



STUDIJŲ KOKYBĖS VERTINIMO CENTRAS

Klaipėdos universiteto  
**STUDIJŲ PROGRAMOS "SOCIALINIS DARBAS"**  
*(valstybinis kodas – 6121JX067)*  
**VERTINIMO IŠVADOS**

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**EVALUATION REPORT**  
**OF "SOCIAL WORK" (state code -6121JX067)**  
**STUDY PROGRAMME**  
at Klaipėda University

**Review' team:**

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## DUOMENYS APIE ĮVERTINTĄ PROGRAMĄ

Studijų programos pavadinimas	<i>Socialinis darbas</i>
Valstybinis kodas	6121JX067
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)
Studijų programos apimtis kreditais	210
Suteikiamas laipsnis ir (ar) profesinė kvalifikacija	Socialinio darbo bakalauras (socialinių mokslų bakalauras)*
Studijų programos įregistravimo data	2007-01-29

\* 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.

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## INFORMATION ON EVALUATED STUDY PROGRAMME

Title of the study programme	<i>Social work</i>
State code	6121JX067
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 – 3.5years
Volume of the study programme in credits	210
Degree and (or) professional qualifications awarded	Bachelor of social work (Bachelor of social sciences)*,
Date of registration of the study programme	29-01-2007

\* 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.

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The Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education

## **CONTENTS**

<b>I. INTRODUCTION</b> .....	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 .....	5
<b>II. PROGRAMME ANALYSIS</b> .....	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 .....	17
2.5. Study process and students' performance assessment .....	19
2.6. Programme management .....	21
2.7. Examples of excellence .....	22
<b>III. RECOMMENDATIONS</b> .....	23
<b>IV. SUMMARY</b> .....	24
<b>V. GENERAL ASSESSMENT</b> .....	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 20 December 2010 of the Director of the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education (hereafter – SKVC).

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

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

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

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

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

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

### ***1.2. General***

The Application documentation submitted by the HEI follows the outline recommended by the SKVC.

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

The Bachelor study Programme of Social Work is being implemented in the Faculty of Health Sciences at Klaipeda University. Currently, Klaipeda University (KU), which was granted University rights in 1991, has 4500 students and is the largest centre of science and culture in the Western Lithuania region.

The Programme origins began at that time by the Department of Social Pedagogy (currently the Department of Social Work (hereinafter – Department) in 1999 as a result of the Department participation in the international Tempus project S-JEP 11014 (Interdisciplinary Training of Social Pedagogues/Social Workers) in 1996-1999.

In the course of structural changes in the University, the Faculty of Health Sciences was established in 2000 and the Department with the Programme was transferred into the Faculty.

A self-evaluation group to analyse the implementation of the Programme and to prepare the self-evaluation report was formed of 7 people by Klaipeda University Rector's Order No. S-215.

The review team members acquainted with the prepared self-evaluation report visited the University and met with the administration of the Faculty, staff responsible for the preparation of self-evaluation report, teaching staff, students, alumni, employers and social partners. Also the review team was introduced to teaching spaces and facilities, library and learning resources.

After the visit the review team members held a meeting in which the contents of the evaluation report was discussed to represent the opinion of the whole group.

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

The review team was completed according to *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 Klaipeda University was conducted by the team on 5<sup>th</sup> December 2017.

1. **Mr. Damien Courtney (team leader)**, *Fellow Emeritus CIT, Former Head of Faculty, Business and Humanities, Cork Institute of Technology, Ireland.*
2. **Doc. dr. Marju Medar**, Associate Professor, *School of Governance, Law and Society, Tallinn University, Estonia.*
3. **Prof. dr. Skaidrite Gutmane**, *Professor, Rector, Latvian Christian Academy, Latvia.*
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.*

The Study Programme of Social Work provides a basic university education in the field of Social Work that complies with European standards whose professional competencies would enable

them to effectively deal with social and health issues providing and organizing social services to a client and his/her family.

The study Programme Social Work is designed for the full-time studies (3.5 years). The aim and learning outcomes are consistent with the purpose of the Programme (SER p. 5).

The Bachelor study programme of Social Work has two deepening specialisations – Social Work in the Community and Social Work in Health Care (Annex 1). The demand for social workers in both specialisations was confirmed by the social partners during the visit.

**The aims of the programme and the learning outcomes are based on the Dublin Descriptors, the European Qualification Framework and the Lithuanian National Qualification Framework, academic and professional requirements, and are linked to EU documents on social development. The aims of the Programme and the learning outcomes are related to Lithuanian state strategies and labour market needs.** The Bachelor Study Programme of Social Work (hereinafter – Programme) is based on the documents of the Bologna Process and the Dublin Descriptor (2004), the Lithuanian Science and Studies Act (2009), and are in line with the European Qualifications Framework Level 6 (2009), and Research and Experimental (social, cultural) Development for 2013-2020. The Study Programme has been prepared taking account of the transformation of modern society and relevant development trends based on the needs of Western Lithuania (Klaipeda and Taurage districts) (SER p. 5). The body of knowledge and related activities are demonstrated in the evaluation report and by the members of the administration, teaching staff, alumni and partners during the visit. It was confirmed that the goal of the Social Work study Programme is to prepare specialists who can professionally react to current and recent social problems in Lithuania. The Programme is rated among the best in Lithuania consistent with European standards (SER p. 9).

