VILNIAUS UNIVERSITETO

BIBLIOTEKININKYSTĖS IR INFORMACIJOS PROGRAMOS (61209S102/612P11001) VERTINIMO IŠVADOS

EVALUATION REPORT

OF LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCES (61209S102/612P11001)

STUDY PROGRAMME

AT VILNIUS UNIVERSITY

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Išvados parengtos anglų kalba
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DUOMENYS APIE ĮVERTINTĄ PROGRAMĄ

Studijų programos pavadinimas	*Bibliotekininkystė ir informacija*
Valstybinis kodas	61209S102 (naujas kodas - 612P11001)
Studijų sritis	Socialiniai mokslai
Studijų kryptis	Informacijos paslaugos
Studijų programos rūšis	universitetinės studijos
Studijų pakopa	pirmoji
Studijų forma (trukmė metais)	nuolatinė (4)
Studijų programos apimtis kreditais[1]	160
Suteikiamas laipsnis ir (ar) profesinė kvalifikacija	Bibliotekininkystės ir informacijos bakalauras
Studijų programos įregistravimo data	1997-05-19

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

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INFORMATION ON ASSESSED STUDY PROGRAMME

Name of the study programme	*Library and Information Sciences*
State code	61209S102 (new code - 612P11001)
Study area	Social sciences
Study field	Information Services
Kind of the study programme	University studies
Level of studies	Bachelor
Study mode (length in years)	Full-time (4 years)
Scope of the study programme in national credits	160
Degree and (or) professional qualifications awarded	Bachelor of Library and Information Studies
Date of registration of the study programme	19-05-1997

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I. INTRODUCTION

In accordance with the Lithuanian law on Higher Education and Research, dated 30 April 2009 (No XI-242), and in compliance with Order No. 1-94 of 30 October 2009, an Experts Team (here after: ET) appointed by the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education has conducted an Evaluation of the study programme Library and Information Sciences (Code 61209S102), Study Field of Communication and Information, Vilnius University.

In conducting their evaluation of the Study programme, the ET has applied the methodological guidelines developed by the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education to implement provisions of the Order No. ISAK-1652 of 24 July 2009 of the Minister of Education and Science "On the approval of the description of the procedure for the external assessment and accreditation of study programmes" (Official Gazette, 2009, No. 96-4083), following the Law on Science and Studies of the Republic of Lithuania (Official Gazette, 2009, No. 54-2140).

The ET would like to pay tribute to the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education in Lithuania and, most especially to the Deputy Director of the Centre and to the Head of the Division for Studies Assessment, for the support given to the ET before and throughout the visit to Lithuania.

The External Assessment was conducted in the period November 2010 with in-country evaluation taking place during the period November 14 to November 20, 2010. The assessment included a one-day site visit to Klaipeda University on November 16, and a 3-day visit to Vilnius University on November 17-19, 2010.

This report does not necessarily paraphrase or re-present the range of information presented in the Report of the Self Assessment Group (here after: SAG). Instead, it focuses on issues raised in the Self Assessment Report (here after: SAR) as well as raising some issues not addressed in the SAR, but which came to the attention of the ET during the course of the Team's time in Lithuania, and specifically, during the course of the site visit.

We would like to express our appreciation to the authorities of the Faculty of Communication, Vilnius University for the manner in which we were made welcome and for the manner in which our queries and our exploration of various key issues were addressed in a professional and positive way by those with whom we came into contact with at the University.

The SAG has put an informative SAR together. It presents, in considerable detail, the nature, structure, aims and content of the programme being evaluated, the methods of study, delivery and assessment, issues with regard to quality, resourcing, student support and participation.

In addition to its examination of the SAR, the ET collected information, data and evidence on which to base its conclusions in the course of the site visit through meetings and other means:

- Meeting with administrative staff
- Meeting with the staff responsible for the preparation of the SAR
- Meeting with teaching staff
- Meeting with students
- Meeting with graduates
- Meeting with employers of those who have graduated from the programme
- Visiting and observing various support services (classrooms, library, computer services, laboratories, etc.)

