



## STUDIJŲ KOKYBĖS VERTINIMO CENTRAS

VILNIAUS GEDIMINO TECHNIKOS UNIVERSITETO ir  
BALTARUSIJOS VALSTYBINIO TECHNOLOGIJOS  
UNIVERSITETO

### STUDIJŲ PROGRAMOS NEKILNOJAMOJO TURTO VADYBA (*valstybinis kodas – 628N2002*) VERTINIMO IŠVADOS

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### EVALUATION REPORT OF *REAL ESTATE MANAGEMENT* (*state code – 628N2002*) STUDY PROGRAMME

at VILNIUS GEDIMINAS TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY and  
BELARUSIAN STATE TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY

**Experts' team:**

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Išvados parengtos anglų kalba  
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Vilnius  
2017

## DUOMENYS APIE ĮVERTINTĄ PROGRAMĄ

Studijų programos pavadinimas	<b>Nekilnojamojo turto vadyba</b>
Valstybinis kodas	628N20002
Studijų sritis	Socialiniai mokslai
Studijų kryptis	Vadyba
Studijų programos rūšis	Universitetinės studijos
Studijų pakopa	Antroji
Studijų forma (trukmė metais)	Iščėtinės (2)
Studijų programos apimtis kreditais	90 ECTS
Suteikiamas laipsnis ir (ar) profesinė kvalifikacija	Dvigubas laipsnis: Vadybos mokslų magistras Vilniaus Gedimino technikos universitete ir vadybos magistras su nekilnojamojo turto vadybos specializacija Baltarusijos valstybiniame technologijos universitete
Studijų programos įregistruavimo data	2011.07.12

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## INFORMATION ON EVALUATED STUDY PROGRAMME

Title of the study programme	<b>Real Estate Management</b>
State code	628N20002
Study area	Social Sciences
Study field	Management
Type of the study programme	University studies
Study cycle	Second
Study mode (length in years)	Part-time (2)
Volume of the study programme in credits	90 ECTS
Degree and (or) professional qualifications awarded	Double degree: Master of Science in Management of Vilnius Gediminas Technical University and Master of Management in the “Real Estate Management” specialty of Belarusian State Technological University
Date of registration of the study programme	12.07.2011

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The Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education

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## I. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. *Background of the evaluation process*

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

### 1.2. *General*

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

No.	Name of the document
1.	A copy of bilateral agreement of both universities.

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

The MSc in Real Estate Management is a joint study programme delivered and managed by a consortium of two Universities—Vilnius Gediminas Technical University (VGTU) and Belarusian State Technological University (BSTU). The Vilnius Gediminas Technical University is a public institution of higher education and one of the largest high schools in Lithuania; while

the Belarusian State Technological University is a leading educational and scientific centre in the Republic of Belarus. The consortium has established a joint programme board which is representative of both Universities. Supervision of the study programme is provided by VGTU Department of Construction Economics and Property Management (Faculty of Civil Engineering) and BSTU Department of Production Organisation and Real Estate Economics (Economic Engineering Faculty).

The self-evaluation report (SER) provided for the external review panel was produced by a committee of eight people (five from VGTU, two from BSTU, and a student member). Prior to the current external evaluation presented in this report, the programme was also externally assessed and accredited for three years by SKVC in 2013.

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

The review team was completed according *Description of experts' recruitment*, approved by order No. 1-01-151 of Acting Director of the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education. The Review Visit to HEI was conducted by the team on 13-14/12/2016.

- 1. Mr John Cusack (team leader), Council member of the Institute of Certified Public Accountants in Ireland (CPA), Ireland.**
- 2. Mr Damien Courtney, Consultant and Member of Academic Community of Cork Institute of Technology, Ireland.**
- 3. Asst. prof. Brigit Baltača, Assistant Professor at BA School of Business and Finance Department of Business Administration, Latvia.**
- 4. Assoc. prof. Rasa Apanavičienė, Assoc. Professor at Kaunas University of Technology Department of Civil Engineering and Architecture, Lithuania.**
- 5. Ms Kamilia Puncevič, student of ISM Economic and Management University study programme Management of Innovations and Technology, Lithuania**

## **II. PROGRAMME ANALYSIS**

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

*Statements on evaluation of programme aims and learning outcomes according to the following criteria:*

- the programme aims and learning outcomes are well defined, clear and publicly accessible;
- the programme aims and learning outcomes are based on the academic and/or professional requirements, public needs and the needs of the labour market;
- the programme aims and learning outcomes are consistent with the type and level of studies and the level of qualifications offered;

- *the name of the programme, its learning outcomes, content and the qualifications offered are compatible with each other.*

The stated aim of the programme is to prepare management Master's graduates for national and international real estate and related sectors who are able to:

- i) Apply practical and research-based knowledge necessary to solve theoretical and practical issues in real estate management;
- ii) Apply the acquired knowledge and understanding, modern methods in practice that requires analytical skills, innovation and integration of knowledge, including scientific research; evaluate the limits of analytical methods' application, assess the research results and their reliability;
- iii) Apply the acquired knowledge and understanding when solving problems in a new, unknown, or constantly changing environment and interdisciplinary contexts;
- iv) Keep self-study, learn to critically evaluate innovations in management theory and practice, effectively operate in the circumstances with the lack of detailed information and instructions, prove the findings and introduce them in appropriate manner to stakeholders having different education and intercultural contexts.

The current language of instruction is Russian and the programme-level learning outcomes are intended to be achieved through the study of single subjects across the curriculum. Students who successfully complete the programme are conferred with the dual award of Master of Science in Management by VGTU and Master of Management in Real Estate Management speciality by BSTU. The learning outcomes encompass the following five general areas:

- Knowledge and its Application
- Research Skills
- Special Abilities
- Social Abilities, and
- Personal Abilities.