**KU Social Work programme meets the requirements outlined in the standards for social work education (Global Standards for Social Work Education, 2004)** developed by the International Association of Schools of Social Work. It is working in line with the objectives outlined in the European Association of Schools of Social Work Annual Plan, 2016-2020, which focuses on the revitalization of activities in the regions and improvement in the quality of Social Work studies. KU Social Work Programme cooperates well with the Association of Lithuanian Social Work with regard to the development of quality social work studies (SER p. 7).

**Programme goals and objectives are consistent with Klaipeda University mission, goals and strategy.** The KU mission is described in the evaluation report as giving priority attention to marine research and studies, history of the Baltic Sea region, culture and languages, education, health and social welfare, economics, politics, communications and arts. Special attention is given to issues related to the sustainable development of Western Lithuania, the city of Klaipeda, and the establishment of an integrated science, study and business centre (SER p. 7). **The mission, operational objectives and strategy of the higher education institution are related to the Social Work Study Programme and understood by all its stakeholders.**

**Programme objectives and intended learning outcomes described in the evaluation report correspond to the mission, operational objectives and to the strategy of the higher education institution.** The organizational structure allows for the planning, organization, and control of the Study Programme implementation as well as realizing intended learning outcomes. These documents and related activities were considered during meetings and discussions with the administration, teaching staff members, social partners and alumni.

**The compliance of the Programme aim and intended learning outcomes with academic and professional requirements, as well as social and labour market demands is evident.** The aim and learning outcomes are presented in the self-evaluation report (SER p. 6-9). It states that the graduates will work in the significant field of Social Work, will effect positive social change for individuals, groups or communities and will perform functions that require deeper knowledge and universal theoretical preparation in the social work area. Alumni and social partners confirmed during the evaluation that they are working in different positions in the field of Social Work which require deeper knowledge and universal theoretical preparation in the Social Work area, and that they are satisfied with their work. The university has good relationships and cooperation with social partners regarding student practice and offering them job opportunities. Annex 8 of the self-evaluation report presents more than forty different partners in the Western Lithuania region regarding internships as part of social work studies. During the different meetings with members of administration, teaching staff, alumni and social partners it was confirmed that the contribution of the Social Work study programme in the implementation process of the University mission is related to the development of health and social well-being as well as the sustainable development of Western Lithuania region and the city of Klaipeda. Graduates of the Social Work Programme are working in many regional and city social work institutions. The KU Department maintains regular contact with them through meetings of the

Social Workers' Discussion Club, conferences and festive events. The best final theses of the Social Work programme are introduced to working professionals thus ensuring a good relationship between theory and practice (SER p. 7). Social partners confirmed in the evaluation meeting that approximately 80% of employed social workers in this region are graduates of KU.

**Programme objectives and intended learning outcomes are well defined, clear, complement each other and publicly accessible.** Programme objectives and expected outcomes are consistent with the requirements set for Bachelor's degree Programmes, and with national and international instruments. They provide the opportunities to acquire knowledge and gain skills. Students and alumni also demonstrated a good understanding of the social work profession and the learning skills necessary to continue in the next cycle of university studies. There is a close relationship between theory and practice in Programme content (SER p. 9).

Programme objectives and intended learning outcomes are clearly described in the self-evaluation report (SER p. 7-8). During the visit teaching staff, students and alumni expressed a good understanding of the "learning outcomes" of the Programme. Objectives and the expected outcomes are considered adequate in meeting the needs of the region, based on national and international instruments. Apart from this, students would like more discussions about professional qualification standards. This is important for students.

**Programme objectives and intended learning outcomes are linked to academic and professional requirements.** The self-evaluation report clearly describes the aims of the Programme and intended learning outcomes. It defines the knowledge and the application necessary for a social worker, including the ability to carry out research, possess social and personal abilities, also special abilities to recognise and critically evaluate needs, strengths and the potential competencies of a person, group and community to organize and provide social work services at regional and municipality level (SER p. 6, 8). Teaching staff expressed a deep understanding of the academic and professional requirements of social work. The study programme demonstrates a close relationship between theory and practice.

**Programme objectives and intended learning outcomes correspond to the type and cycle of studies and the level of qualifications.** The Programme aim and objectives are consistent with its purpose and conform with the following: Description of Study Cycles (2011), Regulations of



the Study Field of Social Work (2015), Descriptor of General Requirements for Degree Programmes of first cycle and Integrated Study Programmes (2014), and Regulations on the Activities of Health Care Social Workers in Health Care Institutions (1999). Learning outcomes comply with the requirements set for a professional Bachelor degree, are relevant for professional activities and are focused on achieving the aim of the Programme (SER p. 5).

