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LIETUVOS SPORTO UNIVERSITETO  
***TRENIRAVIMO SISTEMOS PROGRAMOS (621C61001)***  
**VERTINIMO IŠVADOS**

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**EVALUATION REPORT**  
***OF SPORTS COACHING (621C61001)***  
**STUDY PROGRAMME**  
**AT LITHUANIAN SPORTS UNIVERSITY**

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## DUOMENYS APIE ĮVERTINTĄ PROGRAMĄ

Studijų programos pavadinimas	<b>Treniravimo sistemos</b>
Valstybinis kodas	621C61001
Studijų sritis	Biomedicinos mokslai
Studijų kryptis	Sportas
Studijų programos rūšis	Universitetinės studijos
Studijų pakopa	Antroji
Studijų forma (trukmė metais)	Nuolatinė (2), iššęstinė (3)
Studijų programos apimtis kreditais	120
Suteikiamas laipsnis ir (ar) profesinė	Sporto magistras
Studijų programos įregistravimo data	2006-12-29

## INFORMATION ON ASSESSED STUDY PROGRAMME

Name of the study programme	<b>Sports Coaching</b>
State code	621C61001
Study area	Biomedical Sciences
Study field	Sports
Kind of the study programme	University Studies
Level of studies	Second
Study mode (length in years)	Full-time (2), part-time (3)
Scope of the study programme in credits	120
Degree and (or) professional qualifications	Master of Sports
Date of registration of the study programme	2006-12-29

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## I. INTRODUCTION

The programme Evaluation team for May, 2014 comprised:

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The *Sports Coaching* Master programme is part of the University's mission to be an open European university, validating programmes for all three Bologna cycles of studies and based on the 'latest research and technologies, continuous education and sustainable development of the country, in the areas of sport, physical education, rehabilitation, wellness and recreation'. The course was originally introduced in 1968 and in 2006 it was brought into the current form as a Master Degree is one of the very few University-based degree courses for coaches in the European Union.

The second-cycle *Sports Coaching* (SC) closely relates to the University's mission to develop and offer programmes for all cycles of studies (the first, the second and the third), based on the latest research and technologies, continuous education and sustainable development of the country, in the areas of sport, physical education, rehabilitation, wellness and recreation.

There is no doubt, that this study programme is unique in Lithuania as it covers the areas of physical activity, physical education, sport and coaching. LSU is the only institution in the country where coaches can earn a Master of sports degree.

The 'National Sports Strategy', approved by the Lithuanian Seimas on 24 March, 2011 (No XI – 1296), had a positive impact on the prospect for coaches with a university education in Olympic sports, as more than 40 000 pupils are enrolled in those schools. It is mandatory for the teachers and the coaches at sport schools to have either a teaching or a coaching degree. This regulation provides excellent employment opportunities for qualified coaches with a Master degree.

This *Sport Coaching* Master programme is one of the LSU research-based studies in the area of biomedical and social sciences. Other programmes are medicine and health, life sciences, business and management and education. The *Sport Coaching* programme has a defined target group and a clear focus.

The study programme in the LSU is delivered and coordinated by the Faculty of Sport Biomedicine and the Faculty of Sport Education. Four departments, Information Technologies and Distance Education Centre, Career and Competence Development Centre and the Centre of Academic Quality Supervision are involved and need to be coordinated. Research activities are administered by the Office of Doctoral Studies and Research and the Institute of Sport Science and Innovations. International Relations Office, the Library and Sports and Leisure Centre also

have important role in the delivery of SC study programme. From what the Evaluation Team learnt during the on-site visit, this coordination task is performed extraordinarily well.

The second-cycle SP SC is delivered by the Faculty of Sport Biomedicine, in particular by the “Institute of Sports Science and Innovations” as well as the centre for fundamental and clinical human movement research, physical therapy, adapted physical activity, physical activity epidemiology laboratories, centre for education quality assurance, department of international relations, marketing department and career and competence development centre.

The aim of the study is to provide the students with the latest knowledge of sport sciences, develop research competencies and analytical skills as well as the abilities to present and to apply results, insights and knowledge. These outcomes shall be reached via study modules which meet the Lithuanian Qualification Framework Level 7 qualification requirements.

The establishment of sport coaching as an academic discipline meets the demands of the “Lithuanian progress strategy” (approved by the Lithuanian Seimas in 2011) which asks for the development of the potential of the country and its human resources, supports education and talent development of gifted children and strives to attract experts in various fields, including sport.

Close collaboration of the University’s research, learning and administration units provide positive conditions for collaboration with other departments and University offices and units. The efficiency of this cooperation is underlined by the fact that a Self-Evaluation group collected the material and wrote up the report (with attachments 567pp.) in 80 days. The Self-Evaluation Report (SER) was submitted to the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education on 15 December, 2013.

The Self-Evaluation group comprised ten members, including the team leader and a student. Each member was given responsibility for a particular section of the report. The Evaluation Team commended the SER for its integrity, comprehensive coverage and discursive elements. Some self-reflexivity, some information about problems and deliberations about potential improvements would have been welcomed.

In 2007, the programme received full six-year accreditation from an Evaluation Team appointed at that time.

An on-site visit by the Evaluation Team took place on May 8th, 2014. Following the visit, the Team finalised its report, detailing the findings and outcomes for the *Sports Coaching* Master programme at the Lithuanian Sports University.

## II. PROGRAMME ANALYSIS

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

The second-cycle studies, i.e. postgraduate Master studies, are delivered only in full-time mode and last two years (four semesters). The second-cycle studies are aimed to prepare for autonomous scientific or other type of work that requires academic knowledge and analytical skills. The structure of the postgraduate study programme is presented in the SER (Table 4). The modules comprise: Biomedical research methodology and statistics; Modern technologies of athlete training management; Psychology of sport and elite sport; Biology of physical activity and fitness; Modern Technologies of Integrated Motor Learning; Nutrition and metabolism of people engaged in sport; Final Thesis.

