note that the construction of a new Library near the University is unfinished (SER p. 21; Visiting classrooms, lecture halls, libraries, other facilities; Meetings with Administration, Teaching staff and students).

Students with disabilities receive social support from the University. There is a lift in the central building where the Faculty of Social Education is situated. On the first floor there is equipment for students who are visually impaired (video magnifier, braille printer) so the environment is customized for disabled students (SER p. 20; Visiting classrooms, lecture halls, libraries, other facilities).

During the visit, it was mentioned that the Faculty of Social Education has agreements with different organisations for students to undertake their internships and the social partners confirmed this. The internships are organized through collaboration between three parties – students, university supervisors and internship tutors. During the meeting, the social partners confirmed that students are highly motivated in their practice places (SER p. 9, 14, 26).

Students trained in ‘learning to learn’ techniques, but this needs more attention in future. The Library stocks are constantly renewed using the LUES and ISC funds. The Library regularly organises training courses for its users. An Academic Information System (AIS) and a Moodle learning platform have been implemented at the University (SER p. 20).

The evaluation of study courses showed that many studies have been carried out using Lithuanian literature, but this is not enough at a Bachelor level of education. The new literature and scientific journals on *Social Work Theories* and *Social Policy* need to be used by students for strengthening their research capabilities and preparing Bachelor theses.

2.5. Study process and students’ performance assessment

Entrance requirements are well founded, consistent and transparent. People who have finished high school can apply for this programme. They need a weighted coefficient of History, Mathematics or Information Technology, Lithuanian language and literature, and one other subject.

The average competitive points for admission to the Bachelor studies of Social Work in the period, 2014-2016 is high (3.4 students per place in 2017) (SER p. 22). During 2014-2016 the number of Bachelor degree students in the Faculty of Social Education increased after 2014 when the new study Programme of Social Work received its accreditation and was implemented. Currently, there are 108 students in the Social Work Programme of whom 82 are Bachelor degree students (SER p. 4).

Organization of the study process ensures proper implementation of the programme and achievement of the intended learning outcomes. The study process is organized according to the national description of 2015 Social Work study standards. The university uses a system of cumulative grading. Students can communicate and cooperate with the teaching staff throughout the study process. In this Programme students get practical tasks. There is supervision by mentors in practice places and written documents on student achievements in practice places are compiled. Students would like to add criminal psychology to the programme, part-time students would like to have more psychology and law courses. Students' suggestion of transferring the practice from the 4th semester to the 3rd was adopted (2015 year). Social economy and social administration were introduced upon a request from the students. Students undertake case studies (SER p. 20-27; Meeting with students).

Students are encouraged to take part in scientific, artistic or applied sciences activities. Students noted they had no internship during their first year, but they had to visit (without evaluation) some institutions after lectures. Teachers asked for reflection after all these visits, to continue to develop their scientific work outside of the University (Meeting with students).

Students have the possibility to take part in mobility programmes. After the meeting with students it is clear that they get many offers to participate in mobility programmes but only some of them do. Students would like to use those offers in the future.

The higher education institution ensures proper academic and social support. Students receive social support through seven types of material-financial support including scholarships, allowances and use of dormitories. There are free dormitories for some students. The value of a social scholarship is €123 per month, scholarships for good grades are worth €38 per month.

The value depends on the number of applicants. Anyone who needs support may apply (SER p.26; Meeting with Students).

Students receive social support from the university through seven types of material-financial support (scholarships, allowances, dormitories). Bachelor study Programme students have the right to get accommodation in students' dormitory next to the Central Building of the University paying for it according to the Order of the Rector "The Procedure for Advance and Regular Payments for Hostel, Monthly Payments". The students also have access to infrastructure for leisure and other entertainment. The students may take loans to cover their living costs and tuition fees, they are as well entitled to social, incentive scholarships and a one-time benefit (if student's financial situation is bad) (SER p. 25-26; Meeting with students).