**The title of the programme, intended learning outcomes, the content of the programme and the qualification described in the university documentation are confirmed by the results of the monitoring carried out by the administration.** It was confirmed during the different meetings that feedback on the Programme aim and intended learning outcomes is carried out systematically following the requirements of the University.

**The aim and the intended learning outcomes of the Study Programme are announced publicly** on official websites: KU website (<http://www.ku.lt/>). ISO quality management standards are implemented to ensure KU quality assurance (see: <http://www.ku.lt/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/Sertifikatas-angl.9001.pdf>) (SER p. 30).

## ***2.2. Curriculum design***

**The Programme Structure** is in line with the legislative requirements: the Programme is based on Lithuanian higher education legislative requirements. The Programme has been developed within the Lithuanian qualifications' framework and is fully compliant with the European Bologna process requirements. The aims of the Curriculum and learning outcomes are clear, attainable, and verifiable. The aims of the Curriculum design and content concur with the Klaipeda University regional mission and are oriented towards the development and training of high level specialists in Social Work.

The Curriculum is designed and oriented towards the needs of the national economy in the region, emphasizing a strong regional approach.

**Study Subjects (modules):** The practice of Social Work requires knowledge of human development and behaviour, of social, economic and cultural institutions, and of the interaction of all these factors. Curriculum design, courses, internships and field education experiences

confirm that the Programme prepares for various careers in Social Work by addressing both individual and systemic areas of studies. The Programme curriculum incorporates auditorium education with training in the field to prepare the student to practice as a social worker.

The competence of the staff, highly motivated students, good learning resources, sufficient feedback reactions with alumni and employers speak positively about the quality of the implementation of the Curriculum design.

**Subject Content and Study Methods:** Central in the Curriculum is community work, four very well-organized internships and good contacts with different NGOs and the “Caritas” organization in this regard. The Curriculum is well-structured and meets the students’ need to become good professionals. Academic staff are highly professional, intent on improving the Programme according to labour market demands. Libraries and data bases are sufficient for the successful implementation of the Curriculum. They provide periodicals in print and electronic format, basic books and access to data bases. Good editions of professional scientific literature is available also in English.

**The scope of the programme:** Curriculum design is research inspired by the highly motivated teaching staff. There is evidence of good teaching staff publications which is strongly mission-oriented for the development of Social Work in Lithuania e.g. contact with research in Lapland University; all teachers are closely connected to their research obligations and at the same time to the professional area of Social Work. Several lecturers have PhDs in Social Work from Lapland University. The Curriculum is based not only on the scientific approach, but also on both the inner and outward, personal and institutional, motivation of the teaching staff.

Curriculum design differs from other similar study Programmes existing in Lithuania due to the strong research and regional approach. The English language skills of the teaching staff are sufficient for the preparation and implementation of the Curriculum; students’ English language, however, needs to be improved.

**The content of the programme:** Many of today’s European scientific challenges require joint involvement of researchers from different disciplinary backgrounds. Such interdisciplinary research teams face many challenges resulting from differences in training and scientific culture.

Due to a good research basis for the Social Work education programme at Klaipeda University we recommend the promotion of a stronger interdisciplinary methodology throughout the Curriculum design, to train truly interdisciplinary specialists in Social Work with respect to the critical factor skills and competences. Klaipeda University would be the right place to develop the most innovative European approach to Social Work development in Lithuania. For that purpose, we recommend a Methodology for an Interdisciplinary Research Framework as part of the Curriculum design. It would allow for a range of methodological combinations including a methodology of integrative theology. Curriculum design should be based on modules adopting an interdisciplinary approach. Different phases of designing interdisciplinary methodology in the Curriculum framework can be illustrated through real Social Work and real-life applications in teaching and research.

Recommendation: to raise awareness and knowledge in interdisciplinary methodology as a basis for close interaction between e.g. medicine, pedagogy, sociology, history, caritative theology.

### ***2.3. Teaching staff***

**The teaching staff members from the study programme meet the requirements provided for in legal acts of the Republic of Lithuania and in requirements of the university.**

There is a good understanding of research inspired teaching and professional development in the University. The diversity of staff which implements the undergraduate Programme of Social Work, as well as teacher-subject-specific and methodology competences are in conformity with the international requirements, stipulated by Lithuanian Legal Acts and Klaipeda University Regulations.

There is an increase in the scientific potential of teachers of the Department of Social Work, long-term pedagogical, wide-range practical and consultative experience. Generation balance is maintained and professional academic continuity is ensured. The coherence between scientific research, educational and practice activities of Department teachers fosters the link between theory and practice in the study process.

