



STUDIJŲ KOKYBĖS VERTINIMO CENTRAS

VILNIAUS UNIVERSITETO  
**STUDIJŲ PROGRAMOS *ISTORIJA* (valstybinis kodas –  
612V10007)**  
**VERTINIMO IŠVADOS**

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**EVALUATION REPORT**  
**OF *HISTORY* (state code – 612V10007)**  
**STUDY PROGRAMME**  
At VILNIUS UNIVERSITY

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## DUOMENYS APIE ĮVERTINTĄ PROGRAMĄ

Studijų programos pavadinimas	<i>Istorija</i>
Valstybinis kodas	612V10007
Studijų sritis	Humanitariniai mokslai
Studijų kryptis	Istorija
Studijų programos rūšis	Universitetinės studijos
Studijų pakopa	Pirmoji
Studijų forma (trukmė metais)	Nuolatinė, 4 metai
Studijų programos apimtis kreditais	240 ECTS
Suteikiamas laipsnis ir (ar) profesinė kvalifikacija	Istorijos bakalauras
Studijų programos įregistravimo data	Lietuvos Respublikos švietimo ir mokslo ministro 2012 m. kovo 30 d. įsakymu Nr. SR-1688

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## INFORMATION ON EVALUATED STUDY PROGRAMME

Title of the study programme	<i>History</i>
State code	612V10007
Study area	Humanities
Study field	History
Type of the study programme	University studies
Study cycle	First
Study mode (length in years)	Full-time studies, 4 years
Volume of the study programme in credits	240 ECTS
Degree and (or) professional qualifications awarded	Bachelor of History
Date of registration of the study programme	30 <sup>th</sup> March 2012, under the order of the Minister of the Ministry for Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania No. SR-1688

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## I. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. Background of evaluation process

The evaluation of on-going study programmes is based on the **Methodology for Evaluation of Higher Education Study Programmes**, approved by the Order No. 1-01-162 of 20<sup>th</sup> December 2010 of the Director of the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education (hereafter, SKVC). Evaluation is intended to help higher education institutions to constantly improve their study programmes and to inform the public about quality of studies.

The evaluation process consists of the main following stages: 1) *self-evaluation and the Self-evaluation Report prepared by a Higher Education Institution (hereafter, the HEI)*; 2) *a visit of the Review Panel at the higher education institution*; 3) *preparation of the evaluation report by the Review Panel and its publication*; 4) *follow-up activities*.

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

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

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

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

### 1.2. General

The application documentation submitted by the HEI follows the outline recommended by SKVC. Along with the Self-evaluation Report and Annexes, the following additional documents have been provided by the HEI during the site-visit:

No.	Name of the document
1.	Syllabi of two modules.
2.	Examples of students' questionnaires.

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

According to information provided by the Faculty of History, the Bachelor *History* programme is offered by the Faculty of History's Department of Ancient and Medieval History and the Department of Modern History. It is the successor to the previous Bachelor *History* programme which was validated in 2002 and registered by the order No. 785 of Minister of Science and Education. This earlier programme underwent several assessments by national experts, all of which were positive.

According to the SER: 'in 2010-2012, within the EU structural funds support project *The renewal of the first cycle study programmes at Vilnius University Faculty of History* (project code VP1-2.2-ŠMM-07-K-01-037), all three first cycle study programmes were renewed at the FH – the study programme structure was changed from subject structure to module structure. The programmes were renewed with the aim to implement a competences based learning/teaching, providing knowledge in a wider context of humanitarian and social sciences and maintaining better opportunities for the students to purposefully choose a study strategy. The new specialization, *Science of Sources and Archivistics*, was included into the History programme. The renewed History programme was accredited in 04-04-2012 Order No. SV6-16 of the Director of the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education. Programme accredited until 01-07-2015 (a new code – 612V10007).' (the SER, p. 6).

### **1.4. The Review Panel**

The Review Panel was composed according to the *Description of the Review Team Member Recruitment*, approved by the Order No. 1-01-151, 11/11/2011 of the Director of the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education. The visit to the HEI was conducted by the Panel on 06/05/2015.

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## II. PROGRAMME ANALYSIS

### 2.1. Programme aims and learning outcomes

The Bachelor *History* programme is intended to provide knowledge and skills enabling students to work independently in historical sciences, conduct professional historical research deploying various historiographical contexts and diverse methodologies. It aims to prepare graduates to understand contemporary social, political and cultural processes in a variety of historical perspectives and to provide the competences required to work in dynamic professional surroundings. Programme aims, intended learning outcomes and intended graduate qualifications are well designed to fulfill these expectations, they are coherent with the programme name, contents and the defined profile of a graduate (the SER, p. 7-11).