All modules are designed assuming that the workload of the students consists both of contact hours and self-study hours; the module descriptions contain the total workload (Annex 1). Self-study hours take 80% in the workload of each study module. Students have adequate conditions for self-study at the University.

The aim of 2<sup>nd</sup> cycle SP CS is to educate Masters of *Sports Coaching*, who are familiar with and can contribute to the development of fundamental and applied sciences and technologies with a focus on coaching on an international level. A specific emphasis is on interdisciplinary and creative approaches to coaching and related issues. The graduates shall be comprehensively educated, competent, ethically responsible, and innovative. They should also be able to conduct autonomous research projects with the aim to improve the quality and efficiency of the training of athletes, to “establish the efficiency of athlete training models and their relationship with qualification; systematize the latest knowledge of athlete training technology and convey it to academic or professional audience.” (SER, p. 6) A student having spent a period of study in London concluded, comparatively, that there is a Lithuanian tradition of sport scientists, prepared and trained at LSU.

The aims of the study are very ambitious and there is no doubt that their implementation will improve the qualification of coaches decisively. However, not all aims can be reached via academic studies. It is, for example, questionable if creativity or morality can be learned via an academic education, in particular, if there are not specific courses with those topics provided. Furthermore, the SER does not inform if those abilities are nurtured in other courses. In elite sport, specific ethical problems, such as cheating, doping or match fixing, occur, and it should be important to address and discuss these issues with the student as well as to enable them to deal with sport related misconduct as coaches.

On March 1, 2012, the Code of Academic and Professional Conduct was approved at LSU, aiming at the creation of an environment where respect and trust as well as discussion are valued highly. The Code highlights the importance of moral aspects which should be considered in every academic activity. (SER, p. 19) The publication of such a code earns a commendation from the Evaluation Team.

The general and subject-specific competencies and the interrelated learning outcomes of the Master study in CS SP are presented in the SER (Table 3, pp. 6-7). According to this table, the students should acquire general competencies, such as a scientific background or leadership skills. In addition, studies should enhance personal and professional development. These general competencies are combined with skills focussing on the tasks of academically-educated coaches who should be able to conduct applied research, but also organise, communicate and cooperate with various individuals and groups.

The subject-specific competencies and learning outcomes are related to the expected expertise and skills of coaches of individual athletes and teams. Some learning outcomes are very specific, for example, those connected with “research activity”. Students should “evaluate research methods on the interactions of athlete training models and fitness”. Others refer to research activities in general. The course module descriptions (Annex 1) which include not only the aims and learning outcomes as well as the reading lists (also with English literature) allow a detailed evaluation of the MA study. They are an asset also for the student and teachers. Studying and undertaking research are important competencies which should be acquired during academic studies. Here, new issues related to the dissemination of knowledge emerge which need to be addressed in academia. An increasingly worrying problem with regard to research which also refers to the students is the growing market of “predatory publishers” and the difficulties to

distinguish between reliable information and publications which do not meet the standard of scientific reliability. It is recommended that students should be guarded and be taught to identify reliable sources.

A further issue is the considerable variety of demands in the different sports, e.g. team sports and individual sports, sports based on endurance, strength or skills as well as the different target groups and settings, for example, schools, clubs or sport centres. Coaches, for example, need other competencies dealing with teams or with individual athletes. It is recommended to be aware of the different options and potential employment opportunities and consider a differentiation of the study which could offer choices for the students according to their professional preferences.

New trends in modern societies such as the ageing populations demand new forms of training and new types of coaches. The Evaluation Team recommends to consider how the MA coaching could also cater for the needs of students who find employment in the “sport for all” market or who work self-employed. This means also to include – maybe optional - courses in entrepreneurial skills in the study which enable the students to create working places. Although the discussions with several groups revealed good relations to various social partners, an even closer cooperation with Federations and Sport Organisations is recommended in ways which would be to the benefit of the programme.

The aims and the learning outcomes are clearly defined and made on the University’s website. They refer to the requirements of top coaches, who are in demand in the expanding market for coaches, for example, in schools, and they are meeting the level of a Master study. The name of the study, the learning outcomes and the level of qualification (Level 7) are compatible. With reference to the labour market, the qualifications should equip graduates to gain employment in research (coaching technologies) teachers in academic institutions, coaches in Lithuanian or foreign public or private institutions. Doctoral study programmes in Lithuania (Education, Sports Biomedicine) or abroad (Sports Sciences) are also possible.

Specific commendations refer to the good academic infrastructure, the excellent teachers, to the training gained in internships and to the fact that 65 credits are available for school teaching. Various groups of the university, among them the teachers and students of this programme, showed that ambition is always higher than reality which reveals a constant interest in the development and progress of the university. Aims and learning outcomes of the Master programme indicate a linear and hierarchical development of skill-based teaching and studying. A Uniteted Science Philosophy, a valuable and embracing concept, was articulated during the meeting with senior managers. The field is exceptionally good.

## ***2. Curriculum design***

Responsibility for the curriculum design and the determination of the learning outcomes lies with the Study Programme Committee which was established on 10 January, 2008 following the Rector’s Order No 427-s. Following a decision about new Regulations for the Study Programme Committees a new second-cycle Sport Coaching Study Programme Committee was formed following the Rector’s Order No 94-s of 8 September 2011. The committee was again renewed on 19 September 2013 (Order No ISAK\_14/S).