**Teachers' qualification are compliant with intended learning outcomes.**

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

The Bachelor Study Programme of Social Work is implemented by a team of 11 professional teachers, out whom 8 teachers have a doctorate (four of them have PhDs in Social Work). In the period under analysis three teachers defended dissertations in the field of Social Work at Lapland University in Finland. The teachers who have been in the Department since its establishment continue working in their chosen research areas. Their research activities are reflected in their teaching modules and are enriched through practical experience (SER p. 13-14; Annexes 3, 4).

The achievement of study outcomes is guaranteed by the fact that all the Department teachers have a long-term and versatile professional competence: more than half of Department teachers (6) have a continuing pedagogical education, 4 teachers have more than 20 years of pedagogical and research work experience, 4 teachers have a 10 years of scientific, practical and project experience which conforms with the modules taught, 3 teachers have a 10-year-long experience in practical supervision-consulting activities. All this ensures the preparation of specialists with critical thinking, and integrated knowledge, values and abilities. The preparation of young researchers is also part of a development strategy (their research deals with the modern challenges of social work). All of this information is presented in the evaluation report and confirmed at the evaluation meetings (SER p. 16; Annexes 3, 4) (Meeting with teaching staff and administration).

**The Department conducts fundamental and applied scientific research, and implements national and international projects.**

Active scientific research activities conducted by the Department teachers include participation in national and international projects, review of doctoral dissertations, supervision of doctoral studies and active participation in the activities of various organizations.

Teachers are members of many international organizations and government bodies which have prepared significant documents in the field of Social Work. On the initiative of Prof. dr. Elvyra Acienė the Lithuanian Association of Social Work Schools was founded in 2015. She is the President of this association. The research, pedagogy and practice activities carried out at the Department reveal the research topicality conducted by the Department teachers: *Interdisciplinary focus on social work development in the context of the reinforcement of social*

welfare; the sub-themes are the following: *Innovations and professionalization of social work; Social policy and reducing social exclusion; Social risk groups and quality of life research*. The topicality of Department research and practice activities conform with the content of teaching modules and meet the aim and outcomes of the Social Work graduate programme (SER p. 13).

The study Programme facilitates learning innovative research based methods for working with disabled people, adjuvant medicine and dolphin therapy in cooperation with the Dolphin Therapy Centre established at the Lithuanian Maritime Museum. This study course provides holistic psychosocial assistance to families with a disability (SER p. 13).

Details of teachers' qualifications and research activities are presented in the evaluation report and its annexes. They are well qualified and are pioneers in this field of social work in Lithuania.

**All the teachers implementing the Study Programme have experience of scientific research in the field of social sciences or professional activity in different professional platforms, social work institutions or non-governmental organisations.** This is evidenced by their participation in a great number of projects that correspond to the fields of scientific interests of each teacher in the Department. They include project *AppSam – a project in the CareSam R&D Network* which is a project that has been initiated by Malmo University (Sweden), is an interdisciplinary project and opens new possibilities in international research collaboration; participation in the EU Commission Grundtvig programme project *PAT: Pet Assisted Therapy. Learning with Them*; an award for participation in EPALE, an Adult Education Platform for the promotion of activities has been received (Education Exchanges Support Foundation); participating in project, *Tackling Demand for Sexual Services of Trafficked Women and Girls – STOP TRAFFICK – HOME* with partners from Ireland, Cyprus, Bulgaria, Finland and Lithuania; the programme *DOLPHIN* in cooperation with the Dolphin Therapy Centre of Maritime Museum of Lithuania and also an increasing number of Erasmus+ projects during 2015-2016.

The Department belongs to the framework of international cooperation and implements the Erasmus IP projects which provides international experience for lecturers and for students. In 2012 Erasmus IP *Entrepreneurship and Dynamics of Democracy Development in Europe* was implemented at the Latvian Christian Academy; in 2014 Erasmus IP *Corporate Social Responsibility* was implemented at Mendel University in Brno (Czech Republic). The

Department has a cooperation and academic exchange programme with the University of Šiauliai. In the period under review 21 of the Department teachers visited foreign universities for lecturing and 13 visiting teachers came to KU in the context of the Erasmus programme (SER p. 14-15).

The Department has increased the quality of the study process, research and international profile (scientific publications for 2012-2016 are listed in the Department website). The teachers actively participate in national and international conferences. The Department also organizes and holds national and international conferences and seminars (for example, *Professionalization of Social Work: Dynamics and Evolution*, was organized in 2013; *Social Dialogue as the Potential of Social Work Professionalization* in 2014). Many publications have been prepared during the period under review: 2 monographs, 4 methodology publications (on critical thinking, innovative methods and organization of practice activities), 1 project study, 1 study book, 1 textbook, 66 scientific publications in reviewed scientific journals (2 of them in ISI indexed publications, 30 of them in international peer-reviewed scientific journals); 50 presentations have been made at scientific conferences (35 among them in international). The University organizes English language courses for different levels of language proficiency. All of this information is presented in the evaluation report and its annexes (SER p. 14-15; Annexes 3, 4).