- Examination and familiarization with students' final works, examination material, etc.

At the end of the site visit, the initial impressions of the team were conveyed to the administrative and teaching staff of the programme.

This report relates to the assessment of the undergraduate programme in Library and Information Studies (61209S102) of Vilnius University (hereafter referred to as LIS) by the Experts Team (hereafter referred to as ET).

According to the collective volume of the Self-assessment report, in recent years, the study programmes of the Faculty of Communication have been revised and corrected on Recommendations of the Internal Total Study Programme Assessment carried out in 2005 and in 2008, and that there was a complete internal review (referred to as analysis) in 2008 (SAR, p.5)

Substantial documentation was made available to the ET prior to its visit but not all of the appendix material was in English, despite this being the working language of the ET, and despite its being requested. Additionally supplementary documentation regarding programme updates was only provided at the commencement of the visit. Whilst the additional material was appreciated, its late appearance limited its value to the ET. Slight changes in terminology as well as programme changes made the evaluation a complex process.

Meetings with the staff in the Faculty on the 19th November confirmed the general picture and helped to clarify some of the terminological and course changes.

II. PROGRAMME ANALYSIS

1. Programme aims and learning outcomes

1.1. Programme demand, purpose and aims

1.1.1. Uniqueness and rationale of the need for the programme

The SAR provides the history of the study programme of Library and Information Sciences (in this report called as Library and Information Studies), explains its place within the infrastructure of the Vilnius University. For decades this was the only University in Lithuania providing education in library science. Currently there are two programmes – one at Vilnius University and the other one at Klaipeda University – that are offering Bachelor of Library and Information studies. The name of this programme in Klaipėda was recently changed into Informology.

Market research of specialists in library and information science in Lithuania reveals a shortage of employees with a degree in library and information science, the age of library staff is increasing, and actually there is no rotation of the staff in libraries. The survey of employees in the public libraries of the Lithuanian municipalities and counties showed that only 20% of employees have a degree in library and information science, 33% fall within the age group 51-60 and more and 48% have working experience of 20 year or more. All these factors mean that knowledge and skills of the majority of Lithuanian librarians are insufficient or out-of-date. Respondents in the survey of employers, undertaken for the purpose of self-analysis, emphasized the urgency for development of knowledge and competences related to electronic information. Such areas as information retrieval, information management, e-library services and information and communication technologies were given the highest scores. Employers emphasized the importance of developing ethic provisions as well.

During the meeting with employers we learned that there is high demand for the library and information specialists. Employers from rural areas have been unable to attract young specialists for many years, as most of them prefer living in big cities and especially the capital Vilnius. The alumni also confirmed that they had no problem finding the job, most, but not all of them work in a library.

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

These legal documents are listed in the SAR:

Regarding the Approval of the Lithuanian Strategy for the Development of Information Society. Vilnius, 8 June 2005, No. 625

2007 -2013 Strategic Action Plan of Vilnius University. Vilnius, 2007

Law on the Approval of the Statute of Vilnius University [Interactive]. 2002

This limited list confused the ET, as we missed major documents: Law on Higher Education of the Republic of Lithuania, Law on Science and Studies of the Republic of Lithuania, the Bologna Declaration, and the Lisbon Strategy.

Even though not all major Lithuanian laws are listed, we found the programme in conformity with those, whilst we did not get clear vision where the University and the Library and Information Studies programme stands in relation to the Bologna process we believe that the programme is comparable in content to that in many other European countries.

1.1.3. Relevance of the programme aims

Considering the trends in the library labor market and the needs of employers, the aim and objectives of the degree programme are formulated in the SAR: "The aim of the Library and Information Science and study programme is to educate professionals capable to plan, launch, manage and evaluate the user-oriented information systems and services in all types of libraries and information organizations." In the opinion of the ET, this aim is appropriate for the needs of the marketplace and is not dissimilar from the aims of similar programmes in other parts of Europe.

Furthermore, as far as the ET has been able to ascertain, the programme as reported to us in its documentation, complies with the legal requirements for programmes of this nature.