The Master study of CS SP takes place only as a full-time study of two years. As a second-cycle study it provides scientific knowledge and analytical skills which enable the students to undertake research and work in academic professions. The course contents are “closely related with research conducted in three strategic areas of science: 1) coaching science, sports

physiology and genetics; 2) Health, physical and social education in modern society; 3) Muscles, motor control and rehabilitation”. (SER p. 4)

The structure of postgraduate-study programme, the modules, learning and evaluation methods are presented in Table 5 of the SER (p. 8) which gives also an overview about the study priorities. The modules cover different fields, but the same learning outcomes appear in different contexts, for example, biomedical research methodology and statistics, technologies of training management or methodology of athlete testing. It can be assumed that these topics have different contents depending on the context and that there is a progression of the learning outcomes in the course of the study; but this could have been illustrated more clearly in this table. The Evaluation Team recommends to differentiate between the learning outcomes in the different modules and to indicate the specific contents not only in the annex, but also in the main report. Moreover, there is a decided overrepresentation of natural sciences which do not meet the demands of the expected competencies and learning outcomes presented in chapter 2.1 of the SER. This refers in particular to the “General Competences” and “Learning Outcomes” listed in Table 3.

Although it is stated, that the structure and the content of the study programme are designed in accordance with the anticipated competences of coaches, neither the SER, nor interview feedback provided explicit reasons for the selection of the modules. Some detail in this area would have been helpful. Disciplines which are important for coaches such as social sciences are not taught at all. Psychology, too, is highly underrepresented. Also, the information in Annex 1 shows that important disciplines such as pedagogics and didactics are subjects that future coaches may gain positions at schools, these disciplines are important and it is recommended to consider including them in the study.

It can be assumed that traditions at the university and/or strong research areas had an influence on the selection of subjects. Research-based teaching is an asset; however a broader approach to the research and practice field of coaching is recommended. This would also be a benefit if new markets for coaches emerge.

There is a large variety of learning and assessment methods which allows the students to develop a multitude of techniques to learn and to use knowledge. This provides the opportunity for students to develop important competencies which will enable them to present their knowledge in different ways and use their skills in different environments and contexts.

80 % of the work in the various modules is conducted in form of self-study which can take place at home or at the university, for example, in the library. It can be assumed that the various forms of the evaluation methods are also a means to control the self-study of the students, that is to assess if and what the students have learned. The “learning outcomes” of a study, that is, knowledge and expertise, are mirrored in the final theses of the students. Here, students present a small-scale research project including their scientific questions, their procedures and the results. The master theses of the SP CS revealed a high-level of knowledge and competencies. This is to be commended. At the same time it is recommended to improve the supervision of the theses; there is some evidence of grade inflation in the higher levels of the mark range.

### **3. Staff**

The study programme is delivered by 13 teachers, of these are 8 (62 %) professors, 3 (23 %) associate professors and 2 lecturers, one of them with a doctoral degree (15 %). The average age of the teachers is 51. With one exception, all teachers are full time employees at the LSU. (SER p. 11)

Since 2008, a decisive reduction of the number of teachers occurred which was caused in particular by the decreasing numbers of students. This situation being taken into account, the student-to-staff ratio in the second-cycle SP CS is higher than is demanded. Also compared with

the situation in many other European universities, the student-to-staff ratio is excellent. The number and qualifications of the staff ensures that the programme can be delivered and that a form of teaching can be conducted which allows individual contacts with the students. Students affirmed that while it is tough being a student, it is also tough being a lecturer to strong and questioning students.

The scientific activities of the staff members have been stable in the last years; the SER highlights in particular the international cooperation with regard to studies on Basketball. These studies, as well as the foundation of a centre for Basketball Research, are the result of international cooperation with various partners, in particular with the University of Worcester, (UK). This initiative to create and use international partnerships is highly commended as it is based on the expertise of experts and athletes and, at the same time, contributes to the development of science and practice. There is a strong international and proactive attitude in this programme which should be enlarged and intensified yet further.

The research activities on topics related to basketball are appreciated, not least because basketball is an important sport in Lithuania; however, the focus on one sport is too narrow to include a larger number of staff and students in research activities. The number of teachers involved in scientific projects conducted in Lithuania is currently 30 %, but only 1 teacher is included in international projects.

The report shows, that there is a slight decrease of citations in various databases in 2012, but a relatively high number of citations in the Web of Science. The CVs of the staff show that they published a number of papers in Lithuanian journals; only few publish (as first or second author) in international peer-reviewed journals. The relatively large number of publications in natural sciences is commended.

A small number of teachers participated in international science projects (during the reference period the average was 1) although in national science projects, the average participants over the same period numbered 4. (SER, Table 10) In other forms of participation, the apparent disinterest in types qualification enhancement, in particular, for example, can be explained by the fact, that the teachers evidently meet the expectations in their areas of competence.

There is no doubt, that the qualifications of the staff of the CS SP ensure the expected learning outcome of the students – as long as the focus of the education is on elite sport and natural sciences. The broadening of the education and the interest in other physically active or even inactive groups of the population would demand that the teachers adopt new knowledge and skills, e.g. in the areas of psychology, and sociology. A broader approach to “sports coaching” could increase the employment chances of students who could cater for new target groups, e.g. seniors who may develop an interest in physical activities, exercises and sports. Statistics on the sport habits in Europe, e.g. as provided by the Eurobarometer, indicate that there is an increasing market for sport specialists.

The conditions for the staff to conduct research are good, that is at least with regard to the time and there is a relatively large amount of time available for working in and with research projects. Visits to the laboratories showed that there are relative good conditions with regard to research and teaching in physiology, kinesiology and coaching sciences. The SER states that “abundant and specialized laboratory equipment enables to conduct broad and deep athlete coaching management research”. (SER p. 15)

One of the main issues with regard to research is the low degree of involvement in the international scientific community - there are only few research activities which are conducted

with external partners. In addition, although the “basketball alliances” have to be appreciated, the range of research topics and areas could be enlarged. The field develops systematically and has distinctive features, but new research projects, also with foreign partners, could increase the number of publications and also be used in teaching.