Teachers' collaboration with foreign counterparts should be continued further by involving the young teachers' participation in international scientific research activities.

**The teaching and research experience of academic staff is sufficient for the attainment of learning outcomes.** They are actively involved in research activity, increase their own professional development qualifications and disseminate their research results. The researchers of the Department review doctoral dissertations, are supervisors for doctoral students, review scientific articles and are the members of editorial boards of prestigious Lithuanian and international scientific journals. They are organizers and participants at international events and actively participate in the activities of KU divisions (Senate, Committee on Ethics, Faculty Scientific Council, Attestation Committees, PhD Committees) on scientific, methodological and administrative matters (SER p. 13-17, Annexes 3, 4).

The active work of the teachers has been evaluated by students and society (in 2017 the magazine *Ratings* has named Prof. dr. E. Aciené of the Department as the most prominent, leading lecturer at KU; in 2016 during the celebration of KU 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary, KU Rector awarded Prof. dr. E. Aciené with a Certificate of Appreciation and a Silver Medal for her input in training doctors of science: in recent years the highest number of doctoral students that worked under her supervision defended their doctoral dissertations and became doctors of social sciences. The teachers' experience of pedagogical, scientific and practical activity were presented in the evaluation report and during the visit (Meeting with teaching staff).

The teachers are part of a good team engaged in research together in a positive atmosphere and environment. The positive institutional culture encourages the development of more projects and collaboration with its social partners. Students and alumni confirmed that the teachers are high-level lecturers who teach well and supervise their BA theses effectively.

**Cohort of academic staff is sufficient, and student-teacher ratio is appropriate.** The majority of teachers (70%) who deliver the courses in the Programme are from the Department of Social Work, while 30% of teachers come from other programmes. Out of all teachers who implement this Programme five are professors and six are associate professors. This ratio meets the requirements outlined in the *Descriptor of the Field of Social Work*. During the recent period, the number of teachers having a doctoral degree at the Department increased with at least half of the study modules in the Programme being taught by recognized scholars. During the period under review, the qualifications and the appropriate number of certified teachers have ensured the achievement of intended general and special outcomes that are specified in the study Programme. The achievement of study outcomes is guaranteed by the fact that all the Department teachers have long-term and versatile professional competences. The current ratio of teachers and students provides for quality delivery of lectures and seminars, guidance of internships and supervision of final theses. More time is devoted to individual contact with students in classes and consultation.

**The ratio between the academic staff and students is sufficient for teachers to deal with students individually and support the achievement of learning outcomes.** This information is presented in the evaluation report (SER p. 15) and the annexes (3, 4), and confirmed by administration staff and teachers during the evaluation meetings.

**The qualifications of the academic staff of the Programme are ensured by applying the University systems of examinations and assessment.** All candidates for a teacher's position are appointed in accordance with a publicly announced competition. Candidates for teaching positions are assessed by the Commission that is formed by the Senate of the University. The Department staff were recruited with reference to the research fields related to the academic modules in the study programme, the links of their scientific competence to applied research, their scientific publications, and academic background. The teachers are appointed for a period of five years, after which they have to complete a further assessment process at the Recruitment and Competition Commission. During the assessment, a teacher's pedagogical and research activities are evaluated taking account of their research output (in research journals and participation in national and international scientific events on social work issues), results of student surveys about teacher's abilities to teach a study subject, assessment by the chair and Department colleagues, as well as the quality of their academic activity (SER p. 12-14) (Meeting with teaching staff).

The evaluation report (SER p. 13-18, Annexes 3, 4) and review meetings indicate that teachers working in the Study Programme have extensive pedagogical, research and practical experience, and are able to convey high-quality knowledge and experience to students, as well as to their networks and connections with social work activity. It was confirmed during the review meetings that teachers use the MOODLE system in their teaching, which enhances the opportunity for students to learn. All the study material is available in Moodle. Teachers are good supervisors and offer their students individual consultation and advice. All Skype meetings are available for students.

**The academic work of the Programme planned for teachers is in accordance with the principles of the pedagogical workload of academic and research staff of Klaipeda University approved by the Senate.** The distribution of teachers' workload is regulated in the *Description of the teachers' workload for 2016-2017 (2016, KU Senate Resolution No. 11-49)*. The analysis of the workload distribution for teachers of the Department has shown that the average workload of a full-time teacher conforms to *Description* requirements (full-time is 36 hrs/week and consists of:

1) contact hours (lectures, seminars, workshops, lab works, internship, exams) – 10-14 hours;



2) methodological work (preparation for classroom work, organization and control of students' independent work) – 10-12 hours;

3) research and/or artistic work – 10-16 hours).