Both Universities involve a wide network of social partners and also students and graduates when conducting reviews of the programme in order to ensure that it is kept up to date and remains relevant to labour market needs for suitably qualified real estate graduates. The review panel confirms that the aim and learning outcomes established for this joint-degree qualification are generally satisfactory and comply with legal requirements, as defined for study programmes of this type and at this level.

Since the previous external assessment in 2013, programme learning outcomes were upgraded in 2014 and 2015, with particular reference to the recommendations contained in that

evaluation report. This double degree study opportunity is based on an interdisciplinary and intercultural approach. However, there would seem to be significant opportunities to strengthen both dimensions of current studies. As there are no Lithuanian students currently enrolled on the programme, and limited international contacts for the Belarusian students, it is difficult to achieve a strong intercultural dimension; while there is also room for greater interdisciplinary learning through different avenues, such as students completing more assignments/projects of an integrated nature.

The review panel believes that the programme has an excessive number of learning outcomes. The focus of studies would be enhanced by having fewer outcomes, with a stronger concentration on each. It is also essential to ensure that all stakeholders, and especially students, have a clear, unambiguous understanding of the concept ‘Learning Outcomes’. Student motivation and commitment can be further strengthened when the direct connection between learning outcomes and all aspects of the programme, including specific assignments used to measure progress, is emphasised on a continuous basis. **Despite these remarks, the panel has concluded that the programme aims and learning outcomes are good and are based on the academic and professional requirements of the relevant labour market.** In general terms, the title of the programme, the learning outcomes, the content and the qualification offered can be said, to be compatible with each other.

## **2.2. Curriculum design**

*Statements on evaluation of curriculum design according to the following criteria:*

- the curriculum design meets legal requirements;
- study subjects and/or modules are spread evenly, their themes are not repetitive;
- the content of the subjects and/or modules is consistent with the type and level of the studies;
- the content and methods of the subjects/modules are appropriate for the achievement of the intended learning outcomes;
- the scope of the programme is sufficient to ensure learning outcomes;
- the content of the programme reflects the latest achievements in science, art and technologies.

The curriculum design meets legal requirements. The curriculum of the programme is jointly developed by VGTU and BSTU following and compromising the requirements of national legal acts in Lithuania and Belarus. Articles 58, 59 and table 2.2 of SER explain that the joint programme complies with Lithuanian and Belarus legal requirements. The scope of part-time (distance learning studies) is 90 ECTS. The duration is 2 years. One-year study scope of studies equals to 45 ECTS credits. The structure and scope of the study programme corresponds to the legal requirements for master’s study programmes. Number of subjects in each semester does not exceed 5. No more than 2 course works are scheduled per semester.

The programme is delivered via part-time study mode over four semesters of 20 weeks' duration each, with the final semester being dedicated exclusively to the production of the Master's graduation thesis. There are certain differences in the curriculum as between the full-time, 3-semester study programme in the same discipline currently available in VGTU and this joint degree.

Examples of subjects contained in studies for the double rather than the single degree award offered by VGTU in the field of real estate management include:

- Management of Social and Economic Systems
- Management of Construction and Real Estate under conditions of Market Instability
  - Web-based Decision Support in Business Management
  - History of Science and Technology
  - Management Science Methodology and Philosophy
  - Climate Change: Social Science and Policy Perspective
  - Applied Econometrics in Business
  - Intelligent Structures
  - Organisation and Management of Sector Markets
  - Multiple Criteria Analysis of Life of Building Process and Project Management

Similarly, there are subjects within the VGTU single qualification curriculum which do not form part of the joint study programme. While it is accepted that national factors are taken into account in programme design, it is somewhat surprising that such a variation exists between the curricula. This opinion is based on the fact the parent University is involved in both programmes and the title of the qualification offered by VGTU as part of the joint award is similar to that available following the successful completion of the 'home' programme in Vilnius. It is assumed that part of the explanation with regard to distinctions between curricula may be the different requirements under legal acts in the respective countries, together with a difference in labour market needs as between Belarus and Lithuania.

The content of the subjects and/or modules is consistent with the type and level of the studies. The themes of the courses are not repetitive and the structure of the curriculum is in line with the programme goals and corresponds to the requirements of the second study level. The content of the programme subjects reflects the latest developments of real estate management. The courses have theoretical and practical dimensions.

Suggestions from the review panel in respect of potential improvements to the curriculum include:

- The desirability of including the word 'Strategic' into particular subject titles (with a corresponding adjustment being made to syllabus content, if necessary). The purpose of this proposal is to ensure that studies are seen to be clearly above Bachelor degree level in the same field. In the context of subject names, the titles of the following modules appear to be somewhat unwieldy and overambitious:
  - (i) 'Management of Construction and Real Estate under Conditions of Market Instability'
  - (ii) 'Multiple Criteria Analysis of Life of Building Process and Project Management'.
- The lack of a Strategic Marketing module with a strong international real estate management focus is a weakness in the curriculum, particularly when the international dimension of studies is taken into account. For example, such a subject could place appropriate emphasis on topics such as selling, customer care, sales psychology and consumer behaviour.
- The placing of a greater emphasis on aspects such as strategic business management, financial management and control, legal aspects, health and safety, business ethics, corporate social responsibility, real estate management information systems, and human resource management is required to extend the knowledge and develop the skills of students to the level expected and likely to be required in the high-level employment to which they aspire.
- A stronger emphasis on innovation and creative thinking as an integral part of the learning environment across various subjects within the curriculum is necessary, and could be evidenced in student theses and other project work. The more widespread use of case studies, particularly with an international real estate management dimension, could help in this regard.
- The time allocation to subjects such as 'History of Science and Technology' could be reduced. This is but an example of how the space for the proposed additional material might be found within the curriculum. In this regard, the panel does not wish to be prescriptive.
- The fact that the name of the qualification and the title of 1.5 modules within the curriculum are identical could have implications for how the study programme is perceived by stakeholders.