#### ***4. Facilities and learning resources***

There are sufficient lecture halls and rooms available for the teaching. There could be more possibilities for students to study individually or in small groups. The facilities of LSU for students with special needs (particularly with physical handicaps) are excellent. The equipment of the teaching rooms and the sport halls are adequate. In 2011 the computer hard and software was upgraded and students have access to the Internet and to various computer programmes. Laboratory equipment for general research is adequate. (see Table 16 of SER, p.16) However, projects on coaching a specific sport often need special equipment, which can be used during the sport activities. Very little portable equipment is available. In addition, it is doubtful if there is sufficient space, equipment and support for research projects of students (e.g. for their thesis) as most laboratories are relatively small.

The sport facilities are either good or renovation is planned.

The SER (p. 15, pa 2) reports that students and teachers have access to articles of various study relevant databases. The university has subscribed SportDiscus, Ebsco Publishing and Springer Link which offer access to selected full-text publications. Users can access these data bases in the library or via their own PCs. Students also have access to learning materials via the Moodle system.

In addition, the SER names, among other internet tools, „Google Book Search“, „Google Scholar“ or DOAJ (Directory of Open Access Journals), but these tools are freely available and not provided by the university. They only allow access to “free access material”. It is very difficult, in particular for students, to evaluate the quality of “free access material”, in particular, because an increasing number of publishers accept manuscripts if the author pays the publishing fee. This means that an increasing number of articles and books may not meet the quality standards of an academic publication.

The library does not have many books and journals of leading publishers in the area of sport sciences, e.g. of Human Kinetics or Routledge, who guarantee a strict peer review and claim a subscription of the publications. It is also questioned whether the research conditions are adequate with access to current literature and with funding for necessary apparatus or software, the human and social sciences in particular

There are 31 Lithuanian, but only 17 foreign (12 in English, 1 in German and 4 in Russian) scientific journals subscribed to. This is a very small percentage of the existing literature, given the many disciplines and the multitude of sports. And it also raises the question about the selection criteria of the books and journals. It is recommended to make an effort to provide students' access to a larger number of quality publications of renowned publishing houses.

In some sports the relevant literature is neither in Lithuanian nor in English. It remains questionable whether the foreign language skills of the students are sufficient in English – and whether in some sports skills in other languages are not equally, if not more important, than English (e.g. French/Spanish in cycling). The number of printed journals for sport-specific training theory could be larger, although with ‘Leistungssport’ and ‘Teorija i praktika fizischeskoi kultury’ the library has two outstanding journals. It is recommended to provide access to the best journals for the main sports. The field develops systematically and has distinctive features.

## **5. Study process and student assessment**

Since 2013, graduates of a first cycle university study and holding a Bachelor degree were admitted to the second cycle SP CS. Assessment and access depends on their marks in the various subjects and the quality of their final examination or theses. Applicants obtain additional points via their scientific or sporting activities as well as for participation in international student exchange. Students with impairments also receive a bonus.

The numbers of applicants were up to 4 times higher as the number of the enrolled students. This shows that studying at LSU is very much appreciated and it has to be positively evaluated that the study programme does not have a recruitment problem. The numbers, however, raise the questions about recruitment and the enrolment politics. Obviously the course only accommodates small number students. Why is this the case? It should be considered that a larger group of students would allow a better use of the resources. In addition, there seems to be a problem with students who discontinue. With exception of 2013 when only 6 persons studied in the course, more than 30% of the students did not graduate. However, contrarily, the interviewed students were very satisfied with their study.

With regard to the integration of the students in the international scientific community, it can be stated that only one Lithuanian student and two foreign students used this opportunity. The lack of interest in gaining experiences abroad may be caused by employment and/or the involvement of students in competitive sport. However, there may have been also other, e.g. financial, practical and personal matters which prevented, and continue to prevent students from gaining experiences abroad. That foreign students do not use the mobility programme for a stay abroad may be caused by language problems, as Lithuanian is the language used in this course. It is recommended to explore how foreign students could participate in the study, also for example, by teaching at least some courses in English.

According to the SER (p. 19) 6 of the 7 graduates of 2012 found relevant work.

The study process is closely intertwined with assessments, the evaluations of the learning outcomes with regard to knowledge, skills and attitudes. The norms and procedures are clearly defined in the description of the study modules (SER, pp.8-10). The assessment procedures are similar to those in other academic institutions and it is emphasised that the students receive equitable treatment. A specific focus of the SER refers to a strict policy with regard to cheating and, during interviews, preventative strategies were mentioned as being currently in process.

Students are very well supported in various ways and they have the opportunity to address the course coordinator who is responsible for helping students to solve their problems. The strongest students are eligible for a scholarship; all students can get a bank loan which covers their living costs. As most students are elite athletes or coaches, the conditions are flexible, and modern technologies, for example a “virtual learning environment” is used to allow the students to combine the study with their work. Further benefits are the opportunity to use the dormitory and the sport and recreation centre.

A high degree of satisfaction with their courses and their teachers was expressed in the discussion with the students and with the graduates who provided excellent evaluations and showed a strong identification with this study programme. The field is exceptionally good.