The hours for methodological work and scientific research activities are distributed amongst teachers with reference to individual preferences. The individual workloads of department teachers as specified in the *Description*, may deviate from the Department average by no more than 10% depending on teachers' individual results of their academic and methodological output (SER p. 17).

During the period under analysis the workload of full-time teachers fluctuated between 750-800 hours. This conforms to the *Description* requirements (SER p. 16). Currently, the increased number of positions occupied is determined by the stable number of Masters' students and the growing number of foreign students undertaking Bachelor studies. The teachers' professional development is discussed at Department meetings: teachers share their experience gained in study trips, seminars and conferences, as well as annual reports summarising teachers' working experience which are compiled by the teachers and the Department at the end of each year. The social work competence of the Programme teachers is presented in the teachers' curriculum vitae (SER p. 13-18).

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

***The premises for studies are adequate both in their size and quality.***

The Bachelor study Programme of Social Work resides within the Faculty of Health Sciences. For general and special education disciplines the Department of Social Work can use 18 classrooms which conform with the hygiene requirements. The classrooms are equipped with computers with software and other equipment such as overhead projectors, smart boards, audio and video equipment. Students have facilities to print and copy. There is free Wi-Fi for students and staff in the University.

***The teaching and learning equipment (laboratory and computer equipment, consumables) are adequate both in size and quality.***

The Office of Social Work Practice and Consulting at the Faculty of Health Sciences has functioned since 2016 where students develop their social work practical skills and competencies. The Office is equipped with all the necessary equipment for teaching (e.g. video projector, display screen, magnetic board). It is essential for the growing number of students from abroad that access to the Moodle system is maintained properly.

***Teaching materials (textbooks, books, periodical publications, databases) are adequate and accessible.***

There are basic materials for Social Work studies at the Faculty of Health Sciences Library and Martynas Mazvydas reading room. Literature is suitable for social work studies and is regularly supplemented by the addition of topical books. Students and teaching staff can use (from KU network and from home) subscribed data bases electronic books and articles can be read. Student and staff can also benefit from eLABa (Lithuanian Academic Electronic Library). However, it is clear that students do not use resources sufficiently as evidenced by the lack of foreign languages literature and references to databases in their final papers.

Klaipeda University library is customized for readers with special needs. There is such equipment as a stationary electronic video magnifier, keyboards designed for visually impaired readers and text translators in audio format. The Library environment is also customized for disabled people. The construction of the library through a public private partnership is a good example of cooperation with business. However, the Faculty of Health Sciences environment is not sufficiently adapted for disabled people. Creative ways should be found to facilitate this whilst respecting the local planning requirements for preserved buildings.

***The higher education institution has adequate arrangements for student practice.***

Students and social partners confirmed that the Bachelor study programme of Social Work students have good opportunities to practice in different social work institutions (e.g. NGOs, municipalities, health care institutions, law enforcement institutions).

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

***Entrance requirements are well-founded, consistent and transparent.***

Students with secondary education are admitted to study on the Programme of Social Work by the competitive score taken from their grades. Students from Colleges can take bridging courses for two years (120 credits). The Programme doesn't have any part-time students, just full-time students.

***Organization of the study process ensures proper implementation of the programme and achievement of the intended learning outcomes.*** The studies process includes qualitative teaching, invitations to practice places and interesting assignments. There is personal and institutional motivation. Graduates noted that they always have the possibility of returning to their Alma Mater to discuss any issues and questions. There is regular communication between those from Klaipeda University, and other universities and institutions. Students can visit different institutions and then decide where they want to take their practice placement. There are two specializations in this Programme – Social Work in the Community, and Social Work in Health Care.

***Students are encouraged to take part in scientific, artistic or applied sciences activities.***

The University sends the best theses to its social partners. Students and teachers works together in research.

***Students are provided conditions to take part in mobility programmes.*** The members of the University have the opportunity to go abroad to their partners. Lithuanian students do not really participate in mobility programmes because of family commitments. They should be encouraged to participate in mobility programmes.

***The higher education institution ensures proper academic and social support.*** Students participate in making decisions on scholarships. They also participate in the Study Programme Committee. The University uses questionnaires to ascertain students and alumni opinions about the study process. Students are highly motivated. Students must pay some money for their studies. The University provides some state funded studies and private funded studies. In Social Work almost everyone is state funded. Students confirm that it is possible to get scholarships and loans, and only a small number pay for their studies. International students are private funded.

***The system of assessing student achievements is clear, public and appropriate to assess the learning outcomes.*** Teachers use different student assessment methods such as individual work, presentations, examinations, colloquia and group work. Mostly, they use cumulative grades. Students have more independent work. Students write joint articles with teachers. The type of assessment depends on the subject, e.g. social research methods, working in groups, movie reviews (how they communicate, how they produce information). Students confirm that all teachers take time to explain why students get certain marks (within a maximum of one week). Better evaluation of field work is recommended by the review team.