In relation to the Master's thesis, the panel is aware that the supervisors of these major projects and representatives from both Universities have a role in the assessment of the students' work. When marks are being allocated it is essential that rigorous international academic standards are applied. This would benefit the students by helping them become aware of what the production of a first-class thesis involves. An added bonus would be the enhanced credibility of the study programme.

Intended learning outcomes on subject level are presented in each subject description and they are subordinate to the programme learning outcomes. It is laid out in Subject descriptions included in Annex 1 of SER. The content of the programme reflects the latest developments of real estate management.

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

The 20 subjects within the curriculum are distributed on the following basis-six are taught by VGTU staff, six by BSTU lecturers, with the remainder shared amongst lecturers from both Universities. The number of the teaching staff is adequate to ensure learning outcomes. Table 3.2 of SER provides for the number of teachers involved in the programme and the teacher-student ratio during the past five years. The information reflected proves that the number off teaching staff is more than sufficient to ensure learning outcomes of the programme. According to SER the Programme is delivered by 19 teachers: 8 from VGTU and 11 from BSTU.

The qualification of teachers meets and in most cases is higher than minimum legal requirements. 84% of teachers have scientific degree (minimal requirement is 60% for practice oriented studies), the scientific research field of 80% of teachers is compatible with the subjects taught (minimal requirement is 40%). 7 subjects (from 17 field subjects) (41%) are taught by professors (minimal requirement is 20%). All the teachers of applied subjects have both academic and practical experience.

It is understood that the academic staff in each institution are highly active scientists, as confirmed by the respective curricula vitae. The VGTU teachers have been more heavily involved in contributing to the proceedings of international conferences than their BSTU counterparts over the period 2011-2015; on the other hand, teachers from BSTU have had the much greater input into the proceedings of national conferences. A similar pattern exists when relative contributions to international versus national scientific journals are taken into account. The fact that no teaching staff member from BSTU has published in international conference proceedings over the past five years supports the panel's viewpoint that the international dimension of studies for Belarusian students requires strengthening. The Department of Studijų kokybės vertinimo centras

Construction Economics and Property Management (VGTU), in collaboration with other departments, publishes three internationally recognised journals.

The study programme was developed and upgraded under the project 'Enhancement of VGTU Internationalisation by Implementation of Joint Study Programme Real Estate Management' which received financial assistance under EU structural funds. In Belarus, support was received through funding from the project 'Capacity Development of Education in Property Management through Introducing Distance Learning Technologies'; the sponsorship was provided by Eurasia Foundation and the US Agency for International Development (USAID).

The number of qualified teachers assigned to deliver the curriculum has been approximately 20 over the past five years. The average number of students annually over the same period was between 45-50, thereby ensuring a healthy teacher-to-student ratio. While VGTU teachers participate in the Erasmus Teaching Mobility Programme (average of five per year over the latest six-year period), there is no evidence of a similar involvement by their BSTU counterparts who, admittedly, come to Vilnius for professional development and training towards the improvement of subjects taught. Apart from the mobility necessitated by the agreement governing this Joint Study Programme, BSTU staff participate in various international events and some exchanges—examples include the University of Regensburg, Germany and the University of Warmia and Mazury, Poland.

The regulations of both Universities help to ensure that members of academic staff undertake a range of self-enhancement activities as part of ongoing personal and professional development. In this context, more regular meetings of the lecturers from both Universities are deemed to be essential by the panel. This would allow for the sharing of best practice, the exchange of ideas for programme enhancement, and the development of team spirit.

Looking to the future, it is suggested that a more student-centred, innovative approach to teaching and learning would further improve this study programme. This should involve teaching staff in the use of the latest technology for subject delivery. It is unclear to the panel how much collaboration exists between academic peers from the respective institutions and how often face-to-face or virtual meetings between the two departments actually occur.

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

While the panel did not visit the Belarusian campus, it is stated in the SER that the facilities and resources available there are good for teaching and learning purposes in the context of this study programme. The presentation regarding facilities in partner university was introduced to the panel. The panel does not doubt this assertion. The VGTU campus has impressive material resources for students and staff. All of the VGTU and BSTU premises are

said to meet health and safety requirements. While practical work experience placements are deemed unnecessary, because this is a distance learning study programme for Belarusian students (80 hours of face-to-face contact each semester), efforts are made to organise internships for students. However, this aspect of shared learning last happened in 2013, when two, one- month internships for ten students were arranged reciprocally. A revival of this type of arrangement is strongly suggested by the panel.

It is understood that students may use the library resources of both institutions. Currently, there are only Belarusian students involved in the study programme and they have access to home resources and to the extensive range available at VGTU. The BSTU library, established in 1930, is one of the largest such facilities in Belarus. Efforts are made on a continuous basis to expand and update the materials and facilities contained therein. The databases available are provided in Belarusian, Russian and, sometimes, foreign languages.

The supply of relevant textbooks and other study materials is limited due to the specialised nature of the subjects. However, the teaching and learning process at degree, and especially postgraduate, level could be supplemented beyond the main resource currently provided i.e. educational-methodical and scientific literature prepared by teachers. In this context, staff vigilance is needed to ensure adherence to the highest international standards of teaching and learning. This will help to guarantee the future profile and reputation of the programme. Towards the achievement of this goal, students should have access to the most recent literature related to their field of studies.

The review panel is curious as to why there has not been a more self-critical approach towards ‘Material Resources’ in the SER, where no weaknesses were identified. As an example, the use of Moodle to its fullest capacity as a learning platform should be deemed essential for this type of distance learning study programme. While a separate website has been set up for students that, in itself, does not compensate sufficiently for this particular resource deficit.