1.2. Learning outcomes of the programme

1.2.1. Comprehensibility and attainability of the learning outcomes

The SAR describes learning outcomes that are achieved through the combination of general and professional (speciality) competences.

Although the division of competences is made, the descriptions of the professional (speciality) competences apply much more to the general competences than to the professional ones. No clear structure of learning outcomes and their relationship to the described general and professional (speciality) competences is provided.

In the meetings with both the SAR group and the staff we sought clarification of their understanding of the relationship between assessment and the learning outcomes, but we did not get clear answer. It seems there is no clear, shared vision of how learning outcomes are assessed. On the other hand in the meetings with graduates and the employers, we learned that both groups are satisfied with the quality of education.

1.2.2. Consistency of the learning outcomes

The SAR does not present a clear cross tabulation of learning outcomes at the programme level and learning outcomes of the individual subjects, Dublin descriptors are not used . This makes it hard to evaluate the internal consistency of the programme. The descriptions of the learning outcomes of the individual courses (modules) are of varied quality. Some do not provide any learning outcomes (for example *Language of speciality*, course unit code SPKL1113, *Theories of communication and information (theory of bibliography)*, course unit code KOIT2116).

The ET concludes that whilst the internal consistency is satisfactory, there is need for improvement in this area. We recommend that the university provides clear guidance to its staff that the module descriptors must include clearly stated learning outcomes.

1.2.3. Transformation of the learning outcomes

The SAR provides information on the study programme for the academic year 2007/2008 together with some information on the revisions in 2010. While visiting University, we were handed the study programme of 2010/2011, which allowed us to compare these two programmes.

The SAR states that the LIS programme is constantly improved taking into account the urgent needs and activities of libraries and information institutions in Lithuania and the most recent developments in library and information science. The content of the existing courses is being updated and broadened (for example, information processing and retrieval, and management courses are updated having introduced the topic of digital resources management, storage and retrieval), new courses are offered (for example, *Digital Libraries*).

In the meetings with graduates and employers we were assured that the employers are happy with the programme and they think that the knowledge of the graduates is both up-to-date and of a good quality.

2. Curriculum design

2.1. Programme structure

2.1.1. Sufficiency of the study volume

The SAR provides clear data on the study volume (although with some minor mistakes in figures) and structure of the academic load (Table 1):

Table 1 . Structure of academic load of the degree studies in academic year 2007/2008. (in hours)

Lectures	Seminars	Total contact hours	Practice	Term paper, final theses	Self-study work	Total
1604	688	2292	560	480	3068	6400

It is in total conformity with legal acts and compliant with learning outcomes.

In the meeting with students we learned that they find the distribution of the workload uneven. Their collective view was that the volume of work required from them in the first three years was not particularly demanding whilst they claimed that their workload in the final year is too high. Surprisingly the students were unaware that over 60% of their study time should be devoted to individual work and self-study. They claimed that they did not undertake more than 20 hours a week (self-study and lectures including) during the first 3 years, and though they are studying more than 20 hours in the 4th year. Students also claimed considerable overall between modules. In the view of the students it would be feasible to achieve the learning outcomes in 3 years. Therefore the ET believes that the staff teaching the programme should both review the length of the programme and seek to either remove overlap between modules or ensure that the relevant staff explains why there is overlap. Furthermore, we suggest that the teaching team should consider taking steps to ensure that the students are aware of the expectations placed upon them to study in their own time and to ensure that the students have the necessary study skills to enable them to make effective use of self-study.

2.1.2. Consistency of the study subjects

The SAR provides very clear data on the sequence of the study courses in the Table 2.1.2 – 2. We find the only problem evaluating this out-of-date schedule of 2007/2008 when we were already provided with data of 2010/2011. This is a good example of the problems faced by the ET when provided with documentation from different academic years.

The sequence of the courses in 2007/2008 schedule is quite logical, although some subjects that have been introduced in 2010/2011 are missing (for example Digital Libraries). It is strange that some subjects (for example Retrieval in the Internet, Internet Communication, Professional Ethics) are considered to be electives and not compulsory subjects (both in 2007/2008 and 2010/2011 schedules) even though in our view they ought to be central to a modern professional education in library and information sciences.