***The teachers together with students of the Study Programme disseminate information on the Study Programme,*** its content, aims and learning outcomes. Students welcome the opportunity to discuss different academic issues of concern to them at the Department of Social Work and at the Office of the Vice-Dean. This service is highly responsive to their needs. Students can also use scientific literature, methodology materials on writing research papers, final theses and course papers of previous Social Work students which are available at the Department and deposited there by teachers. Information on the study Programme, study modules, time schedules and deadlines is also available on the University website. Teachers' consultation hours are fixed for the whole term period, they are uploaded on the Department website and posted on the Department notice board (SER p. 24). The most popular form of consultation is between a teacher and a student (Meetings with students and alumni).

***Professional activities of the majority of programme graduates correspond to the expectations of programme operators and employers.*** A teachers' task is to prepare students to use their acquired knowledge to effect changes in society. Students state that job prospects are good after completing their Bachelor studies. Some older students like to return home to work in their towns and villages (e.g. in day care centres for old people), some of them will stay in Klaipeda, some will take the Masters' studies. For international students it is harder because they do not know the Lithuanian language.

***The programme corresponds to the state's economic, social, cultural and future development needs.*** The Social Work study Programme was one of the first in the Faculty. They maintain closer relationships with other disciplines – especially with health care. This programme maintains a holistic approach. They collaborate together in research and regional labour market.

The study Programme is oriented to integrating some health care study subjects. There is interest in the balance between society renewal and authority.

*Fair learning environment is ensured.* The virtual learning system, Moodle has been introduced, mostly for international students; in English and Lithuanian. The review team recommend the greater integration of foreign students into the study process. Currently, foreign students are taught separately. Students would like to have dedicated computer labs.

*Students are provided opportunities to make complaints and lodge appeals in accordance with clear, public and transparent procedures.*

## **2.6. Programme management**

*Responsibilities for decisions and monitoring of the implementation of the programme are clearly allocated.*

The University Statute regulates the main management principles and distribution of duties. The University's academic strategy ensures compatibility with the Bologna process and the University Senate determines its study regulations. The Faculty Council, Academic Commission and the Senate approve each new study programme designed by the Department. The University promotes the principle of self-governance. There is concern, however, that management strategy is not sufficiently in harmony with the Programme management and operation.

*Data and other information regarding programme implementation are collected and analysed periodically*

The Department meets regularly, twice a month, to consider Programmes matters including research themes, module harmonization and the content of internships.

*The outcomes of internal and external evaluations of the programme are used for the improvement of the programme.*

A study Programme self-assessment system, as it's presented in the self-evaluation report, is implemented and the internal self-assessment is carried out every three years to consider the external assessment report. A specially formed self-assessment group consists of the staff of the

Department, Faculty and students. Regular feedback and teaching staff professional development are essential components of internal self-assessment. Teachers mentioned in the evaluation meeting that there is good collaboration between departments and that they are an integral part of the University.

***The evaluation and improvement processes involve stakeholders.***

The self-evaluation report indicates, that social partners, student representatives and practitioners are involved in the management of the Programme with the Department of Social Work contribution being the largest. Regular meetings of the Department discuss the implementation of the Programme. The Department also organizes once every two-three months methodological seminars to consider students' research themes, and scientists' academic and research issues. The coordinator of the Programme is the Head of Department. The Study Programme Committee's, which consists of academic staff, students and practitioners, task is monitoring and administration update of the Programme and new study modules. Stakeholder engagement ensures that the quality of the study is implemented in accordance with the quality assurance requirements of the Programme. Stakeholder involvement ensures quality assessment, equal opportunities for students and tolerance. During the meeting it was emphasized, that an important aspect of the quality assurance process is the regular participation in it by students, alumni and social partners

***The information about the study programme is public, relevant and easily accessible.***

Information on the aim and objectives of the Programme, study subjects, documents that regulate management standards and the study process are publicly available on the website of the University (<http://ku.lt/>).

## **2.7. Examples of excellence**

**The Programme ensures possibilities to choose different specializations – i.e. Social Work in the Community and Social Work in Health Care.**

**High level of regional cooperation and social partnership.** There is a strong community of teaching specialists, graduates and social partners in and for the region of Western Lithuania. A good emotional atmosphere in KU facilitates good collaborative relationships with business

enterprises and the return of graduates to consider issues, the development of joint projects and the pursuit of higher studies. The construction of the library through a public private partnership is a good example of cooperation with business.

**Teachers are active in scientific research and international projects' activities.** They implement projects covering a wide range of different social work field activities such as related to aging issues (*AppSam – a project in the CareSam R&D Network*); pet therapy (*PAT: Pet Assisted Therapy. Learning with Them*); adult education (EPALE Adult Education Platform); and human trafficking (*Tackling Demand for Sexual Services of Trafficked Women and Girls - STOP TRAFFICK – HOME*).