The system of assessing student achievements is clear, made public and appropriate to assess the learning outcomes. 50% of the grade consists of the examinations and the other 50% from a cumulative grade. Evaluations for independent work include meetings with institutions, visits, case studies and using a virtual platform (SER p. 23-24).

Professional activities of the majority of programme graduates correspond to the expectations of programme managers and employers. Employers and social partners noted that students are quite well prepared to consult with their clients because they have three practice placements throughout the years of the Programme. LUES students work most often with people with intellectual disabilities. They are better in this area in comparison with other Universities. LUES students' communication with the team and with the clients is effective and different (SER p. 24-25; Meeting with students).

The programme corresponds to the state's economic, social and cultural future development needs. The Bachelor Programme's two specializations are – social work with youth and social work with people with special needs. It was developed to introduce ideas to the community. At the end of each year, faculty holds meetings with social partners and students to discuss changes and improvements needed. Students take new trends in society into account when considering career possibilities. The Study Process Committee considers the need for new subjects and tries to avoid any overlapping areas or courses. Discussions are held with social partners and students on what they need and want (SER p. 9, Annex 3.1.; Meetings with social partners and students).

Fair learning environment is ensured. Students noted that they have sufficient materials, they have their personal e-mails, virtual library, and for part-time studies teachers prepare materials and tasks via Moodle or VMA. The Moodle System should be developed according to students` needs and expectations. The students have opportunities to use foreign scientific materials and the possibility of using databases such as EBSCO in preparing Bachelor theses (SER p. 21). The review team are of the opinion that there is a need to pay more attention to research methodology and analysis of the scientific sources in foreign languages to prepare Bachelor` theses at the required level. **Students are provided with opportunities to make complaints and lodge appeals in accordance with clear, public and transparent procedures.**

2.6. Programme management

Study Programme assessment and quality assurance is regulated according to the European Common Quality Assurance Framework (2003), Dublin Qualifications Acts, the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (2015) and the description of the procedure for external evaluation and accreditation of study programmes and other legislation. The administration of the Programme is carried out in accordance with the University statute; the descriptor of the procedure for renewal of study programmes and quality assessment at Lithuanian University of Educational Sciences; and the Code of academic ethics of Lithuanian University of Educational Sciences and other legislation (SER p. 27).

The responsibilities for decision making regarding the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the programme are clearly defined. The Study Programme is carried out at three levels: University, Faculty, and Social Work and Sociology Department, which combines their Programme quality activities with the Study Programme Committee. The Senate determines the system of science and study quality assurance; it approves the University strategy for quality improvement and the internal system of academic quality assurance; and it determines accreditation and qualification requirements for lecturers and research staff who implement the University Programme management. At the Faculty level, the Council considers the proposals of the Study Programme Committee, study subjects, and submits the titles and subjects of Final Theses for the Senate to approve. The Council

considers issues related to the organization of the study process and academic evaluation solves issues related to the updating of the Programme (SER p. 27-28; Meeting with Administration staff).

Internal quality assurance mechanisms are clear, effective and maintained regularly.

The main decision-making body regarding the Programme management is the Study Programme Committee, which consists of 8 members, i.e. 5 lecturers (associate professors of the Department), 1 student representative and 2 social partners. The Committee is responsible for monitoring the Programme structure, aims and learning outcomes, study process and assessment and other aspects of the Programme operation. In addition, Committee receives feedback from the students, employers and alumni for improvements in the Programme.

Feedback from stakeholders of study programme is regularly collected and analysed.

Feedback is used to improve the programme. The Committee meetings are regular. It should be noted that students' confidential periodical surveys are carried out as one of the ways to ensure quality assurance of the Programme. **All stakeholders** (teachers, students, social partners, alumni) **are involved in appropriate aspects of programme management and administration.** University has an Alumni Club. During the evaluation meetings, social partners and alumni reported good communications between the management team, alumni and partners of the study Programme. In addition, it should be mentioned that the Department coordinates lecturer compliance with the qualification requirements and provides recommendations for lecturer evaluation. The Head of Department is responsible for the administration, organization and control of the study process (SER p. 28-29; meetings with administration team, teachers, alumni, students and social partners).