Students, whom we met, voiced concerns about the elective choice. Their concerns are twofold; firstly they can choose one from two. Making an informed choice is handicapped by the lack of information about the modules. It appears that the decision is often made on no more information than the module title. The importance of making an informed choice is increased by the fact that material that we would deem to be core is often only available within electives. Accordingly we urge the teaching team to make more information about electives available to students so that they can make more informed choices. Finally students suggested that they would like more practice and more seminars but less lectures. The ET understands that course delivery is always affected by resource constraints but recommends that the Department gives consideration to the students' observations.

2.2. Programme content

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

The programme content appears to meet the general requirements of Lithuanian law and conforms to the requirements of Vilnius University. The ET concludes that the study programme of Library and Information Studies complies with legal acts.

2.2.2. Comprehensiveness and rationality of programme content

The SAR provides detailed description of each subject. Even though the descriptions are provided according to a standard template (which is much appreciated), not all the descriptions are comprehensive enough. Some have different course unit titles (perhaps because of poor translation), or different class hours in comparison with Table 2.1.2 – 2. The description of elective subject *Universal Literature* is missing while the description of *The Management I/II parts* are listed, even though there is no such topic in the Bachelor programme.

The content seems quite comprehensive judging from the descriptions in SAR. But the students reported overlap of material in different subjects. In addition, they suggested an over emphasis on historical topics. The ET recognizes that there can be good reason for what appears to students to be overlap; for example consideration of the same topic in different contexts or from different perspectives, nevertheless we urge the teaching team to ensure that such overlap occurs consciously and that wherever possible the reason for the overlap is explained to the students.

The teachers claimed that they use various innovative teaching methods and discussed examples with us. The ET had very limited opportunity to observe a teaching session but one of us observed one class without advance warning and was happy with what was taking place and the rationale.]. Students explained that teaching methods varied between subjects but one general comment was a desire on their part for more practical experience and less theoretical material. We were pleased to learn that students have the freedom to choose the place of practice themselves if they do not like the ones offered by the University.

3. Staff

3.1. Staff composition and turnover

3.1.1. Rationality of the staff composition

According to the SAR, 38 qualified teachers implement the LIS programme. 248 students are involved in the LIS study programme, 150 of them are full-time students, and 98 students attend extramural or broadening courses. The majority of the teachers are local teachers (55 percent), the others are guest teachers. We assume these figures correspond to the academic year 2007/2008, as the SAR does not provide a clear date. In general we observe data provided in the SAR refers to different years which is sometimes confusing.

The SAR provides academic load of teachers in Table 3:

Table 3. Academic load during the study year in the *Library and Information Sciences* (U, F) study programme

Academic Staff	Lectures		Contact hours		Non-contact hours	
	Number of hours	By per cent	Number of hours	By per cent	Number of hours	By per cent
1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**
Professors:						
General Subjects	32	1	20	1	20,5	0,733715104
Special Training Subjects	184	4	68	2	161	5,762347888
Docents:						
General Subjects	88	2	14	0	85,4	3,056549749
Special Training Subjects	1312	28	1028	27	1055,9	37,79169649
Others:						
General Subjects	156	3	270	7	251,3	8,994273443
Special Training Subjects	2864	62	2392	63	1219,9	43,66141732
Total:	4636	100	3792	100	2794	100

Table 3 provides data from academic year 2006/2007. The description of this table in the SAR has several mistakes in figures, although they are not essential and a general understanding about the composition of staff could be identified. The most serious consequence caused by data covering an extended period of time was the provision of CVs and course descriptions concerning persons who passed away two years before our visit. Inevitably the capacity of the ET to make recommendations can be compromised by this mish mash of information. Even though the SAR was updated in 2010 we did not find any data about these changes in the SAR.

The qualification of staff is described in the attached CVs. It corresponds to the requirements.