This programme, developed and introduced in 2012, has been devised in accordance with the legal requirements of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania and complies with both European and national frameworks for higher education qualifications. The programme's aims and intended learning outcomes are well set out and are available and accessible for staff, students and the broader public. They are all published in both Lithuanian and English languages, amongst others, and are available on the university's website and the AIKOS system at: [https://klevas.vu.lt/pls/pub/public\\_ni\\$www\\_progr\\_app.show.;](https://klevas.vu.lt/pls/pub/public_ni$www_progr_app.show.;) [http://www.aikos.smm.lt/aikos/programos.htm?m=program&a=displayItem&id=612V10007.](http://www.aikos.smm.lt/aikos/programos.htm?m=program&a=displayItem&id=612V10007)

There is an emphasis on competency-based learning and this is demonstrated in the module descriptors; while the writing of individual intended learning outcomes has been informed by the pan-European pedagogic approaches made popular by the 'Tuning' guidance for constructing degree programmes. This is a strong and important aspect of provision. Moreover, the programme is based on strong principles as it combines the broad aims of engaging students in a wider context of humanitarian and social science learning with a desire to present a positive image of the country with a clear statement about developing an appreciation of the importance of its potential contribution to cultural tourism and contemporary society. In creating this ambitious programme, there has been liaison with an array of social partners in order to formulate intended learning outcomes that attune them to requirements in the national job market. Finally, the programme also aims to give students a good preparation to work in discipline-related fields such as, amongst other things, teaching and archive work.

The study programme has been planned with great care and allows students choice as they go through towards completion. There are opportunities for students to increasingly engage in

comparative history, though largely within a local – and on a smaller scale – a European nexus. However, as time goes on in the programme, students can create their own learning plan and, because there is a good student to staff ratio, this seems to be a realistically manageable process (the SER, section 3.3, p. 20 gives the ratio at 8 students to 1 teacher).

The aim of creating a research-informed programme has been achieved (and this can be evidenced by mapping staff profiles with the module descriptors). This is laudable and presents students with opportunities to potentially work throughout the programme, engaging at the very highest academic levels. In addition, there are grant opportunities for talented students in order to both reward their achievement and support their progress. The programme is still new, but early indications from student feedback are positive, with 89% of them giving it positive assessment.

The defined intended learning outcomes rightly stress the relevance of developing the ‘ability to convey knowledge of history and its research to specialist and non-specialist audiences; (and the) ability to raise and foster historical awareness of the society’, but there appear to be weaknesses in providing all of the necessary tools for students to develop and demonstrate skills in ‘academic writing’ or in providing modules on writing for diverse audiences.

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

The curriculum places a strong emphasis on developing students’ historical understanding of society and their capacities to convey knowledge to specialist and non-specialist audiences, which is an essential attribute in the practise of Public History. There is also an ambition, throughout the programme, to develop interdisciplinarity (and its concomitant skillsets) in order to create a better understanding of cultural, social and civil society, though interdisciplinarity seems to be most successfully demonstrated in the modules about modern history subjects. Students have a very good opportunity to study across a wide range of historical periods, though an overview of the curriculum offer suggests that, at present, there is a very strong emphasis on European history, particularly of Lithuania and the Baltic States, rather than on non-European and global history. The curriculum is also traditional in its structure and in common with most European universities it begins with survey modules in the first year followed by more specialist subjects afterwards.

It should be noted, though, that in a few modules, there is the potential to develop an understanding of non-European regions and perspectives (‘Comparative and Transnational History’ is an obvious example), however the prime focus of many modules remains true to the

stated objective of developing an appreciation of Lithuanian history. Moreover, there are some modules which focus on the study of social history, but according to information in the module descriptors, in general the history of women and ‘history from below’ is not given as much attention as the history of elites, institutions and nation states. There is, however, the opportunity to develop cross-cultural capability through study abroad opportunities and particularly through learning or enhancing foreign language capability. The University is also considering non-credit bearing subjects in foreign languages as part of its offer. This capacity to include language development is potentially very significant, as it can enable students to be more effective as researchers in the discipline, especially in relation to Lithuanian and other Baltic-centred histories and also improve their capacity to take effective advantage of studying in international environments.

Lectures and other information made available on the University’s Virtual Learning Environment (VLE), prepares students for more active learning in seminars, but activities also include experiential learning outside the classroom from year 1 onwards. There is also the integration of digitised sources in the student learning experience, though the testing of students’ application of digital technology is focused on learning outcomes and assessments in a few modules (most notably, in those about archives). There are a number of research-oriented modules which can prepare students for the independent research they will have to undertake in their theses. Some module descriptors mention fieldwork opportunities, though some others which would seem, with their subject content, to have golden opportunities to use the very rich historical environment in and around Vilnius, do not seem to take that up (for example, the module ‘Lithuanian State Institutions: analysis of documentary heritage’). Information about modules is readily available in handbooks, but there is some inconsistency in the way they are set out, with some giving copious details about their intended learning outcomes and modes of assessment and others far less. Also, with regards to intended learning outcomes, there also remains the potential to further develop them by creating differentiated expectations and characteristics across them for the different levels of studies/year groups, as is the practice in many leading higher education institutions elsewhere in Europe.