University has a good structure for marketing the study programme. The monitoring of graduates' employability and careers is carried out at three levels: 1) the University level, accomplished by the Study Marketing and Careers Office, 2) the Faculty / Department level, and 3) Study Programme Committee (SPC) level. The indicators of graduates' employability and career opportunities are included into the strategic plan of the University for 2012-2020.

Alumni and social partners are actively involved in the marketing process. The managers and employers of the study Programme are satisfied with the professional activities of graduates from the Bachelor study Programme who carry out discussions in University

meetings, conferences and other public events. The University Bachelor Studies Fair is organised in May every year, where prospective Bachelor students are introduced to the Bachelor study programme and employment possibilities. Employers and social stakeholders express their opinions on the content of professional training, as well as searching for specialists in a corresponding field. (SER p. 26; Meetings with teachers, administration, students, alumni and social partners).

A management weakness indicated in the evaluation report is that cooperation with corresponding departments and students of other universities is insufficient and that information technologies are not fully used in the study process (access passwords to Moodle, AIS and other sites are different). The university is planning to develop different forms of cooperation with partners and employers in the future. More cooperation with other university departments and universities needs to be developed also (SER, pp. 27-29).

2.7. Examples of Excellence

Students, alumni and social partners confirmed satisfaction with the Programme. The study environment is very positive. Alumni and social partners have positive experiences of consultation and engagement with teachers and students. Inclusiveness and engagement with alumni and social partners is evident to the review team.

The Programme management and administration staff have good relations with university management and policy makers, which is a good platform for the development of the study Programme. Programme management is well organised. Documentation is worthy of positive comment.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

For the further development of the Programme, it is necessary to strengthen the following aspects:

- 1) The students' knowledge of social work theories and social policy needs to be improved. A common vision of Social Work theories and new Social Policy approaches need to be developed and communicated among teaching staff and students. More attention should be paid to the integrity of the Programme subjects and more updated literature in English is needed for Social Work studies in the Programme courses.
- 2) In the evaluation report, it is stated that the Study Programme teachers are not actively involved in the international sphere of social work. The international mobility of teachers and students needs to be developed, which can support the development of a common understanding of social work and improve the language skills of teachers and students. University needs a strategy for strengthening international cooperation with the European Association of Schools of Social Work (EASSW) and ERASMUS partners.
- 3) The review shows the need for inviting foreign professors by using different sources of funding, and participating in different professional organisations and networks. More frequent activities and communication with foreign colleagues supports the development of foreign languages skills of the teaching staff.
- 4) University needs to develop connections with the Labour Exchange with the aim of collecting and using information from employers and social partners regarding labour market demands and trends. There should be greater emphasis on practice in the Programme.
- 5) Standards for supervisors need to be developed. It is necessary to analyse and ensure the quality of students' Bachelor theses and develop a strategy for the quality assurance of them.
- 6) Teachers stated they are doing more than they are paid for. They are dissatisfied with low salaries and have advocated changes in financing policy at university and state level. A financing policy strategy should be developed at university level.

- 7) Cooperation with the corresponding departments and students of other universities is insufficient. It is necessary to develop and diversify the forms of cooperation with partner universities and organisations.

IV. SUMMARY

The Bachelor Study Programme of Social Work is a well-functioning programme with whom the persons interviewed are highly satisfied. The objectives and intended learning outcomes are well defined, clear and publicly announced. The Programme is linked well to the state, societal and labour market needs, and with the mission and vision of the university. The aim and learning outcomes correspond to the requirements of first cycle studies in Lithuania. The title of the Programme, intended learning outcomes, the content and the qualification are in harmony.