In the meetings the staff expressed concern about huge workload a consequence of which is that the majority of staff undertakes research during their vacations, in the evenings and even at night. Whilst some staff felt that this was a normal state of affairs which they perceived as a consequence of their job choice, others felt that it was undesirable. The ET understands the concerns but suggests that the situation is the same in most countries.

3.1.2. Turnover of teachers

There is no clear data on the turnover of teachers in the SAR. We can read only about poor payment of teachers: "The most urgent problem in making up a team of teachers is the financial situation of the University. It is very difficult to convince talented young specialists who have just graduated to choose the work of a teacher at the Vilnius University because they are well aware of their opportunities and choose more profitable and/or less complicated work requiring professional skills."

Studijų kokybės vertinimo centras

During the meeting with the Administration we learned that this situation is improving and there are increased possibilities of attracting more qualified people. Meeting with teachers, we learned that there are both permanent staff and staff who are both part time and on a fixed term contract. Whilst the former staff is stable there is a regular turnover of the latter staff. Some are leaving for better paid jobs, some are asked to leave because of poor teaching (each teacher is evaluated by students and by the Center of Quality Assurance and the ones who do not meet requirements and do not change for the better have to leave). So the turnover of staff which leads to quality assurance is for the better.

3.2. Staff competence

3.2.1. Compliance of staff experience with the study programme

The SAR provides comprehensive data on the compliance of staff experience: "71 % of own teachers have scientific degree and/or pedagogical title. Most of the teachers are active researchers participating in national and international research projects, actively publishing the results of own research work in appropriate media (international and national research journals and books)" – this is demonstrated in the CVs provided. Staff is participating in national and international projects, some are members of the editorial boards of Lithuanian and international professional publications, all are active in preparing and delivering presentations at international scientific conferences.

The invited teachers have practical experience in the field they are teaching, some are doing research in the same field.

Based upon the documentary evidence presented to us and discussions in meetings, the ET believes that the staff, who deliver the programme have the experience and knowledge to deliver this study programme enough

3.2.2. Consistency of teachers' professional development

The SAR reveals problems in teachers' professional development: "There is a lack of financing and opportunities for BIMI teachers for systematic improvement of qualification skills and representation on the international level (the Faculty of Communication is not capable to send at least one participant to annual prestigious IFLA conference, to make conditions for longer internships when teachers would have opportunities to make research work and/or prepare tools for teaching, etc.)." SAR, page 17.

During the meetings with staff we heard that they find professional development of staff strategically important for the faculty. As we have understood it is at the level of the department only, not at the university or faculty level as they would like it to be. There is no compulsory programme, except assessment each 5 years. As we have understood there are no pedagogical courses at the university, as the approach is that the person coming to teach should have knowledge in didactics. In most cases this is true, but not in all. One teacher remembered that there was a course offered a year or 1.5 ago (through a EU funded project), so the ones who wanted could participate. At the moment some teachers participate in the training on the work with VLE, but this is totally on the volunteer basis.

The ET concludes that there is no consistent teachers' professional development programme at the faculty, only few separate trainings are offered from time to time. Therefore whilst we acknowledge that overall teaching is adequate, we recommend the creation of a teachers' professional development programme attendance at which should be compulsory for all teachers.

4. Facilities and learning resources

4.1. Facilities

4.1.1. Sufficiency and suitability of premises for studies

In general the suitability of premises for studies is good. Lecture halls are of good quality, other teaching rooms are well-equipped and flexible, with projection and other equipment, and seem sufficient in number, although as some facilities are shared there is some competition with other departments. Library study facilities are good and conveniently located.

4.1.2. Suitability and sufficiency of equipment for studies

Suitability and sufficiency of equipment for studies evaluated as very good. There are ample labs equipped with modern computing facilities; neither teachers nor students voiced any complaints about either the availability of access to, or quality of, these resources.

4.1.3. Suitability and accessibility of the resources for practical training

There appeared to be a good range of appropriate placement locations available, and good relations with employers sponsoring these. Students generally reported no difficulties in finding placements of an appropriate nature.