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

Both Universities have specific regulations governing entry to the programme. In the case of VGTU, students who do not have a Bachelor degree in the discipline are allowed to compensate by presenting confirmation that certain key subjects such as Mathematics and Economics formed part of their undergraduate studies. Under BTSU regulations, non-specialist undergraduate degree holders are also required to compensate in a limited way for their lack of background in the study discipline. The panel is concerned that students from such potentially different backgrounds are eligible to join the programme. The reservations are based on factors such as the following:

- Students coming from substantially different backgrounds cannot be expected to respond equally well to a postgraduate level of teaching and learning in the area of real estate management. Teachers, too, are likely to be faced with a dilemma in attempting to meet the defined learning outcomes as they cover the curriculum with students who possess disparate background knowledge and skills, and possibly different levels of motivation.

- The receipt of a postgraduate double degree in real estate management normally suggests a reasonable level of equality in terms of the expertise developed by the graduates. However, a specialist real estate student will have spent six years gaining both the Bachelor and Master's qualifications in the discipline, as compared to the much shorter duration of postgraduate studies. This raises an anomaly which could influence international as well as national perceptions regarding the level of studies and the overall standard of learning associated with the Master's qualification.

The dropout rate of Belarusian students has been particularly low, and some who left have returned to complete their studies at a later stage. As part of their development, students have participated in conferences of a scientific or creative nature over the past four years--11 conferences and 7 seminars-- as either speakers or audience participants. Forms of student support cover aspects such as the obtaining of visas and residence permits to facilitate cross-border mobility, and the provision of accommodation when reciprocal visits are arranged. Cultural, health and sports supports are also available.

A range of assessment mechanisms is utilised to measure student progress. In this context, it is noted that academic management responsible for the study programme wishes to "concentrate on applying more efficient assessment methods". A wider use of integrated assignments with both a theoretical and a practical focus would be of assistance in this regard. It is also advisable that students are automatically provided with verbal or written feedback when they receive examination/assignment results. With regard to students' theses, it is essential that all such project work contains analytical sections covering both conclusions and recommendations, as well as having a reflective learning dimension. The allocation of full marks for a thesis, irrespective of the inherent quality, is extremely difficult to justify when international higher education standards and practices are taken into account for benchmarking purposes.

While inter-university mobility is proposed as a feature of this type of joint study programme, the panel accepts that it may not always be easy for students to relocate, even for short periods. Despite this limitation, it is essential that certain minimum standards with regard to mobility are implemented. The agreement signed between the two Universities in 2011 states

that "academic mobility should make up at least 25% of programme value" and that " students must study for at least 30 ECTS in each partner's University. Such mobility arrangements should also be complemented by the use of the latest technology and electronic systems to present aspects of the international dimension, such as guest lectures, exhibitions, and recorded events. This is seen as important in light of the fact that the current level of student mobility from Belarus to Lithuania is perceived to be rather limited.

Efforts to ensure honesty and ethical behaviour on the part of students are maintained by the use of AD Tester software. Where a student cheats in examinations/tests, the SER states that he/she has to repeat the examination. Should this be the only penalty, it is considered inadequate and not sufficiently effective as a deterrent. In respect of the thesis, all Master's students are obliged to sign a special document to confirm that the research work is free from plagiarism. Scientific supervisors (or related professionals) check to ensure the integrity of research work and course papers submitted by students. In a broader context and in deference to the circumstances of some students, it is possible to agree an individual study programme to accommodate particular needs.

Academic management and the panel members are concerned that this innovative, joint approach to the development of a highly relevant higher education postgraduate qualification does not currently attract significant students to form a cohort in VGTU. The development of a focused promotional campaign to attract Lithuanian students is regarded as essential by all stakeholders.

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

Both Universities, and their respective Faculties and Departments, are applauded for having the foresight to establish this joint Master's degree study opportunity, despite the many challenges involved in the process then and now. The administrative structures necessary to effectively deliver a quality programme are in place, while other potential partnership agreements between VGTU and Universities abroad could possibly use this initiative as a blueprint for further joint development purposes.

Quality assurance measures in respect of programme design, delivery and review are the responsibility of the Joint Programme Board. Additional support is provided by the International Studies Centre; with the study programme being overseen by the Faculty Council and the Deanery. However, the apparent lack of Business Faculty representation at managerial level would seem to be a limiting factor, given the interdisciplinary nature of the study programme. This omission is particularly noticeable in the composition of the Study Programme Committee of VGTU, which consists of six members: the Department Head and three representatives from

the Department of Construction Economics and Property Management, together with a social partner representative and a student member.

As part of the study programme administration it is understood that the Student Union is “responsible for solving academic, social and even personal problems of the students and applying various methods for elimination of those problems (SER, p. 34)“ and might help students so solve various issues. Students also can declare their comments directly to the Head of Department, Deanery of Civil Engineering faculty, Academic Affairs Office.

In relation to Quality Assurance and Quality Management, general provisions are contained in VGTU Study Regulations (2012), as the parent institution, and the quality of studies is assured by the University Senate’s Regulations and the University Rector’s Orders. All information about the implementation of the study programme is contained in a single information system known as 'Alma Informatika'. Feedback from students helps to inform academic management about how well all aspects of the study programme are progressing. BSTU has its own separate quality assurance guidelines, mechanisms and procedures which complement those in VGTU.

Social partners have a key role in programme design, delivery and review. It is apparent that a high level of goodwill towards VGTU in general, and this study programme in particular, exists amongst the social partners. Although the review panel did not consult with a number of BSTU social partners via video link during the visit to VGTU, it is understood that in Belarusian they are equally supportive of and committed to this double degree initiative. It is essential that both institutions avail of this valuable goodwill resource to maximum effect on an ongoing rather than just a periodical basis. The development of a SWOT analysis, at least once per year, for the purpose of ensuring high quality studies is a commendable feature of current programme management practice.