## **6. Programme management**

The second-cycle study programme *Sport Coaching* is managed in the LSU Faculty of Sport Biomedicine whose administration takes care of „the organization and the quality of the study,

as well as administration of student education and the evaluation of their academic achievements“ (SER, p. 20). The groups and institutions participating in the administration of the programme as well as their tasks are listed in the SER (p. 20): The Faculty finds support through the CS Study Programme Committee, the Centre for Academic Quality Supervision, International Relations Office, Career and Competence Development Centre and the Library. The organization, implementation and monitoring of studies are within the province of relevant departments responsible and their staff. Specific staff roles and responsibilities are outlined in job descriptions.

There are numerous documents which inform about the regulations and procedures of decision making and quality assurance on the institutional level. All of them are approved by the LSU Senate. (SER, p. 20-23)

Since 2013, the procedures to assess the quality of the study have been improved; they are conducted according the “regulations for academic quality assurance” and administrated by the Office of Quality Management and Accreditation which was established in 2012. The quality-management system has been developed on the basis of ISO 9001 and was implemented in the University in September 2013 (SER, p. 20). Based on the students’ experiences with their study and their progress in learning, a continuous assessment of the study takes place. The results of this process are used for recommendations and for improvements of the study. (SER p. 20)

The main body which decides about aims, contents and procedures of the studies is the Study Programme Committee which also evaluates the learning outcomes. It consists of a director, coordinators, an international coordinator, students and partners. Quality assurance and a continuous improvement of the programme are among its most important tasks. The committee also decides about the teaching material, the work load of the faculty and it evaluates the feedback of the students.

The head of this committee is the Study Programme Director whose tasks are to develop and implement the study programme in accordance with the University’s aims and strategic guidelines. The aim of the University is to reach a high quality of the study and to educate students with competencies which meet international academic standards and contribute to the development of Lithuania. Another important task of the Study Programme Director is to analyse, evaluate and improve the programmes in accordance with European Union requirements for similar programmes and with the demands of governmental and non-governmental groups and associations as potential employers. (SER, p.20)

The Study Programme Director cooperates with the Course Coordinator whose tasks are described in the Rector’s order No 9 of 22 January 2013. He/she has to supervise the study programme and to provide information about the learning experiences of students. In addition, there is an International Coordinator (job description approved by the Rector’s order No 9 of 22 January 2013) who assists in the development and implementation of the faculty’s strategy with regard to international relations and activities. (SER, p. 21)

The concrete procedures of decision making in the Study Programme Committee are described in the SER, p. 20 – 23). It is important to note and commend that all groups connected with the university are involved in the development of the programmes and that the programmes are in accordance with the procedures laid down by the Senate.

Regulations for study quality assurance were approved in 2013 (LSU Senate meeting of 21 May 2013, Minutes No 10). There is a large number of indicators which are used for the internal assessment of numerous variables, most importantly the learning outcomes.

The major body responsible for the quality of studies on the institution level is the University's Senate. On the faculty level, the responsible institution is the Study Programme Committee which provides relevant information to the Commission of Studies. The assessment process takes place continuously; in addition every year a survey of students, and every second year, interviews with the staff are conducted. The results are a topic of discussion among the relevant persons, groups and bodies. The results form the basis for improvements.

A specific focus is on the perspectives and opinions of the students who are represented by Faculty Students' Council. It is mentioned in the SER, p. 23, that various surveys have been conducted which generally found a positive attitude of the students towards the quality of studies and student support.

Emphasis is laid also on the quality assurance, and the SER report provides detailed information about the participants and the procedures as well as on the legal backgrounds and decisions:

“The development of the University's quality-assurance system is supported by the University objectives, mission and values, Lithuanian Sports University's integrated activity development strategy for 2012-2017, Code of Academic and Professional Ethics (approved on 1 March 2012 in the LSU Senate meeting, Minutes No 5), and Provisions for Ensuring the Quality of Studies in the European Higher Education Area”. (SER, p.22) Based on these documents, the quality assessment procedures appear sound.

In addition, documents referring to regulations for studies, for example, to general requirements and evaluation procedures, regulation of learning resources and students' support as well as to teaching and research competencies of the academic staff are founded on: Regulations for Study Programme Committees; Regulations for the activities of the faculty study quality assurance committee, Regulations for Library activities; Regulations of sports and leisure centre activities; Regulations for the operation of Student Council; Regulations for Dormitory Council activities; Procedures for teacher workload planning and accounting. SER (p.22)

The evaluators had the opportunity to talk with current students and with alumni. They all agreed that the study meets their needs and expectations. They reported good relations with their teachers, their high expertise and their excellent way of teaching. There was a consensus about the high quality of the courses and good learning conditions. The Alumni also referred to positive experiences in the labour market.

LSU has close cooperation with “social partners”. A “social partner” sits in the Study Programme Committee; however it is not mentioned if this person has the right to vote. The cooperation with the social partners is highly important as they may provide job opportunities for graduates and they can also take on the role of counsellors with regard to contents of the study. The Evaluation Team met the social partners and discussed with them, among other issues, the situation of the graduates. There was a consensus that the programme qualifies the graduates for a variety of jobs. Social partners have come to expect the highest standards and wish to ensure that these are maintained.

A specific trait of the SP CS is the cooperation of the teachers and “external partners”, in particular representatives of sport schools and clubs. Some of them are presidents of federations, general secretaries, seniors coaches of national teams or members of federations councils. It is stated, that these teachers “have first-hand experience and knowledge of the challenges and trends in their sports and make a significant input towards programme quality improvement, attending open meetings of the Department and Study Programme Committee”. (SER, p.23) The

discussions with the external partners made clear that there is a large support of the programme and that there will be even better employment opportunities for graduates in the future.

The quality of the study management also depends on the availability of information. The University's information system appears to be excellent which may contribute to the positive evaluation made by the students.