4.2. Learning resources

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

Library stocks of printed materials seem appropriate and adequate to student numbers and demand. A shortage of textbooks and other printed materials in Lithuanian was commented on by some and referred to in the SAR (p.5), but overall provision is sound.

4.2.2. Suitability and accessibility of learning materials

A VLE (Moodle) is provided and student have external access to library databases both internally and externally via VPN. Some teachers also support other electronic delivery methods for materials (e.g. websites) as they prefer not to use Moodle "due to its complexity". We would suggest that this reflects a training issue and one instance of where a formal CPD policy (referred to in 3.3.2 above) might be applied beneficially.

5. Study process and student assessment

5.1. Student admission

5.1.1. Rationality of requirements for admission to the studies

The SAR provides very limited information on the admission on p. 20: "Persons, who have completed schools of general education (12 forms) are entitled to apply for LIS studies. In 2009, the average competitive score to a state-funded place was 18.64, and 16.78 to a paid place. There were no special requirements for applicants."

More information on the general admission system was provided by the Lithuanian ET member who enabled the rest of the team to understand the situation. The ET suggests that for future evaluations, the Faculty should provide clear information on the admission system as it is not clear for the foreign experts from the information provided. Based on the available information the ET finds the admission system rational.

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

The weakest point in the study programme is its low prestige in society. The SAR provides data on efforts to attract more students on p. 20: "Programme executors, seeking to attract as many students as possible, start visiting schools in autumn and informing pupils about LIS studies. They also participate in the day of open doors at Vilnius University and the Education Fair in the LITEXPO centre. In order to enhance the motivation of first year students, the Faculty organizes excursions to the major libraries of Vilnius (VU library, national library of Martynas Mažvydas, Vilnius County Adomas Mickevicius Public Library, Technical Library, Medicine Library, and the Library of the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences) and other information centers.

The SAR notes "since 2009, the blog *Rock&Roll for Librarians* of the Internet website of the Faculty of Communication has been announcing interesting articles about library innovations, original operational solutions, as well as about interesting, honorable and famous graduates from LIS."

All 4 students whom we have met came to study this programme accidentally. Although they had not intended to study *Library and Information Sciences* they find the programme interesting and useful so they stayed. Whilst the students professed their satisfaction with the programme, they confessed that it is low prestige to confess to their friends what they are studying.

5.2. Study process

5.2.1. Rationality of the programme schedule

The SAR did not provide timetables of lectures, even though it said "timetables of the last two semesters are presented in Annex 1.2", this annex was missing. On the other hand the SAR gives a clear description on the timetables that are prepared taking into account the requirements of the Regulations of Consecutive Studies and specifics of the education base at the Faculty of Communication.

Students made it clear that the workload is uneven – they had lots of free time during the first three years of studies, while in year 4 they are very much occupied. Examining the situation it turned out that this is not because of the timetable, but because of their interpretation of it. The days without lectures are considered as free by students, while these days are given for self studies.

The ET advises to give clear instructions for students what they are expected to do during the self study hours.

5.2.2. Student academic performance

Students' academic performance is monitored constantly by collecting data on study process. This is done by the central university body. This makes it possible to assist students when needed.

Drop out rates for students on the programme as documented in the SAR "is evidently decreasing (from 23 students in 2003 to 2 students in 2007)". These are normal figures that do not constitute a problem for the university.

The ET did not observe examples of student participation in research projects leading to research publications which included the students as joint authors. Indeed this would be very rare in many countries. The ET did observe opportunities for appropriate participation in research projects.

5.2.3. Mobility of teachers and students

Evidence is provided in the SAR on the mobility of teachers and students, even though some figures do contradict: on p. 23 it is said "In 2008, 5 students spent 5-6 months of traineeship in..." while on the very same page few lines below it is stated "In 2008, none of the students left to foreign universities..."

The SAR notices that "Students, who have trained abroad, have a broader horizon and approach problems with an innovative attitude. They are more active in research and public activities. They produce term papers and final theses of higher quality."