**The Programme has a strong international dimension,** promotes international cooperation, strengthens intercultural competencies, and encourages student and teacher mobility. The Programme has been ranked in 2016 by magazine *Reitingai* as the only programme in the field of Social Work as corresponding to an international level study programme.

**The Social Work study programme teachers' initiative** founded the Association of Lithuanian Social Work Schools. The Department of Social Work has also become one of the initiators of the Association of Lithuanian Social Work. Active participation in the activities of these associations' strength the idea of a School of Social Work and the promotion of the profession of Social Workers.

### **III. RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. Alignment between student workload and learning outcomes should be ensured through persistent monitoring of student workload. More supervision is recommended.
2. In order to train social work specialists with strong interdisciplinary knowledge bases the promotion of a stronger interdisciplinary methodology throughout the curriculum design of the study Programme is recommended.
3. The involvement of young teachers in international scientific research activities and mobility should be encouraged further.
4. Following the very well adapted library facilities for students with special needs, the Faculty environment requires adaptation to meet the needs of students with a disability.
5. Considering that the Programme has been recognised as corresponding to the level of an international study Programme, more student mobility and learning of languages should be encouraged and is recommended.
6. Improve the greater integration of foreign students in the study process.
7. Faculty strategy should be more aligned with the Programme management team and operation.



#### **IV. SUMMARY**

Klaipeda University currently is the largest centre of science and culture in the Western Lithuania region. The University has a commendable reputation and provides good examples of collaboration with business enterprises and social partners. Students, alumni, teaching staff and the whole academic community are satisfied with the University. This was evident to the review team.

The Social Work Programme is functioning well and rated highly among the people interviewed. The objectives and intended learning outcomes are well-defined, clear, and publicly announced. The Programme is linked well with societal and labour market needs and conforms with the University regional mission.

The aim and learning outcomes correspond to the requirements of first-cycle studies in Lithuania. The title of the Programme, intended learning outcomes and the content are synchronized well. The admission procedure is clear, publicly and easily accessible. The Programme, as it is presented in the SER, is one of the best in Lithuania corresponding to European standards. It shows the high level of the Programme competitiveness which is supported through financial flexibility by the University.

The study Programme has two deepening specialisations – Social Work in the Community; and Social Work in Health Care - and is oriented towards the development and training of high level specialists in Social Work. Teaching staff orientate the Programme to labour market needs.

The study process is supported by providing various academic and social supports to students, encouraging student feedback and ensuring necessary learning measures.

Teachers are highly qualified researchers and their qualifications meet the established requirements. They are actively involved in research activity and their own professional development. Teaching staff have a long-term and versatile professional competence – scientific, pedagogical, practice and project experience. The age structure of teaching staff is favourable for the implementation and development of the Programme. Teachers are very motivated and

enthusiastic, so in this context, the mobility of young teachers and their participation in international research should be encouraged more.

The Programme is well-structured and meets student needs to become good professionals. This includes the practical students' skills acquired during practice. The Programme curriculum incorporates auditorium education with training in the field to prepare the student to practice as a social worker. Existing subjects in the Programme help students to develop their critical thinking, self-sufficiency, progress and abilities to systemize and use the knowledge gained.

The establishment numbers of teaching staff is sufficient and the existing facilities and learning resources ensure the implementation of the Programme's aims and learning outcomes. A good relationship with the University ensures that the graduates continue to deepen their scientific activities by returning to their alma mater for PhD studies. Teachers of the Programme are active researchers in the academic and applied areas. The Association of Lithuanian Social Work Schools was established through their initiative which is a good example of their cooperation with other higher education institutions.

The implementation of the Programme is supported through sufficient material resources including a well-equipped library, accessibility to use well-known electronic databases and well-known literature of social work. The Library is very well adjusted for students with special needs. However, Faculty facilities need to be improved more for access by students with a disability.

A tradition of long-lasting cooperation between the Department of Social Work and its social partners ensures good opportunities for student internships. Student satisfaction with practice is revealed by their positive feedback.

Programme management is very effective as all stakeholders are included in the management process with the biggest responsibility resting with the Department of Social Work. The Faculty and the Programme would benefit from greater engagement by top management and the highest level of administration. For optimal and comprehensive management assurance, and in accordance with the principle of collegiality, it would be appropriate to allocate more responsibilities to stakeholders who would welcome more involvement.

## V. GENERAL ASSESSMENT

The study programme *Social Work* (state code – 6121JX067) at Klaipeda University is given **positive** evaluation.

*Study programme assessment in points by evaluation areas.*

<b>No.</b>	<b>Evaluation Area</b>	<b>Evaluation of an area in points*</b>
1.	Programme aims and learning outcomes	4
2.	Curriculum design	3
3.	Teaching staff	4
4.	Facilities and learning resources	3
5.	Study process and students' performance assessment	4
6.	Programme management	3
	<b>Total:</b>	21

\*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.

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