Information about the programme management is very comprehensive: it shows clearly that the management of the programme and the assurance of the quality of the study are extremely important tasks which are handled well. They are conducted by a committee in which consensus and coherence are guaranteed via the participation of the various groups and the transparency of processes and decisions. The good relationships between the different groups learning and working at the university, also with the university management, are commended.

However, some of the procedures described in the report seem to consume a large amount of time and resources. It is recommended to explore, whether a "streamlining" of the programme management is possible without there being negative effects on the quality.

During the visit, the University employees provided the Evaluation Team with the document *LSU Regulations for Study Quality Assurance*. As it is declared in the document, the regulations were prepared in line with the Republican law of Higher Education and Science, University Statute and The Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG). The document states that the University seeks to promote and develop academic integrity, quality culture and appropriate conditions for students' self-development and the pursued qualification. Furthermore, in line with Standard 7 of the ESG, the University guarantees that information about study quality and measures to improve it will be always publicly available, as a responsibility to Lithuanian society and employers.

In a wider educational context, the Lithuanian Sports University is well-developed in Third-age education. The University invites all 50 year olds and older persons to be students who want to contribute to this development and do so by acquiring new knowledge and skills in wellness and sport. In 2013-14, the intention was to admit 30 students, but the number of volunteers who entered studentship has been significantly higher than planned. There are now 144 students.

It is particularly commended that the university is valued by the students and the external partners as a place of knowledge and expertise and that it contributes by educating coaches to develop excellent athletes and, in addition, helps towards achieving a fit and happy population. The field is exceptionally good.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Consider to broaden the programme and to educate students for coaching of various target groups, also on a sport for all level and with a perspective on health and wellbeing.
2. Consider to increase the number of students in order to utilize the available resources in a better way.
3. Increase the number of international literature publications, in particular the provision of journals.
4. Educate the students in the critical use of literature, in particular the open-access material.

5. Attempt to provide classes in English in order to increase the international exchanges and to improve the language skills of Lithuanian students.
6. Enlarge the scope of coaching science to include more human and social science approaches, e.g. in the area of pedagogics and didactics.
7. Consider to enlarge the spectrum of theories and methods, in particular include qualitative methods and approaches in the study.
8. Attempt to reduce the administrative tasks, in particular with regard to the programme management, and increase the time for research and publications.
9. Continue and even intensify the contacts and cooperation with the social partners.
10. Find ways to reduce and prevent student discontinuance.

#### IV. SUMMARY

The *Sports Coaching* MA is a unique programme which qualifies coaches on an academic level and enables them not only to coach elite athletes and teams in various sports, but also to work in schools or to enter a university career. In other European countries coaches cannot gain academic qualifications at the university level. The MA SP CS is a study which attracts more students than can be accommodated. Nearly 90% of the graduates find employment in study relevant areas. Both facts are indicators of the high quality of the programme.

Aims and learning outcomes are well chosen; at least should the graduates plan to work in the traditional fields of coaching elite athletes. Here, the programme is based on a long tradition and focuses on general and special coaching theory, on research in particular in the field of biomedicine as well as on their applications to the various fields of practice. The programme focusses clearly on coaches of elite athletes in traditional sports and those employed by clubs or federations. However, there is a growing demand for coaches in schools and for instructors of new target groups and in non-traditional sporting activities. To accommodate these new trends, the programme would have to be adapted and should provide expertise and the skills needed in these areas. This would also mean to include more human and social sciences, in particular pedagogics and didactics, as well as the mastering of various forms of qualitative methods in education. Entrepreneurial skills could also be an advantage for future coaches. It has also to be mentioned, that all groups of the university are involved in issues concerning the study programme.

The curriculum design meets the demands of the current programme with its specific learning aims and outcomes. However, for the future, it has to be adapted to new aims and target groups. In particular, coaches working at schools would need didactical and pedagogical expertise working with children and young people. In addition, new demands such as a thriving market in the sport for all areas have emerged in the last decade. The increase of international exchange of knowledge (and people) demands excellent language skills; the overflowing market of publications (also from predatory publishers) demands expertise in the choice of literature and new approaches to research demand an increase in methodological expertise, for example, the use of qualitative methods.

The members of the staff are highly qualified, many are active researchers, some publish in international journals. According to the SER, but also according to the statements of the students, they are highly engaged in teaching and advising students. The students particularly emphasized that their teachers are competent, accessible and willing to help in academic and non-academic matters. The SER also provides insight into the extended work connected with various tasks, for example, curriculum development and quality assurance. Bureaucracy and administration seem

to demand a large amount of time which could – at least partly – be better used for some of the most important tasks of university teachers, for example in research and publishing.

The material resources are mostly good; some facilities will be renovated. Current facilities are accessible to individuals with special needs. The laboratories are mostly small, but well equipped according to the current projects of the researchers. However, as research is a highly competitive field with permanent innovations, there may be a need for a long-term research and funding policy. This is in particular true for the library, where more current international journals should be made available to students and staff.

The study process is well planned and, given the large amount of “self-study” hours, it is important to have access to computers, programs and also to E-learning. The evaluation of the courses is effective; however, the possible “inflation” of some high marks should be scrutinized. A particular focus is on quality assessment. The existing rules and regulations guarantee that the programme aims and learning outcomes of the study are attained and that the programme has high quality.

The programme management is excellent not the least because a cooperation of all groups involved. A particular asset of the study (and the university in general) is the satisfaction of the Alumni and the support of a large number and variety of social partners. Their statements about the programme were enthusiastic and they are an asset who can be used in many ways.

There are several issues which should be addressed with regard to the future: the high drop-out rate of the students should be researched and measurements been taken in order to reduce and preferably prevent drop outs; the fields of the study should be broadened, in order to meet new demands and target groups, and international cooperation should be intensified, in research areas in particular, in order to produce more publications in international journals.