There are also other, interesting and relevant curriculum offers which enhance the student experience in a more holistic way, in order to develop broader graduate attributes. Some of these are the Department’s ‘History Detectives’ course and the University-wide ‘To Give, not to Take’ programme. There are also study abroad programmes, though at present only small numbers of students use the opportunity to take them up (the SER, section 5.10, p. 31).



The programme culminates with the writing of the Bachelor thesis, which is part-examined by a public defence. As the programme has only been introduced recently, there are no graduates from it yet, but based on the curriculum and site visit, it appears that the processes for leading students to the final stages of their thesis needs careful reconsideration and implementation. Information provided about the curriculum indicates that the ‘Bachelor’s Seminar’ – the key mode of preparation for the thesis – will be conducted only during semester 6 (with 16 hours of lectures and 210 of undefined practical work), followed by a rather vaguely defined ‘Bachelor Final Thesis’ lecture which is to be accompanied by practical writing training in the last semester (semester 8). It would be advisable to restructure the processes of advice on thesis – possibly by creating a revised, continuous three semester long ‘Bachelor Seminar’ in semesters 6 to 8, with much smaller student groups.

The modular structure of the curriculum is well formed and the teaching load well distributed over the eight semesters, starting with introductory modules and leading to more specialised ones (see the SER, Annex 1). The distribution and placement of ECTS points follows European standards, as well as country specific regulations<sup>1</sup>. Study modules of study field yield 165 ECTS points (including 15 ECTS points for the Bachelor thesis and 15 ECTS points for practise), general university modules 15 ECTS points, additional modules 60 ECTS points.

The curriculum is assessed in a variety of ways (see below), but early indications from student feedback suggest that tasks should be more evenly spaced across the academic year, rather than clustered. It is clear, from the module descriptors, that students are repeatedly exposed to in-depth study and analysis of primary sources in their seminar work. Some modules, such as ‘Historical Sources and Virtual Digital Heritage Systems’ present relevant, up-to-date challenges by requiring students to engage with digital technology and software tools. Other modules present considerable intellectual and philosophical challenges by introducing them to the ways in which the discipline of history has been critiqued by post-modernist thinking (in ‘History and Historik’).

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<sup>1</sup> General Requirements of First Degree and Integrated Study Programmes approved by the Order of the Minister of Education and Sciences of the Republic of Lithuania.

### *2.3. Teaching staff*

Teaching staff, responsible for the implementation of the programme, fully conform to national legal requirements<sup>2</sup> and their competences are adequate to implement it and support students in working to attain the intended learning outcomes. According to the SER, the academic staff employed in 2014-15 to implement the programme is composed of 44 lecturers, 38 (86%) of whom hold a PhD in humanities or social sciences. Several of these lecturers have experience of applied history – of working in practical situations – and have impressive depth in historical research, with experience ranging between 4 and 37 years (with an average of 16.5 years). Meanwhile, their experience of teaching varies from between 1 and 37 years, with an average of 13.6 years.

In terms of staffing, there has been a demonstrable effort to ensure the inflow of young scholars and teachers in order to anticipate succession planning and maintain vibrancy in the Department. Staff are, as a group, extremely well qualified and highly experienced as historians and researchers and importantly include, as stated above, active researchers from nearby institutes, institutions and learned societies. Staff are research-active, contributing their publications in Lithuanian and internationally peer reviewed journals. Many also participate in either national or international research projects and have produced highly regarded monographs. The academic quality of the teaching staff is one of the faculty's great strengths; and as there is a generous staff to student ratio of 1:8, students taking this degree have the benefit of regular, highly expert tuition and advice. Moreover, there has been institutional value placed on staff gaining qualifications and recognition of their teaching and there is the need to demonstrate competence in teaching and learning through engagement with continuing professional development (hereafter, CPD) every five years. Staff CVs reveal that some have made contributions to the scholarship of learning and teaching in history and there has been engagement, by others, with CPD and training in the use of Moodle systems. However, though the University offers CPD about teaching and learning, staff do not always take up these opportunities. Indeed, there appears to be no system of incentivisation for and/or penalties for individuals not engaging in professional, pedagogic development.

There is a good demographic profile amongst the staff, with a blend of the highly experienced working alongside those in mid-career and also those relatively new to teaching. This is very

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<sup>2</sup> General Requirements of First Degree and Integrated Study Programmes approved by the Order of the Minister of Education and Sciences of the Republic of Lithuania.

much to the mutual benefit of each constituent group and also to the student body. Lecturers engage in serious academic research, which finds its expression in the taught modules. As the Review Panel found during their visit to the Faculty, staff share their findings and methods with students and at times engage them directly in the research processes.

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

With regards to occupational health, safety and hygiene standards, the premises and buildings of the Faculty of History and Central Library of Vilnius University appear to be completely satisfactory to accommodate the lectures and classes provided by the *History* study programme. With its facilities and departmental rooms based in the Old Town, there is some pressure on space – though this pressure has a greater impact on the staff, many of whom have to share rooms. A possible negative consequence of this could sometimes be a difficulty in finding space to have a confidential tutorial with students.