It was apparent talking with staff and students that they do know about the opportunities but not all of them are making advantage of those opportunities. Constraints of time and money are obvious reasons for this situation.

5.3. Student support

5.3.1. Usefulness of academic support

There is considerable evidence in the SAR that there are appropriate measures in place to provide students with the relevant information about their studies although we believe that there is scope for providing more information about electives to enable better informed choice. However in terms of access to study support from lecturers, it was clear that this was a very hit-and-miss affair – some students found access to, and support from, their teachers to be very good and helpful, whereas others found difficulty in arranging appointments and found that teachers were unhelpful in explaining things to them.

The ET was impressed with the use of internet technologies for academic support.

5.3.2. Efficiency of social support

No substantive mention of student social support is made in the SAR, however the observed facilities were good and plentiful, with plenty of student social space in and around the department which was well used, social clubs and activities, refectories, etc. There was no complaining from the student body in regard of social facilities and support.

5.4. Student achievement assessment

5.4.1. Suitability of assessment criteria and their publicity

The SAR provides detailed information on the student achievement assessment.

The ET noted that students are made aware of the methods of assessment and the timing of assessment for each subject at the start of teaching, for bachelor thesis and guidelines for their evaluation - in *Methodical Instructions for Written Papers* that describe in detail the procedures for preparation, defense and evaluation of works. Students appeared to be aware of what was expected of them when we talked to students.

Whilst the ET is comfortable that students are aware of what is expected of them and note that the staff at VU uses an approved assessment scale, we did not find evidence that the students are aware of the criteria which are applied to any specific assessment in order to reach the mark on the approved scale. The ET believes that there is scope for making marking schemes available to students.

5.4.2. Feedback efficiency

There was evidence of wide variability in terms of feedback efficiency. Some students reported that lecturers provided good detailed feedback, usually verbally, to help explain marks, but many reported that "they were simply given grades" without explanation. Similarly, when asked, students said that they found some lecturers could be approached and would give more guidance, but others either did not or were considered to be unapproachable. Some reported receiving written feedback but this seemed to be the exception rather than the rule. Whilst most students reported being satisfied overall with the level of feedback received, the lack of consistency is a matter of concern. The ET suggests that the Faculty and or the University should consider means of introducing greater uniformity in feedback so as to enhance the students' learning experience.

5.4.3. Efficiency of final thesis assessment

The lists of recent theses provided to the ET indicate an interesting range of theses. Discussions with students indicated a variety of opinions on the level of support they are getting from teachers. Some were very happy with the support they receive, while the others were facing communication problems. In general, students seemed aware of what was expected of them.

The ET faced a problem in evaluating the assessment of presented theses. As all the theses were in Lithuanian, ET paid special attention to the English abstract; but was disappointed with their poor quality. The ET advises the faculty and or University to make use of *Emerald* requirements for the structured abstracts:

http://www.emeraldinsight.com/authors/guides/write/abstracts.htm

Some lists of literature evidenced poor selection of resources for bachelor theses; few were largely based on information from the web with little if any use of research articles or monographs were used. Wider use of foreign language resources is missing. The university has a good library, but proper use of it is not seen examining bachelor theses of the study programme of Library and Information Studies.

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

There was no indication in the SAR of any system for this activity, which was confirmed by conversations with teachers who indicated that the intention was that this would be addressed when the move to modular teaching happened. At present such issues are dealt with on a case-by-case basis and cases appear very rare – no students reported having need for this.

The ET suggests that a clear written system for assessment and recognition of achievements acquired in non-formal and self-education should be developed and made widely available to students.

5.5. Graduates placement

5.5.1. Expediency of graduate placement

It appears from the SAR that graduates often gain employment in the largest and academic libraries in Vilnius. The Labor Exchange states that in 2007 only one graduate of the Library Science and Information degree program was registered who was employed the same year.

Meeting with employers revealed that they are very happy with the quality of the graduates. The alumni of the programme appear to be gaining employment and the current economic situation appears to be the main constraining factor.