In order to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of programme management, it is recommended that greater autonomy should be granted to the Joint Programme Board. This would help to overcome inevitable delays caused by somewhat inflexible and over-centralised decision-making systems. The panel also suggests that stakeholders would benefit from the production of a separate, specific chart giving details of the academic and administrative sharing of duties and responsibilities across both partner institutions. A source of pride to academic management and teaching staff is the reported fact that only one graduate from the programme to date is still seeking employment.

### **III. RECOMMENDATIONS**

The review panel's purpose is to enhance and add value to this unique joint Master's degree programme in the field of real estate management. This report contains suggestions designed to improve the quality of studies and expand the competence of graduates. However, the section below does not repeat all of the ideas and recommendations outlined above under different headings within the document. Consequently, the report should be regarded as a unified attempt in terms of the overall comments, proposals and ideas put forward. What follows is a reiteration some of the proposals referenced earlier in the text.

1. The distinctions in the curricula as between the Master's programme in Real Estate Management offered by VGTU and this double degree provided in conjunction with BSTU requires further analysis to establish the rationale for the substantially different approach being adopted towards the provision of what is basically a similar qualification.

2. The number of learning outcomes associated with the programme is considered to be excessive. In the case of at least the two modules identified earlier in this report, it can be claimed that the learning outcomes and syllabus content are overambitious and worthy of further review.

3. Outlined under the heading 'Curriculum' above are key proposals intended to enrich the overall teaching and learning process and strengthen the qualification. In this context, and without changing their focus, it is considered that many of the subject names in English need amendment to reflect the more commonly used international titles for similar syllabus content.

4. Staff associated with the delivery of the joint degree are highly qualified and experienced. The teachers should make sure that they are using the latest technology for pedagogical purposes and avail of all opportunities for continuous personal and professional development. More regular communication between VGTU academic staff and their Belarusian counterparts is strongly advisable.

5. The international dimension of research undertaken by BSTU lecturers needs to be expanded through activities such as participation in conferences abroad and publications in peer-reviewed international journals.

6. The introduction of more practically based, real-life projects for student completion is of major importance. Such assignments, preferably with an international dimension, could be commissioned by employers in the area of real estate management who would benefit from the solutions arrived at by students, under staff supervision.

7. Comments made above about the student assessment process are designed to prompt an internal discussion with regard to aspects such as: the necessity for all Studijų kokybės vertinimo centras

tests/assignments currently being administered, the links between each assessment instrument and learning outcomes as understood by students, the desirability of a greater number of integrated assignments, the suitability of each assessment instrument for measuring the defined learning outcomes, and the generous scoring system currently applied in marking students' theses.

8. While the panel can testify to the high standard of facilities and resources in VGTU, it is also reiterated that similar-type infrastructure exists in BSTU, thereby helping to assure study programme quality. However, the maintenance of this type of learning environment cannot be taken for granted and will require ongoing attention and further investment on the part of both Universities.

9. Arrangements for the integration of theory and practice could be improved by a renewal of the work experience concept for students which was last implemented in 2013. While BSTU students have participated in conferences in the past, publications from their involvement in such events appear to have ceased in 2012.

10. Student mobility from Belarus to Lithuania may not always be easy for a variety of reasons, as was mentioned above. However, certain defined requirements must be adhered to in line with the terms of the partnership agreement between the two Universities. To compensate for the lack of visiting lecturers to BSTU, wider use should be made of video conferencing and other technologically based means in order to capture relevant international expertise.

11. The involvement of social partners in both countries and their goodwill towards the programme reflects well on progress and achievements to date. Every effort should be made to ensure that the input of these key stakeholders, including Alumni is availed of on a continuous basis for the further development of the programme.

12. There should be a much stronger emphasis on not just the further development of students' analytical skills but also their competence in terms of innovative and creative thinking skills. This development should extend to an involvement in the development of new policy models as well as an appraisal of those already in existence.

#### **IV. SUMMARY**

This Joint Study Programme represents an impressive example of cooperation between two neighbouring countries which have a long history of working together but which have different institutional arrangements, one within and the other outside of the EU, and different educational systems, one Bologna compliant and the other not obliged to be compliant( the panel, however, is given to understand that BSTU is currently modernising its academic models in line with the principles of the Bologna process). Individual national standards, quality assurance policies, and approaches to some components such as examinations and theses compound the distinctions between the two educational systems. VGTU and BSTU are to be commended for this unique development initiative, leading to the important double degree opportunity.

Levels of responsibility and tasks within the partnership agreement are explained in terms of coordination and decision making by the establishment of a Consortium of VGTU and BSTU representatives responsible for the programme content and its implementation at subject level, and the sustainability and institutional anchoring of studies at University level. BSTU is committed to providing quality programmes benchmarked to high international standards in an intellectually rich and diverse learning environment, while VGTU academic standards and quality assurance practices are well known and highly respected. As referred to above, the Consortium established a Joint Programme Board with 'the authority and primary responsibility for overseeing programme development and delivery'. This committee meets at least once a year, although decisions are also made between meetings through electronic communication. VGTU is the Coordinating Institution with responsibility for general administration and finance. The management structures and interconnections between VGTU and BSTU for the implementation of the programme are challenging and require "consensus, close collaboration, flexible and timely decision-making by the Board' given the 'rapidly changing requirements and legal acts regulating education at national level in Lithuania and Belarus".