Students and alumni expressed a deep understanding of Social Work academic and professional requirements and gave positive feedback regarding the objectives and intended learning outcomes of the Study Programme. They stated that the learning outcomes of the study cycle are related to the aims and intended learning outcomes of the Study Programme as well as the content of the study subjects. The learning outcomes of the Study Programme are regularly reviewed and improved by the programme committee, based on feedback from students, alumni and social partners. Programme aims and intended learning outcomes comply with the qualification standards of a social worker as well as with labour market demands. Employers and social partners noted that LUES students are quite well prepared to consult with their clients. Their communication with the team and with clients is effective and different. The demand for social workers is explored and additional sources of study financing are sought in cooperation with partners and employers.

The Bachelor study Programme of Social Work has two specialisations – Social Work with Youth; and Social Work with Persons with Special Needs. The demand for social workers in both specialisations was confirmed by social partners during the visit.

The Programme is delivered by 35 professional teachers, out of whom 19 teachers have doctorates, 10 teachers have Master's degrees, and three teachers are PhD students. The requirements regarding staff composition and qualifications are met and exceeded. The age structure of teaching staff is favourable for the implementation and development of the Programme. Teachers of the Study Programme are highly qualified researchers and have extensive experience of pedagogical work. They are actively involved in research activity, develop their own professional qualifications and disseminate their research results.

Motivation and enthusiasm among Programme staff is high. Staff of the Programme demonstrate outstanding professional pedagogical development, mobility, co-operation and engagement within and outside the university.

During 2014-2016 the number of Bachelor degree students in the Faculty of Social Education increased after 2014 when the new study Programme of Social Work received its accreditation and was implemented. Currently, there are 108 students in the Social Work Programme of whom 82 are Bachelor degree students.

The Programme is currently supported by a wide range of high-quality resources including physical facilities, databases, software programmes, simulation licenses, subscription of case-study repositories and the like. The Library is well developed and offers access to the majority of internationally well-known electronic databases. However, more English language literature on topics of Social Work theories and Social Policy are needed for an improvement in the quality of studies.

The University cooperates well with policy makers and social partners which contributes to research and development activities involving teachers, students and partners.

The application procedure to the Programme is carried out online and all the information about the admissions process and requirements is conveniently presented on the website. Students are provided with opportunities to make complaints and lodge appeals in accordance with clear, public and transparent procedures. The Programme is targeted at working professionals which is reflected in admissions criteria, but teachers' workload and the financial system underpinning it need more attention. Teachers stated that they are doing more than teachers are paid for. The downside of the Programme is low student mobility, and the development of students' mobility and support for this is needed. A good connection to the labour market is a major strength of this Programme, but it comes to some extent at the expense of research and related studies.

More attention needs to be paid to the development of international cooperation. Students need more support to prepare for practice abroad and well-organised supervision during foreign practice.

The Programme management meets the requirements for higher education. The processes of quality assurance, the roles and responsibilities of the different bodies, committees and positions are functioning well and described in detail. The University has implemented student feedback as part of the improvement system. The overall student satisfaction is very high. Management is proactive and brave in implementing changes for improving operations and quality, and searching for new and innovative ways. It is recommended that the University should strengthen cooperation with partner universities and organisations, also with Erasmus partners in foreign countries.

The Bachelor Study Programme of Social Work is a good Study Programme notwithstanding the aspects identified that need to be improved. It seems to be highly valued as useful and inspiring among all the Study Programme stakeholders.

V. GENERAL ASSESSMENT

The Bachelor Study Programme Social Work (state code –612L50007/6121JX013) at Lithuanian University of Educational Sciences is given **positive** evaluation. *Study programme assessment in points by evaluation areas.*

No.	Evaluation Area	Evaluation of an area in points*
1.	Programme aims and learning outcomes	3
2.	Curriculum design	3
3.	Teaching staff	3
4.	Facilities and learning resources	3
5.	Study process and students' performance assessment	3
6.	Programme management	3
	Total:	18

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

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

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

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

Grupės vadovas: Team leader:	Mr. Damien Courtney
Grupės nariai: Team members:	Prof. dr Skaidrite Gutmane
	Doc. dr. Marju Medar
	Mr. Saulius Davainis
	Ms. Evelina Kripaite