6. Programme management

6.1. Programme administration

6.1.1. Efficiency of the programme management activities

Programme management within the Faculty of Communication is undertaken by the Committee on the Studies of Library and Information Science. A division of the Faculty of Communication, i.e. Study Division, supports the Committee on Studies. The Committee is comprised of five members (including students' representative and social partner). The issues related to the introduction of changes into the programme or upgrading the programme are discussed in the Institute of Library and Information Science. The decisions of the Committee are presented for consideration in the Institute of Library and Information Centre Management. Amendments and updates of the study programme are considered and approved by the Study Commission and the Council.

The ET noted throughout its visit some internal tensions among the administration and staff. It was especially evident before the meeting with the staff. We did not observe the obvious degree of collegiality in decision making. This allows us to express some concern about decision taking within the Faculty of Communication.

6.2. Internal quality assurance

6.2.1. Suitability of the programme quality evaluation

The ET notes that internal evaluation and review occurs on a regular basis and on various levels. After the central body – Centre of Quality – was established, it takes the responsibility of quality assurance on the University level. The meetings with staff revealed that the faculty does not trust data they receive from the Centre of Quality and perform their own evaluation.

ET suggests to work in closer collaboration with Centre of Quality and to develop the system in need instead of partly duplicating their activities. Individual teachers also evaluate their courses either in discussions or in printed questionnaires.

6.2.2. Efficiency of the programme quality improvement

Discussions with students there was some evidence that quality circles are not being closed especially concerning student feedback. Whilst the SAR group reported that collected data is used to improved quality, it appears that students are not made aware in a systematic way of the ways in which data collected from them has led to changes.

The ET recommends the development of a formal mechanism by which stakeholders can see both the data and the impact that it has had on courses.

6.2.3. Efficiency of stakeholders participation.

Students participate in the Committee on the Studies of Library and Information Science. Each year they complete questionnaires, they are able to suggest improvements. Whilst they are able to do so, students admitted that they do not always make such suggestions in part because they are skeptical that they can make an impact; a point which merely serves to underline the recommendation in the previous paragraph

Employers are represented on the Committee on the Studies of Library and Information Science but few are able to attend; presumably because of work pressures. The same would appear to apply to Alumni.

The ET noted that stakeholders are included in the formal procedures but only make limited input. The Faculty may wish to consider means by which it can encourage greater participation.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1. We recommend that the University provides clear guidance to its staff on the inclusion of statements of learning outcomes in the t the current course descriptors. We strongly recommend the use of Dublin descriptors.

3.2. We strongly recommend the creation of a programme of pedagogic development for teachers. There is a case to be made for making this compulsory.

3.3. We recommend that the Faculty takes steps to ensure improved communication with the places of practice to ensure that there is a clear understanding of the requirements of the students and the supervisors. It is not enough to leave students to their own devices and to not make clear to supervisors what is expected.

3.4. The ET recommends that students are given clearer guidance in the use of the considerable self study time. This light should be extended to including classes and exercises intended to enable students to become effective independent autonomous learners.

3.5. The ET recommends that the Faculty makes greater effort to provide students with information about courses content prior to elective choice such that students can make informed choices. Provision of course descriptors either in paper or on the web would be obvious ways to achieve this. Some UK universities run "elective fairs" at which information is provided to enable informed choice.

3.6. ET advises the Faculty and/or the University that students need guidance on the writing of improved abstracts for their theses. One means of achieving this would be the adoption of a structured form of abstract, e.g. that used by Emerald
(www.emeraldinsight.com/authors/guides/write/abstracts.htm).

IV. GENERAL ASSESSMENT

The study programme Library and *Information Sciences* (state code – 61209S102 (new code - 612P11001)) is given **positive** evaluati*on*.

Study programme assessment in points by fields of assessment.

No.	Evaluation Area	Evaluation Area in Points*
1.	Programme aims and learning outcomes	3
2.	Curriculum design	3
3.	Staff	3
4.	Material resources	4
5.	Study process and assessment (student admission, study process student support, achievement assessment)	3
6.	Programme management (programme administration, internal quality assurance)	3
	Total:	**19**

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

2 (poor) - 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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