As the Faculty of History is housed in the old part of Vilnius and students have access to the nation's historical resources in a way that privileges them in a way that cannot be experienced so immediately elsewhere in Lithuania. Though students have the benefit of surroundings which are historic and conducive to study, facilities include rooms dedicated to computer terminals and technical equipment, while the VLE is used to develop knowledge, understanding and skills. For example, staff produce Moodle resources and e-books to support student learning. The University library and those of partner institutions are extremely well resourced with traditional book collections and electronic resources such as e-catalogues and access to international databases such as EBSCO; and throughout the programme, modules give students the reason, opportunity and challenge of using these to promote their knowledge. Additionally, museums, archives, other repositories and even Vilnius itself provide students with an enormous array of opportunities to access specialist resources in the form of hard copy texts, manuscripts and material culture. The Department also has its own library of 30,000 books on history and history-related subjects including the history of art, cultural history, heritage, conservation, museology and archaeology. However, the most significant learning resource for students is the highly qualified staff that are on hand to support them.

Collections of research publications and literature available at the library fully satisfy student needs associated with and required by the programme's aims and funding to the library serves to replenish its resources. Students taking this programme can also make use of rich resources in the many other libraries, archives and museums in Vilnius which boast ample collections of

primary sources, records and books in the areas of history, cultural history and anthropology. In addition since 2013 all Vilnius University students, especially those living in the *Saulėtekis* valey dormitory, have been able to work at the National Open Access Scholarly Communication and Information Centre 24 hours a day.

All of the University libraries provide the students with a list of data bases and access guidelines (e.g. EBSCO publishing data bases), though information readily available on the Faculty of History's web resources have been usefully supplemented by teaching staff to include publications dedicated to various themes of history including researching sources and archives, the history and anthropology of ethnic minorities and cultural tourism. Moreover, it is worth noting that the Faculty has also prepared and published a special volume with details about each of the modules on offer, in order to support students' understanding of their programme.

Practices intended to develop professional skills and applied competences are carried out in various state and private institutions, all of which have appropriate arrangements with the University. Details of these institutions are described in section 4.3 of the SER (p. 23-24).

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

The procedures for admissions to the programme have been approved by the University and meet all of its rules of transparency and equity. Indeed, information about entrance requirements, application procedures, programme content and forms of assessment are all openly available to prospective applicants as well as the general public. It is accompanied by details of the programme's aims, intended learning outcomes and modes of study and once students are enrolled, the programme structure enables them to work towards intended learning outcomes in a timely and effective manner. A year 1 module, 'Introduction to Studies' gives a clear overview of and support in meeting academic and procedural requirements. However, it is year 1 that experiences the most noticeable issues with attrition/drop out. According to the SER, the programme is competitive and attracts large numbers of candidates (100 every year), while the dropout rate of 15% appears to be acceptable, particularly as it has been shown to not to be usually connected with insufficient engagement with the study process or academic failure, but more usually for personal and family reasons.

However, a point which requires extra attention regarding students' number on the programme is the seminar group sizes which are too large, with sometimes up to 100 in attendance. This is

perceived as an issue by the programme students as well and should be solved by programme managers seeking to improve quality of studies further.

In departmental documentation about modules, it is sometimes difficult to clearly see how intended learning outcomes are explicitly tested by the assessment criteria or the assessment itself (for example for 'History of Neighbouring Nations and States'), and in the course of the review students were not able to give clear explanations about how marks are allocated to some activities. However, most modules have assessments during the module and so it is possible for tutors to give formative as well as summative feedback to students. In the main, however, assessment is summative. Importantly, students reported that there is some inconsistency in the quality and quantity of feedback from module tutors and indeed it could be more targeted, to help students to better understand how to make progress. Developing in this area of provision is advisable, especially since an emphasis is placed on students developing the ability to assess themselves critically and to develop as independent learners.

While the module system has a modern approach to the construction of the study programme and has many visible strengths, good practice also suggests that every module should also have clear structures. This appears not to be consistently the case, but could be addressed through both the introduction of a syllabus template and the development of a strong, shared understanding of how criteria for assessment can be applied to all constituent parts of the module, not just the module as a whole.

A very notable strength of the programme is the preparation of students to work as historians using primary and secondary sources in archives, repositories, facilities off-site, including the local built environment and museums. Moreover, they are given a variety of challenges in the tasks set by tutors for the dissemination of their findings. It was found, however, that final year dissertations/theses written by students working under the previous version of the programme (no theses were available yet in the new programme) showed signs of being overly descriptive, rather than being analytical and critical in their approach to their chosen subjects. Far too few dealt with European and global history – indeed, according to the topic list for those written in 2014 only 2 theses dealt with global and 4 with European subjects, while 62 focused on Lithuanian history (In 2013 the statistics were: global – 2, European – 0, Lithuanian – 62). In addition, the thesis summaries in English are in need of attention and improvement. Care will need to be taken to ensure that the new programme does not replicate these shortcomings.