The outcome of many regular meetings with real estate associations and related labour market representatives is a valuable source of information about the sector which is used in a number of ways, including the promotion of the programme. Job prospects and career opportunities for graduates are good in both countries. The Distance Learning mode of delivery was chosen as the most suitable for international and part-time mature students. The quality assurance process requires and ensures that internal and external evaluations of the programme

occur regularly. These are central and crucial to the ongoing development of this programme. Internal evaluations are carried out routinely as part of the annual review by the Study Programme Committee and other bodies, making use of relevant data and information.

In the absence of hiring foreign professors due to lack of financial resources in Belarus the ‘international orientation of the programme’ is enhanced through advising students to view open source videos from the best Universities around the world. Students are also encouraged to participate in Erasmus and other intensive learning projects as part of high-level international mobility. However, the response has been very limited to date. The use of the Russian language and a scarcity of ensuing publications represents a challenge in terms of the availability of wider reading material for students.

VGTU and BSTU stakeholders, management, teaching and support staff are represented in the various bodies involved in the programme, as outlined above. In addition, membership of the Study Programme Committee specifically includes a representative of the social partners and a student member. The social partners of both Universities are very supportive of the programme and value it highly. BSTU cooperates with public and corporate bodies, non-governmental associations and the educational scientific-production centre in Belarus and a similar approach is adopted by VGTU. Graduates influence developments in learning outcomes and suggestions based on their knowledge and experience, their delivery of lectures, and their influence on the selection of appropriate thesis research projects are greatly appreciated. The latter contain challenging topics oriented to the solution of practical issues which are in line with the top priority trends in real estate management or related areas. In this context, the establishment of a comprehensive Alumnus Association should be highly beneficial.

The Belarusian alumni who engaged with the review panel in discussion were enthusiastic about the programme and are keen to assist in improving it. They favour more face-to-face contact between students and teachers, in spite of the effectiveness of virtual, online and other modern forms of technical communications involved in the distance learning system. They spoke of the many benefits accruing to graduates, including a greater understanding and insight into the Belarusian and Lithuanian real estate markets and the establishment of personal contacts. The employers are involved in the effective management of the programme team and they believe that more meetings of the Joint Programme Board and the Study Programme Committee should take place in Minsk.

Students can influence and are engaged in the decision-making process, individually or through the Student Body, one of whose functions is to improve this and other study programmes. The panel members were informed by BSTU student representatives that the programme would benefit from a more practical focus. They value the unique opportunity to

experience EU cutting-edge knowledge, teaching methodologies, case studies, as well as individual and group projects.

The review panel wishes to thank the staff of both Universities for the arrangements made to facilitate the review process. The kindness and courtesy shown to us is much appreciated. We wish all associated with this double degree study opportunity every success in the future, and express the hope that the graduates will continue to make a significant impact in real estate management, not only in their respective countries but also internationally as well.

## V. GENERAL ASSESSMENT

The study programme Real Estate Management (state code – 628N20002) at Vilnius Gediminas Technical University and Belarusian State Technological University is given **positive** evaluation.

*Study programme assessment in points by evaluation areas.*

No.	Evaluation Area	Evaluation of an area in points*
1.	Programme aims and learning outcomes	3
2.	Curriculum design	3
3.	Teaching staff	3
4.	Facilities and learning resources	4
5.	Study process and students' performance assessment	3
6.	Programme management	3
	<b>Total:</b>	<b>19</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:	Mr John Cusack
Grupės nariai: Team members:	Mr Damien Courtney
	Asst. prof. Brigita Baltača
	Assoc. prof. Rasa Apanavičienė
	Ms Kamilia Puncevič

**VILNIAUS GEDIMINO TECHNIKOS UNIVERSITETO PIRMOIOS PAKOPOS  
STUDIJŲ PROGRAMOS NEKILNOJAMOJO TURTO VADYBA (VALSTYBINIS KODAS  
– 628N20002) 2017-05-09 EKSPERTINIO VERTINIMO IŠVADŲ NR. SV4-81 IŠRAŠAS**

<...>

**V. APIBENDRINAMASIS ĮVERTINIMAS**

Vilniaus Gedimino technikos universiteto studijų programa *Nekilnojamojo turto vadyba* (valstybinis kodas – 628N20002) vertinama **teigiamai**.

Eil. Nr.	Vertinimo sritis	Srities įvertinimas, balais*
1.	Programos tikslai ir numatomi studijų rezultatai	3
2.	Programos sandara	3
3.	Personalas	3
4.	Materialieji ištekliai	4
5.	Studijų eiga ir jos vertinimas	3
6.	Programos vadyba	3
	<b>Iš viso:</b>	<b>19</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)

<...>

**IV. SANTRAUKA**

Ši jungtinė studijų programa yra puikus dviejų kaimyninių šalių, kurios turi ilgą bendro darbo istoriją, tačiau skirtinges institucines sąrangas, bendradarbiavimo pavyzdys. Viena iš šalių yra ES narė, o kita – nėra, viena dirba pagal Bolonijos procesą, kita nėra įsipareigojusi pagal jį dirbtį (tačiau, ekspertų supratimu, BVTU šiuo metu savo akademinius modelius modernizuoją pagal Bolonijos proceso principus). Skiriasi šių dviejų švietimo sistemų nacionaliniai standartai, kokybės užtikrinimo politika ir požiūris į kai kuriuos elementus, tokius kaip egzaminai ir baigiamieji darbai. VGTU ir BVTU reikia pagirti už šią unikalią plėtros iniciatyvą, kuria studentams suteikiama svarbi galimybė įgyti dvigubą laipsnį.