The university and the programme enjoy high levels of appreciation and an excellent reputation in the country.

## V. GENERAL ASSESSMENT

The study programme *Sports Coaching* (state code – 621C61001) at Lithuanian Sports University is given **positive** evaluation.

*Study programme assessment in points by fields of assessment.*

No.	Evaluation Area	Evaluation Area in Points*
1.	Programme aims and learning outcomes	4
2.	Curriculum design	3
3.	Staff	3
4.	Material resources	3
5.	Study process and assessment (student admission, study process student support, achievement assessment)	4
6.	Programme management (programme administration, internal quality assurance)	4
	<b>Total:</b>	<b>21</b>

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

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

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

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

Grupės vadovas:  
Team Leader:

Prof. Dr. Terence Clifford-Amos

Grupės nariai:  
Team members:

Dr. Ando Pehme

Prof. Dr. Arnd Krüger

Prof. Dr. Gertrud Ursula Pfister

Prof. Dr. Algirdas Raslanas

Meda Keleckaitė

**LIETUVOS SPORTO UNIVERSITETO ANTROSIOS PAKOPOS STUDIJŲ  
PROGRAMOS *TRENIRAVIMO SISTEMOS* (VALSTYBINIS KODAS – 621C61001) 2014-  
06-27 EKSPERTINIO VERTINIMO IŠVADŲ NR. SV4-379 IŠRAŠAS**

&lt;...&gt;

**V. APIBENDRINAMASIS ĮVERTINIMAS**

Lietuvos sporto universiteto studijų programa *Treniravimo sistemos* (valstybinis kodas – 621C61001) vertinama **teigiamai**.

Eil. Nr.	Vertinimo sritis	Srities įvertinimas, balais*
1.	Programos tikslai ir numatomi studijų rezultatai	4
2.	Programos sandara	3
3.	Personalas	3
4.	Materialieji ištekliai	3
5.	Studijų eiga ir jos vertinimas	4
6.	Programos vadyba	4
	<b>Iš viso:</b>	<b>21</b>

\* 1 - Nepatenkinamai (yra esminių trūkumų, kuriuos būtina pašalinti)

2 - Patenkinamai (tenkina minimalius reikalavimus, reikia tobulinti)

3 - Gerai (sistemiškai plėtojama sritis, turi savitų bruožų)

4 - Labai gerai (sritis yra išskirtinė)

&lt;...&gt;

**IV. SANTRAUKA**

*Treniravimo sistemų* magistro laipsnio programa yra unikali, pagal ją akademinio lygiu rengiami treneriai, galintys ne tik treniruoti įvairių sporto šakų aukščiausios klasės sportininkus ir komandas, bet ir dirbti mokyklose arba siekti akademinės karjeros universitete. Kitose Europos šalyse treneriai neturi galimybės įgyti akademinės kvalifikacijos universitete. Norinčių studijuoti pagal *Treniravimo sistemų* magistro laipsnio programą yra daugiau, nei programa gali priimti.

Beveik 90 % programos absolventų įsidarbina su jų studijomis susijusiose srityse. Abu šie pastebėjimai liudija gerą šios studijų programos kokybę.

Programos tikslai ir studijų rezultatai pasirinkti tinkamai; programos absolventai gali planuoti dirbti tradicinių sporto šakų aukščiausios klasės sportininkų treneriais. Programa grindžiama ilgalaikėmis tradicijomis, didžiausias dėmesys skiriamas bendrojo ir specialaus treniravimo teorijai, mokslo tiriamajai veiklai, būtent biomedicinos srityje ir šių žinių taikymui įvairiose praktikos srityse. Akivaizdu, kad pagrindinis programos tikslas yra ugdyti aukščiausios klasės, taip pat klubuose ar federacijose dirbančių sportininkų trenerius. Tačiau šiuo metu auga trenerių mokyklose, naujų tikslinių grupių, netradicinių sporto veiklų instruktorių paklausa. Kad galėtų tinkamai patenkinti šias naujas tendencijas, programa turėtų būti atitinkamai adaptuota, kad studentams suteiktų minėtose naujose srityse reikalingos patirties ir įgūdžių. Tai taip pat reiškia, kad į programą reikėtų įtraukti daugiau humanitarinių ir socialinių mokslų dalykų, ypač iš pedagogikos ir didaktikos srities, plačiau taikyti įvairius kokybinius mokymo metodus. Būsimiems treneriams taip pat praverstų verslumo įgūdžiai. Kaip buvo minėta, visos universiteto grupės dalyvauja sprendžiant įvairius su studijų programa susijusius klausimus.

Studijų turinys atitinka esamos programos konkrečius studijų tikslus ir rezultatus. Tačiau ateityje studijų programa turėtų būti atitinkamai adaptuota, atsižvelgiant į naujus tikslus ir naujas tikslines grupes. Ypač mokyklose dirbsiantiems treneriams bus reikalingi darbo su vaikais ir jaunimu didaktikos ir pedagogikos įgūdžiai. Be to, per paskutinį dešimtmetį susiformavo nauja su įvairiomis sporto sritimis susijusių poreikių rinka. Vykstant intensyviems tarptautiniams žinių (ir žmonių) mainams reikalingi puikūs užsienio kalbų įgūdžiai; perpildytoje leidinių (taip pat ir grobuoniškų leidėjų) rinkoje būtina ugdyti literatūros atrankos ir metodologinės patirties poreikių tyrimų, pavyzdžiui, kiekybinių metodų naudojimo, įgūdžius.