As stated above, there are also study abroad programmes, though in the past three years only four students, out of a cohort of over 200, have taken advantage of this scheme. Even so, a very large group of social partners/employers interviewed as part of this programme review were very enthusiastic about the overall quality of the graduates produced by the History Faculty and were unanimous that the graduate attributes that had been developed by the end of the degree programme made them employable across a broad spectrum of occupations and professions as well as those that were more obviously related to the discipline's content.

An insufficient number of guest lectures and foreign instructors is a weakness of the programme. As Vilnius University is the nation's leading higher education institution and prepares its graduates to have the potential to work with peoples and institutions across the world, it is strongly advised that a strategy is developed to create lectures, seminars or even programmes and modules that are taught or co-taught by visiting scholars in a foreign language.

## ***2.6. Programme management***

Individual, group, departmental and faculty committee responsibilities for programme management are clearly defined for everything from day-to-day matters to monitoring, reporting, evaluation and development. More broadly, the Faculty works to well established University-wide systems for quality assurance including, for instance those for processing student work in order to help assure honesty and integrity in study. Since the whole history programme has been benchmarked against internationally recognised standards (CLIOHNet and Tuning), the writing of any new modules is monitored by the relevant Faculty committee. Programme management also embraces the monitoring of student progress and engagement and, in understanding serious issues and weaknesses such as the number of students leaving the programme before completion or a shortfall in international partners, works to take a view on creating strategies for improvement and how they can best be implemented. Module evaluations are routinely carried out and inform the programme management team of student perceptions; though because evaluation forms are generic, due to being developed centrally by the University, some tutors supplement this information with their own evaluation forms. There is scope for this type of good practice to spread across all programme tutors.

Evidence of effective programme management is seen in other functions. For instance, there is outreach to prospective students through the dissemination of information about the programme through events and websites; an Erasmus co-ordinator informs students of schemes to support study abroad; while an enthusiastic group of alumni and social partners contribute, via

committees, to discussions ranging from the general, about the programme's ethos and overall development, to the specific about intended learning outcomes and partnerships.

In terms of pastoral care and academic requirements, students are given information about systems in year 1 in their 'Introduction to Studies' module, but there is no systematised structure of personal tutoring/academic advising. In this review, it became apparent that students understood that they had a role to play in evaluating the programme through their module evaluations. They seemed less clear, however, about how their views influenced change. A University-wide system of student evaluation and assessment of modules and the personal performance by lecturers is well established. The questionnaires for evaluations are well structured, yet the process of assessment raises some serious doubts. First of all, it is voluntary and only attracts a small fraction of students – participation rates of 30% or lower cannot adequately fulfil their function. Moreover, although questionnaires are conducted via the Internet, no security system appears to be in place to ensure the anonymity of the respondents and while it may be difficult to break into the system, it is still possible. Careful attention needs to be paid to improving this valuable tool for its evaluation.

### III. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The current curriculum has an imbalance between national and international history, with its concomitant global perspectives – instead it has a very heavy weighting in favour of the histories of Lithuania and the nearby Baltic States. It is recommended that the curriculum is developed to reflect a more global reach. Strategies to accomplish this range from the introduction of new modules, particularly those which embrace non-European histories, to taking the opportunity whenever new staff are employed to broaden the Faculty's expertise by targeting academics with new areas of historical enquiry. In the meanwhile, it would be highly beneficial to increase the flow of guest lecturers from abroad, in order to give students the chance to embrace history from alternative perspectives, and maintain vibrancy for academic staff through their contributions to the Faculty's research culture.
2. In connection with the above recommendation, it is recommended that schemes to enable the mobility of both staff and students be utilised to greater effect in order to give both groups the experience of teaching, researching and learning in other international environments.
3. There is a need for more systematic, regular and incentivised staff engagement with CPD to develop and maintain currency in their approaches to teaching and learning. Also useful would be cross-faculty CPD on assessment and feedback and the spread of good practice with regards to innovative pedagogies associated with the use of digital technology not only to enhance both the student learning experience, but also support the ways in which they can demonstrate their historical understanding. There was also evidence of grade inflation in the marks awarded to many of the Bachelor theses in the old programme and greater precision in assessment techniques would help to eliminate this as an issue.
4. Curriculum delivery is 'lecture heavy' and consideration should be given to changing the balance between the amount of time devoted to lectures and seminars. Creating more seminar time would enhance the potential for students to develop their critical and analytical skills through workshop activities. Moreover, since students report that some seminar group sizes are too large, with sometimes up to 100 in attendance, addressing this could also provide an opportunity to deploy staff time differently, in order to reduce class sizes. This recommendation is stressed in particular with reference to the very beginning of programme – the first semesters – which have a huge impact on supporting students working in new ways in a new environment.



5. The process of leading students towards the writing of their Bachelor thesis should be analysed and adequate changes and provisions made, especially as for many students this is the most important written work in the programme, which is also defended in public.
6. It is recommended that the Department should conduct an enquiry into the feasibility of giving increased pastoral support to students (both individually and in groups) in their first year of study, as that is the time when they are most likely to drop out from their studies.