Partnerystės sutartyje atsakomybės lygis ir užduotys paaiškinamos pagal koordinavimą ir sprendimų priėmimą įsteigiant VGTU ir BVTU atstovų konsorciumą, kuris yra atsakingas už programos turinį ir jo įgyvendinimą pagal dalykus, taip pat už tvarumą ir studijų įtraukimą į institucijas universiteto lygmeniu. BVTU įsipareigoja vykdyti kokybiškas programas pagal tarptautinius standartus intelektualiai turtingoje ir skirtingoje mokymosi aplinkoje, o VGTU akademiniai standartai ir kokybės užtikrinimo praktika yra gerai žinomi bei labai gerbiami. Kaip minėta pirmiau, konsorciumas įsteigė Jungtinės programos tarybą, kuri „yra įgaliota ir kurios pagrindinė atsakomybė – prižiūrėti programos plėtrą bei vykdymą“. Šis komitetas susitinka bent kartą per metus, o sprendimai tarp susirinkimų priimami bendraujant elektroninėmis ryšio priemonėmis. VGTU yra koordinuojančioji institucija, atsakinga už bendrajį administravimą ir finansus. Valdymo struktūros ir vidiniai ryšiai tarp VGTU ir BVTU dėl programos įgyvendinimo

kelia iššūkių ir tam reikia, kad „Taryba rastų bendrą sutarimą, artimai bendradarbiautų, lanksčiai ir laiku priimtų sprendimus“, atsižvelgiant į „greitai besikeičiančius reikalavimus ir su švietimu susijusius nacionalinius teisės aktus Lietuvoje bei Baltarusijoje“.

Rengiant reguliarus susitikimus su nekilnojamojo turto asociacijomis bei atitinkamais darbo rinkos atstovais gaunama vertingos informacijos apie sektorį, kuri naudojama įvairiais tikslais, iškaitant ir programai reklamuoti. Absolventų darbo perspektyvos ir karjeros galimybės abiejose šalyse yra palankios. Tarptautinių ir ištęstinių studijų brandiems studentams pasirinkta teikiti studijų programą nuotoliniu būdu. Kokybės užtikrinimo procesas reikalauja ir užtikrina, kad reguliariai būtų vykdomas programos vidinis ir išorinis vertinimas. Tai pagrindinis ir būtinis šios programos nuolatinio tobulinimo aspektas. Vidiniai vertinimai atliekami reguliarai, tai – dalis Studijų programos komiteto ir jo organų vykdomo metinio vertinimo, atliekamo pagal susijusius duomenis bei informaciją.

Kadangi Baltarusijos universitetas dėl finansinių išteklių trūkumo nesamdo profesorių iš užsienio, „tarptautinė programos orientacija“ skatinama studentams patariant peržiūrėti laisvai prieinamus geriausiųjų pasaulio universitetų vaizdo įrašus. Studentai taip pat skatinami dalyvauti „Erasmus“ programoje ir kituose intensyvaus mokymosi projektuose, kurie yra intensyvaus tarptautinio judumo dalis. Tačiau iki šiol norą dalyvauti šiuose projektuose pareiškė tik nedidelė dalis studentų. Rusų kalbos vartojimas ir skelbiamu leidinių stygius rodo, kad studentams gauti daugiau literatūros šaltinių yra iššūkis.

VGTU ir BVTU socialiniai dalininkai, vadovybė, dėstytojai ir pagalbinis personalas atstovaujamas įvairiuose pirmiau minėtuose programos organuose. Be to, Studijų programos komitete dalyvauja socialinių partnerių ir studentų atstovai. Abiejų universitetų socialiniai partneriai intensyviai remia šią studijų programą ir labai ją vertina. BVTU bendradarbiauja su valstybinėmis ir privačiomis institucijomis, nevyriausybinėmis asociacijomis ir Baltarusijos švietimo bei mokslo gamybiniu centru, VGTU taiko panašų metodą. Absolventai padeda tobulinti studijų rezultatus, labai vertinami jų žiniomis ir patirtimi pagrįsti pasiūlymai, jų dėstomos paskaitos, taip pat jų nuomonė renkantis atitinkamus baigiamųjų darbų mokslinių tyrimų projektus. Šių projektų temos būna susijusios su praktinių problemų sprendimais, siejamais su svarbiausiomis nekilnojamojo turto vadybos ar panašių sričių tendencijomis. Šiame kontekste būtų itin naudinga išteigtis visapusiskus klausimus sprendžiančią absolventų asociaciją.

Baltarusijos universiteto absolventai, kurie bendravo su vertinimo komisija, entuziastingai kalbėjo apie programą ir norėtų prisdėti ją tobulinant. Jie labiau pritarė asmeniniam dėstytojų ir studentų bendravimui nei virtualioms, internetinėms ir kitoms modernioms technologinėms bendravimo formoms, naudojamoms nuotolinei dėstymo sistemai. Jie kalbėjo apie daugelį privalumų, kuriuos įgyja absolventai, iškaitant didesnį supratimą ir ižvalgas apie Baltarusijos ir Lietuvos nekilnojamojo turto rinkas bei galimybę užmegzti asmeninius kontaktus. Darbdaviai dalyvauja efektyviame programos grupės valdyme, jų manymu, reikėtų rengti daugiau Jungtinės programos tarybos ir Studijų programos komiteto susitikimų Minske.

Studentai gali daryti įtaką ir dalyvauja sprendimų priėmimo procese, individualiai ar per Studentų atstovybę, kurios viena iš funkcijų yra tobulinti šią bei kitas studijų programas. BVTU studentų atstovai informavo ekspertus, kad programai būtų naudinga, jei būtų taikomas labiau praktiškas požiūris. Jie vertina unikalią galimybę gauti naujausią ES žinių, dėstymo metodiką, atlikti atvejų analizę, taip pat vykdysti atskirus ir grupinius projektus.