Universiteto pedagogai yra aukštos kvalifikacijos specialistai, dauguma jų aktyviai dalyvauja mokslo tiriamojoje veikloje, kai kurie skelbia darbus tarptautiniuose žurnaluose. Kaip nurodyta savianalizės suvestinėje, taip pat kaip teigia studentai, dėstytojai aktyviai dalyvauja pedagoginėje veikloje, teikia konsultacijas studentams. Studentai ypač pabrėžia, kad jų dėstytojai yra kompetentingi, lengvai prieinami ir mielai padeda studentams įvairiais su studijomis susijusiais ir kitais klausimais. Savianalizės suvestinėje taip pat minimos didelės personalo pastangos atliekant įvairias užduotis, pavyzdžiui, plėtojant studijų turinį ar įgyvendinant kokybės užtikrinimo priemones. Akivaizdu, kad biurokratinis ir administracinis darbas reikalauja daug darbuotojų laiko, kurio bent dalis galėtų būti skirta svarbiausioms universiteto dėstytojų veiklos sritims, pavyzdžiui, mokslo tiriamajai veiklai ir darbų publikavimui.

Materialieji ištekliai daugiausiai yra geri; kai kurios patalpos artimiausiu metu bus renovuojamos. Universiteto patalpos patogiai pasiekiamos specialių poreikių turintiems asmenims. Dauguma laboratorijų yra nedidelės, tačiau jos gerai aprūpintos įranga, reikalinga šiuo metu universiteto tyrėjų vykdomiems projektams. Tačiau kadangi mokslo tiriamoji veikla yra labai konkurencinga, joje nuolat diegiamos įvairios naujovės, universitetui gali būti reikalinga ilgalaikė mokslo tiriamosios veiklos ir finansavimo politika. Ypač tai pasakytina apie biblioteką, kuri turėtų pasirūpinti, kad studentams ir dėstytojams būtų prieinami naujausi tarptautiniai atitinkamos srities žurnalai.

Studijų procesas tinkamai suplanuotas, o atsižvelgiant į pakankamai didelį „savarankiškoms studijoms“ skirtą valandų skaičių, labai svarbu užtikrinti, kad studentai galėtų laisvai naudotis kompiuteriais, įvairiomis programomis ir e-mokymosi priemonėmis. Dalykų vertinimas yra veiksmingas; vis dėlto, reikėtų peržiūrėti, ar kai kurie labai geri įvertinimai nebuvo suteikti nepelnytai. Ypač didelis dėmesys skiriamas kokybės vertinimui. Universiteto taisyklės ir reglamentai užtikrina aukštą studijų programos kokybę ir galimybę pasiekti apibrėžtus programos tikslus ir studijų rezultatus.

Programa yra puikiai valdoma, tam nemažos įtakos turi ir glaudus visų susijusių grupių bendradarbiavimas. Ypač didelė studijų (ir viso universiteto) vertybė yra programos absolventų

pasitenkinimas studijomis ir daugybės įvairių socialinių partnerių parama. Ir absolventai, ir socialiniai partneriai apie programą atsiliepia labai entuziastingai, ir jie patys yra didžiulė vertybė, kurią universitetas galėtų įvairiausiai būdais išnaudoti.

Kalbant apie ateitį reikėtų atkreipti dėmesį į kelis dalykus: būtina išnagrinėti didelio studentų nubyrėjimo priežastis ir imtis priemonių studentų nubyrėjimą sumažinti, o gal ir užkirsti jam kelią; studijų sritys turėtų būti praplėstos, siekiant tinkamai atsižvelgti į naujus rinkos ir tikslinių grupių poreikius; būtina plėtoti tarptautinį bendradarbiavimą, ypač mokslo tiriamosios veiklos srityse, kad daugiau darbų būtų skelbiama tarptautiniuose žurnaluose.

Universitetas ir *Treniravimo sistemų* studijų programa yra labai gerai vertinama ir turi puikią reputaciją šalyje.

### III. REKOMENDACIJOS

1. Įvertinti galimybes praplėsti programą ir ugdyti studentų įgūdžius dirbti įvairių tikslinių grupių treneriais su įvairių lygių sportininkais, o ateityje ir sveikatingumo srityje.
2. Ieškoti galimybių didinti studentų skaičių, siekiant veiksmingiau išnaudoti turimus išteklius.
3. Didinti tarptautinių leidinių skaičių, ypač tarptautinių žurnalų.
4. Ugdyti studentų naudojimosi literatūra, o ypač lengvai prieinama, įgūdžius.
5. Dėti pastangas pradėti vesti užsiėmimus anglų kalba – tai padės plėtoti tarptautinius mainus ir gerinti Lietuvos studentų užsienio kalbos įgūdžius.
6. Praplėsti treniravimo sistemų mokymo apimtį, įtraukiant humanitarinių ir socialinių mokslų dalykus, t. y. iš pedagogikos ir didaktikos srities.
7. Ieškoti galimybių praplėsti teorijų ir metodų spektrą, ypač siekiant studijų procese plačiau naudoti kokybinius metodus ir strategijas.
8. Bandyti mažinti administracinio darbo apimtį, ypač susijusio su programos valdymu, ir daugiau laiko skirti mokslo tiriamajai veiklai ir leidinių publikavimui.
9. Palaikyti ir toliau plėtoti kontaktus ir bendradarbiavimą su socialiniais partneriais.
10. Rasti būdų mažinti studijas nutraukiančių studentų skaičių.

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Paslaugos teikėja patvirtina, jog yra susipažinusi su Lietuvos Respublikos baudžiamojo kodekso<sup>1</sup> 235 straipsnio, numatančio atsakomybę už melagingą ar žinomai neteisingai atliktą vertimą, reikalavimais.

Vertėjos rekvizitai (vardas, pavardė, parašas)

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<sup>1</sup> Žin., 2002, Nr.37-1341.