#### **IV. EXAMPLES OF EXCELLENCE**

1. In terms of reputation, the Faculty of History is recognised as having the best provision for educating students in the discipline in Lithuania. University teachers are made up of extremely well-qualified staff not only from the University Faculty, but also by historians who are the nation's leading professionals in their fields of enquiry working in the city's research institutes. Students therefore have the benefit of being able to experience learning in modules that are almost all directly based on research-informed teaching.
2. Students have the unrivalled benefit of having access to excellent facilities to support their learning, both within the University in its various library collections, computer terminals and large body of expert staff; and also in the city's many museums, archives, other repositories and the richness of its local built environment and heritage. Their skill sets in relation to developing as history practitioners are therefore, by the end of their programme, very good indeed and this is recognised by a broad spectrum of stakeholders and professions, who hold the degree in high esteem and regard the Faculty's graduates as eminently employable.
3. The implemented module system has introduced quality changes in teaching and staff co-operation. It reflects a modern approach to university education.

## V. SUMMARY

Vilnius University is the biggest, leading and most renowned university in the country. As such it has a strong reputation and therefore does not need to be concerned about attracting students. This reputation and its high standards are highly visible across both the History Faculty and in the Bachelor programme in History.

There are many positive aspects to the programme. First and foremost, it has a strong reputation for producing high quality graduates, who have been trained to be critical researchers and communicators. This updated history degree is based on pedagogic principles currently being used across Europe, with intended learning outcomes designed to construct a range of competences pertinent to the development of employability, professional skills and languages. The programme aims and intended learning outcomes are being monitored and developed and benefit from constant interaction with social partners, scholarly institutions and even political bodies.

Some modules give students very challenging work and others, which integrate work on developing capacity in the digital humanities, have the potential to inform best practice across the programme. In being taught in the heart of Vilnius's Old Town, students are given the experience of studying in a historic environment, but it is one which has been refurbished by the University and replenished to a high standard in order to accommodate the latest facilities in educational technology. Students also utilise the local environment – its many archives, repositories, museums and specialist institutes – to support their learning. They are taught by highly qualified tutors from both the Faculty and nearby institutes and so have the benefit of studying modules which are research-informed. The Faculty has the support of an active group of alumni and stakeholders, and academic staff demonstrate a strong willingness to be innovative, in order to develop the student experience.

Teaching staff are well qualified and represent an interesting mix of experience and young potential and energy. Lecturers engage in serious academic research, they share their findings and methods with students and at times engage them directly in the research processes. The module programme has also had a positive influence on teaching interactions between lecturers and has resulted in some innovative solutions.

There are some areas that would benefit from attention.

Some Bachelor's dissertations/theses completed under the programme's predecessor were descriptive and dominated by Lithuanian subjects, rather than critical and analytical with a broader set of international topics. The process of leading students towards the completion of their dissertations should be given special attention and the modules on 'academic writing' and constructing the Bachelor's thesis should be given more thought and developed. Moreover, many dissertation summaries in English were inadequate and in some cases even hard to understand, yet the marks allocated were still generous.

The balance in terms of curriculum content needs attention, since there are inadequate opportunities for students to study non-European history; and there are too many lectures at the relative expense of seminars (some of which suffer from having too many students in them). There is the need for more foreign lecturers to work in the Department both as guest or visiting lecturers and as permanent staff (for the former, this may be attended to by short-term measures; for the latter, by the implementation of a longer-term strategic approach to succession planning). Finally, feedback to students about their assessments should be more targeted, in order to be more effective in supporting progression.

It appears that improvement in the area of staff knowledge and understanding in teaching and learning techniques is possible and staff development requires a more systematic approach. Even though there are some University-wide programmes supporting the development of pedagogic innovations, staff are inconsistent in their engagement with CPD about teaching and learning.

## VI. GENERAL ASSESSMENT

The study programme *History* (state code – 612V10007) at Vilnius University is given a positive evaluation.

*Study programme assessment in points by evaluation areas.*

No.	Evaluation Area	Evaluation of an area in points*
1.	Programme aims and learning outcomes	3
2.	Curriculum design	3
3.	Teaching staff	4
4.	Facilities and learning resources	4
5.	Study process and students' performance assessment	3
6.	Programme management	3
	<b>Total:</b>	<b>20</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:	Dr. Hab. Jakub Basista
Grupės nariai: Team members:	Prof. Siegfried Beer
	Mr. Peter D'Sena
	Assoc. Prof. Vygantas Vareikis
	Mr. Gintautas Rimeikis

**VILNIAUS UNIVERSITETO PIRMOSIOS PAKOPOS STUDIJŲ PROGRAMOS  
ISTORIJA (VALSTYBINIS KODAS – 612V10007) 2015-07-20 EKSPERTINIO  
VERTINIMO IŠVADŲ NR. SV4-214 IŠRAŠAS**

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**VI. APIBENDRINAMASIS ĮVERTINIMAS**

Vilniaus universiteto studijų programa *Istorija* (valstybinis kodas – 612V10007) vertinama teigiamai.

