



CENTER FOR QUALITY ASSESSMENT IN HIGHER EDUCATION

OVERVIEW REPORT FOR MEDICINE STUDY FIELD

2022 year of the evaluation

Prepared by the chairperson of the expert panel

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I. INTRODUCTION

The overview is based on the external quality evaluation of the *medicine* study field in the following Lithuanian Higher Education Institutions (HEIs): *Lithuanian University of Health Sciences and Vilnius University*.

The external evaluation was organised by the Lithuanian Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education (SKVC).

Comprehensive external evaluation reports were prepared separately for first and second cycle field studies with detailed evaluation marks. They point out strengths and weaknesses and conclude with recommendations. This overview focuses on the main findings of the external evaluation of the *medicine* field from a general point of view.

Based on the findings of the evaluation, the expert panel have come to a decision to give a **positive** evaluation to the *Lithuanian University of Health Sciences second cycle and Integrated studies*; and *Vilnius University second cycle and Integrated studies*.

On the basis of external evaluation report of the study field, SKVC takes a decision to accredit study field and cycle for 7 years.

II. STUDY FIELD OVERVIEW BY EVALUATION AREAS

3.1. Intended and achieved learning outcomes and curriculum

The learning outcomes of the evaluated study programmes in both Universities are clear and well defined, and the teaching methodology fits the intended outcomes and attention is being paid to the professional development of teachers. Students feel that their feedback is used to improve teaching and that teachers listen to their suggestions for improvement. The flexibility of the study programme in terms of electives is improved on paper, but, in practice, it is still limited. Students could be more involved in the programme but this is now not possible because of the high workload, especially for the Second cycle students. Social partners should have a genuine impact on the content of the study programmes.

3.2. Links between science (art) and studies

Funding has been made available for more PhDs in medicine and the launch of a new doctorate school for medicine. This strengthens the scientific climate. Publication in international journals is promoted, but more scientific depth could improve the quality of the program. There is no clear policy related to new trends in Open Science and Science for Society. Opportunities for student exchange are available but still restricted in practice.

3.3. Student admission and support

Selection of the students takes place according to legal and institutional standards. Students in the field have support concerning financial support, accommodation services as well as psychological support. They also have an opportunity to participate in student activities and services for students with special needs. Students are happy with their studies in general, but the stress levels among students are high. Especially, second cycle students experience high stress levels because they often have a job alongside their study.

3.4. Teaching and learning, student performance and graduate employment

Academic integrity, tolerance, and non-discrimination policies are really well established and implemented, and the study process is adapted to the needs of persons with disabilities in both Universities. The monitoring and assessment of students' study progress are based both on formal and informal approaches. The graduates of the integrated Medicine curricula may continue their studies in the medical residency programme in Lithuania and abroad and in doctoral degree studies in biomedical sciences at Lithuanian and foreign universities. Statements and appeals regarding research and study issues are examined by special Dispute resolution commissions. The procedures are transparent.

3.5. Teaching staff

All the staff the expert panel met, whether academic, clinical, or administrative, were motivated and committed to their roles. The composition of academic staff is in line with the Lithuanian legal requirements in terms of qualifications and experience, and the research activities of the teachers are appropriate. There are no mentoring programs for (young) teachers and interdisciplinary competencies are not considered in teacher training. Developing different career models for teachers could be considered: focus on research skills or focus on teaching skills.

3.6. Learning facilities and resources

Both Universities house an impressive number of auditoria, rooms, laboratories, simulation rooms, but the conditions of some classrooms, and facilities (practical laboratories) especially at Vilnius University are outdated and need improvement. The clinical laboratories at the hospitals are well maintained and equipped providing a good environment for the programmes. The Libraries are sufficient.

3.7. Study quality management and public information

Study quality assurance systems in both Universities fulfil the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area and are related to the Universities' mission. There have organized courses for teaching staff to train and improve their teaching,

pedagogical, and communication competencies, but systems for monitoring staff achievements are not fully introduced. Vilnius University and Lithuanian University of Health Sciences disseminate information about quality assurance, good study quality practice, and student involvement

III. EXAMPLES OF EXCELLENCE

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

MAIN STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE IMPROVEMENT IN MEDICINE STUDY FIELD

- **Strategic recommendations for Higher Education Institutions (at the institutional level):**
 1. System for monitoring staff achievements should be organized and introduced.
 2. Possibilities for students to personalize their study program should be improved.
 3. Structural tutor system for all students should be set up.
- **Strategic recommendations for the Ministry of Education and Science and Sport (at the national level):**
 1. It is recommended to develop a policy related to new trends in Open Science and Science for Society.

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