Vertinimo grupė abiejų universitetų personalui dėkoja už organizacinus vertinimo proceso įgyvendinimo aspektus. Labai vertiname mums išreikštą geranoriškumą ir pagarbą. Visiems su šia dvigubo laipsnio studijų galimybe susijusiems asmenims linkime sėkmės ateityje, taip pat viliamės, kad absolventai toliau darys reikšmingą poveikį nekilnojamojo turto vadybai ne tik savo šalyse, bet ir tarptautiniu mastu.

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## **II. REKOMENDACIJOS**

Vertinimo grupės tikslas – sustiprinti šią unikalią jungtinę nekilnojamojo turto vadybos magistro studijų programą ir padidinti jos vertę. Šiose išvadose pateikiami pasiūlymai, skirti studijų kokybei pagerinti ir absolventų kompetencijai didinti. Tolesnėje pastraipoje nekartojomos visos pirmiau šiame dokumente po skirtingomis antraštėmis minėtos idėjos ir rekomendacijos. Taigi vertinimo išvadas reikėtų traktuoti kaip jungtinį bandymą pateikti komentarus, pasiūlymus bei idėjas ateičiai. Toliau kartojami keli anksčiau tekste pateikti pasiūlymai.

1. Reikia toliau analizuoti VGTU vykdomos nekilnojamojo turto vadybos magistro studijų programos ir šios dvigubo laipsnio studijų programos, kuri teikiama kartu su BVTU, turinio skirtumus tam, kad būtų galima nustatyti loginį pagrindą, kodėl taikomas gana skirtinges požiūris į iš esmės panašią kvalifikaciją.
2. Su programa siejamų studijų rezultatų skaičius laikomas per dideliu. Kalbant bent apie du anksčiau šiose išvadose nurodytus modulius galima teigti, kad studijų rezultatai ir atskirų dalykų turinys yra per daug ambicingi ir juos derėtų dar kartą peržiūrėti.
3. Pastraipoje „Programos sandara“ pateikti esminiai pasiūlymai, skirti papildyti bendrą dėstymo ir mokymosi procesą bei sustiprinti kvalifikaciją. Šiame kontekste manoma, kad reikėtų taisyti daugelį dalykų pavadinimų anglų kalba, nekeičiant jų esmės, kad juose atsispindėtų panašaus atskirų dalykų turinio įprastesni tarptautiniai pavadinimai.
4. Jungtinę programą dėstantis personalas yra itin kvalifikuotas ir patyręs. Dėstytojai pedagoginiai tikslais turėtų naudoti pačias naujausias technologijas ir pasinaudoti visomis galimybėmis nuolat tobulėti asmeninėje ir profesinėje srityse. VGTU akademiniams personalui rekomenduojama reguliarai bendrauti su Baltarusijos kolegomis.
5. BVTU dėstytojų vykdomi tarptautiniai tyrimai turėtų būti praplėsti dalyvaujant konferencijose užsienyje ir skelbiant publikacijas kolegų vertinamuose tarptautiniuose leidiniuose.
6. Itin svarbu studentams skirti vykdyti praktiskai pagrįstus, realius projektus. Tokios užduotys, pageidautina, vykdomos tarptautiniu mastu, nekilnojamojo turto valdymo srityje galėtų būti skiriamos darbdavių, taip jie gautų naudos iš personalui prižiūrint studentų sugalvotų sprendimų.
7. Ankstesni komentarai apie studentų vertinimo procesą skirti iniciuoti vidinę diskusiją apie tai, ar būtini visi dabar teikiami testai ir užduotys, sąsajos tarp kiekvienos vertinimo priemonės ir studijų rezultatų, kaip juos supranta studentai, ar pageidaujama daugiau integruotų užduočių, ar tinkama kiekviena vertinimo priemonė nustatytiems studijų rezultatams išmatuoti bei studentų baigiamujų darbų vertinimui taikoma plati vertinimo sistema.
8. Ekspertai gali patvirtinti, kad VGTU materialieji ištekliai atitinka aukštus standartus, taip pat teigama, kad panaši struktūra yra ir BVTU, taip užtikrinama studijų programos kokybė. Tačiau tokio studijų aplinkos palaikymo negalima vertinti kaip savaimė suprantamo dalyko, tam abu universitetai turi nuolat skirti dėmesio ir investicijų.

9. Teorijos ir praktikos integravimas galėtų būti aktyvesnis, studentams atnaujinant darbo patirties sąvoką, kuri paskutinjį kartą atnaujinta 2013 m. Nors BVTU studentai praeityje yra dalyvavę konferencijose, informacija apie jų dalyvavimą šiuose renginiuose nebeteikiama nuo 2012 m.
10. Kaip minėta anksciau, studentų judumas iš Baltarusijos į Lietuvą ne visada lengvai vykdomas dėl įvairių priežasčių. Vis dėlto abiejų universitetų partnerystės sutartyje nustatyta tam tikrų reikalavimų reikia laikytis. Siekiant kompensuoti kviečių dėstytojų iš BVTU trūkumą, reikėtų plačiau naudoti vaizdo konferencijų ir kitas technologines priemones tam, kad būtų galima įgyti panašios tarptautinės kompetencijos.
11. Socialinių partnerių iš abiejų šalių įsitrukimas ir jų geranoriškumas programos atžvilgiu puikiai atsispindi jos pažangoje bei iki šiol atskleistuose pasiekimuose. Reikia imtis visų pastangų norint užtikrinti, kad šių pagrindinių socialinių dalininkų, įskaitant absolventus, indėlis būtų nuolatinis ir programa būtų nuolat tobulinama.
12. Reikėtų gerinti ne tik studentų analitinius įgūdžius, bet ir jų gebėjimą inovatyviai ir kūrybiškai mąstyti. Tobulinant šiuos įgūdžius reikėtų kurti naujus politikos modelius ir vertinti jau sukurtuosius.

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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.

Vertėjos rekvizitai (vardas, pavardė, parašas)