Eil. Nr.	Vertinimo sritis	Srities įvertinimas, balais*
1.	Programos tikslai ir numatomi studijų rezultatai	3
2.	Programos sandara	3
3.	Personalas	4
4.	Materialieji išteklių	4
5.	Studijų eiga ir jos vertinimas	3
6.	Programos vadyba	3
	<b>Iš viso:</b>	<b>20</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;

**V. SANTRAUKA**

Vilniaus universitetas yra didžiausias, pirmaujantis ir garsiausias universitetas Lietuvoje. Atitinkamai ši aukštoji mokykla problemų, susijusių su studentų pritraukimu į studijas, nepatiria. Minėtoji reputacija ir aukšti standartai taip pat yra taikomi ir Istorijos fakultete bei *Istorijos* bakalauro studijų programoje.

Studijų programoje yra daug teigiamų aspektų. Visų pirma, studijų programoje rengiami aukštos kvalifikacijos specialistai, gebantys kritiškai mąstyti, atlikti mokslinius tyrimus bei komunikuoti. Studijų programos pagrindas yra šiuolaikiniai pedagogikos principai, šiuo metu taikomi Europos šalyse, siekiant, kad numatomi studijų rezultatai užtikrintų studentų įsidarbinamumą, tinkamą profesinių įgūdžių įgijimą bei užsienio kalbų mokėjimą. Programos tikslai ir numatomi studijų

rezultatai yra nuolat peržiūrimi, tobulinami ir atnaujinami bendradarbiaujant su socialiniais partneriais, mokslo institucijomis ir net politinėmis organizacijomis.

Studijuodami tam tikrus modulius studentai turi įdėti labai daug pastangų. Moduliai, kuriuose ugdomi skaitmeniniai gebėjimai humanitariniuose moksluose, gali būti įvardijami gerąja studijų programos praktika. Istorijos fakultetas yra įsikūręs Vilniaus senamiestyje, todėl studentai turi unikalią galimybę studijuoti istorinėje aplinkoje. Senieji universiteto rūmai yra puikiai pritaikyti studijoms, aprūpinti naujausia technika. Studijų metu studentai taip pat naudojami miesto archyvais, saugyklomis, muziejų ir mokslo įstaigų ištekliams. Fakultete dėsto ne tik itin aukštos kvalifikacijos dėstytojai, bet ir garsūs šalies istorikai, dirbantys Vilniaus mokslinių tyrimų institutuose. Fakulteto administracija palaiko glaudžius ryšius su programos absolventais ir socialiniais partneriais, dėstytojai noriai siekia naujovių, kad galėtų suteikti studentams kuo įvairesnių žinių.

Programoje dėsto aukštos kvalifikacijos akademinis personalas, kuriam būdingas tiek patyrimas, tiek jaunas potencialas bei energija. Dėstytojai dalyvauja aukšto lygio mokslo tiriamojoje veikloje, dalijasi patirtimi ir žiniomis su studentais, kartais tiesiogiai įtraukia studentus į mokslinius tyrimus. Modulinė sistema studijų programoje skatina dėstytojus bendradarbiauti bei sąlygoja inovatyvių sprendimų priėmimą.

Tam tikrus studijų programos aspektus reikėtų tobulinti.

Kai kurie ankstesnės programos bakalauro baigiamieji darbai yra aprašomojo pobūdžio, juose dominuoja temos, susijusios su Lietuva. Juose trūksta kritinio ir analitinio požiūrio, orientacijos į tarptautinę tematiką. Daugiau dėmesio reikėtų skirti baigiamojo darbo rengimo ir priežiūros procesui, į studijų programą reikėtų įtraukti akademinio rašymo dalyką. Dauguma baigiamųjų darbų santraukų anglų kalba yra parengtos netinkamai, kai kuriais atvejais jos sunkiai suprantamos, tačiau tokių darbų įvertinimai balais yra gana aukšti.

Programos sandarą reikėtų peržiūrėti, nes kai kurių dalykų dėstoma per mažai, kaip pavyzdį galima paminėti, ne Europos istorijos dėstymo stoka; paskaitų skaičius, lyginant su seminarų, yra per didelis (kai kuriuose seminaruose dalyvauja itin daug studentų). Dėstyti studijų programoje reikėtų pritraukti daugiau užsienio dėstytojų – kviestinių arba dirbančių nuolat (pirmu atveju tai būtų trumpalaikės priemonės, antru atveju – reikalingos ilgalaikės strategijos). Galiausiai, grįžtamasis ryšys studentams apie jų įvertinimus turėtų būti labiau plėtojamas ir aktyvesnis, siekiant efektyviau teikti akademinę paramą.

Dėstytojai turėtų plėtoti savo žinias apie dėstyimo ir mokymosi metodus. Akademiniio personalo kvalifikacijos kėlimas turėtų būti sistemiškesnis. Nors universiteto mastu ir yra vykdomos pedagoginių naujovių vystymo programos, dėstytojai nereguliariai įsitraukia į pedagoginės kvalifikacijos tobulinimo veiklas.

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### **III. REKOMENDACIJOS**

1. Vertinant iš nacionalinės ir tarptautinės istorijos perspektyvos, programos sandarai nėra būdinga pusiausvyra. Studijų programoje labai daug dėmesio skiriama Lietuvos ir kaimyninių Baltijos šalių istorijai. Tarptautiškumas studijų programoje turėtų būti labiau akcentuojamas. Siekiant šio tikslo į studijų programą galima būtų įtraukti naujų modulių, ypatingai susijusių su ne Europos šalių istorija, taip pat įdarbinti naujų dėstytojų, su kuo įvairesnėmis interesų sritimis. Būtų labai naudinga pakviesti daugiau dėstytojų iš užsienio, kad studentai turėtų galimybę susipažinti su kitais istorijos diskursais bei skatinti akademinį personalą dar aktyviau dalyvauti fakulteto mokslinių tyrimų veikloje.
2. Remiantis pirmesne rekomendacija pažymėtina, kad reikėtų labiau skatinti dėstytojų ir studentų dalyvavimą judumo programose, suteikiant jiems galimybę mokytis, dėstyti ir atlikti mokslinius tyrimus tarptautinėje aplinkoje.
3. Dėstytojai turėtų būti skatinami sistemiškiau, nuosekliau ir intensyviau kelti profesinę kvalifikaciją, turint tikslą plėtoti bei užtikrinti jų požiūrių šiuolaikiškumą dėstant. Kalbant apie studentų vertinimą ir grįžtamojo ryšio teikimą, būtų naudingos kvalifikacijos kėlimo sistemos tarp fakultetų, kurios taip pat sukurtų prielaidas dalytis gerąja patirtimi pedagogikos naujovių srityje, pasitelkiant skaitmenines technologijas, ne tik prisidedančias prie studentų mokymosi patirties didinimo, bet ir leidžiančias jiems pademonstruoti savo istorines žinias. Ekspertų grupė pastebėjo, kad dauguma ankstesnės programos bakalauro baigiamųjų darbų buvo įvertinti ne visais atvejais pagrįstai aukštais balais. Vertinimo sistemos peržiūrėjimas turėtų prisidėti prie minėtosios problemos išsprendimo.
4. Programoje ypatingai daug laiko skiriama paskaitoms. Paskaitų ir seminarų skaičiaus skirtumą reikėtų mažinti. Didesnis seminarų skaičius prisidėtų prie studentų kritinio mąstymo ir analitinių gebėjimų ugdymo. Studentų teigimu, kai kurių seminarų metu juose dalyvaujančių studentų grupės yra per didelės – iki 100 žmonių. Sprendžiant šią problemą reikėtų perskirstyti dėstytojų darbo laiką. Svarbu, kad seminarų grupės nebūtų



per didelės pirmaisiais studijų semestrais, nes tuomet formuojasi studentų įgūdžiai dirbant naujoje aplinkoje.

5. Reikėtų išanalizuoti ir atlikti reikiamus pakeitimus baigiamojo darbo rengimo procese, nes baigiamasis darbas daugeliui studentų yra pats svarbiausias rašto darbas, be to jis yra ginamas viešai.
6. Rekomenduojama apsvarstyti galimybę pirmo kurso studentams (individualiai ar grupėmis) teikti daugiau akademinės paramos, nes būtent pirmaisiais studijų metais studentų nubyrėjimo skaičius yra didžiausias.

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#### **IV. IŠSKIRTINĖS KOKYBĖS PAVYZDŽIAI**

1. Vilniaus universiteto Istorijos fakultetas garsėja kaip teikiantis studentams aukščiausios kokybės istorijos krypties išsilavinimą Lietuvoje. Fakultete dėsto ne tik itin aukštos kvalifikacijos dėstytojai, bet ir garsūs šalies istorikai, dirbantys Vilniaus mokslinių tyrimų institutuose. Studentai iš modulių, kurie yra pagrįsti mokslo tiriamąja veikla, gauna didžiulę naudą.
2. Studentai gali naudotis išskirtiniais universiteto ištekliais – bibliotekos fondais, kompiuteriais, itin kvalifikuotų dėstytojų pagalba, taip pat ištekliais už universiteto ribų – miesto muziejais, archyvais, saugyklomis, taip pat turtingu vietos paveldu ir aplinka. Baigusieji studijų programą yra įgiję puikius istoriko praktiko įgūdžius. Tai pripažįsta ir platus socialinių partnerių ratas. Jie labai vertina šią studijų programą ir mano, kad programos absolventai turi labai geras įsidarbinimo galimybes.
3. Įdiegta modulinė sistema pagerino mokymo kokybę, sustiprino bendradarbiavimą tarp dėstytojų. Šios permainos atspindi šiuolaikinį požiūrį į universitetinį išsilavinimą.

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Paslaugos teikėjas patvirtina, jog yra susipažinęs su Lietuvos Respublikos baudžiamojo kodekso 235 straipsnio, numatančio atsakomybę už melagingą ar žinomai neteisingai atliktą vertimą, reikalavimais.