

Vilnius Art Academy

Architecture Study Programs

FINAL REPORT

61205M103 Architecture	(Bachelor of Architecture)
62405M103 Architecture and Heritage Preservation	(Master of Architecture)
62405M106 Architecture of Buildings	(Master of Architecture)
62105M105 Architecture of Interior	(Master of Architecture)
62405M104 Architecture of Landscape	(Master of Architecture)

Head of the group: prof. Spyros Amourgis

Members: prof. Gerhard Meyer
prof. András Ferkai
prof. Jānis Krastiņš
assoc. prof. Petras Grecevičius

Vilnius
2008 m. kovas 9 d.

Profile of programmes of Architecture study field

Title of study programme	Architecture	Architecture and heritage preservation	Architecture of Buildings
State code	61205M103	62405M103	62405M106
Kind of study¹	U	M	M
Mode of study² (duration in years)	80	F (2)	F (2)
Volume of study programme in credits	160	80	80
Degree and (or) professional qualification to be awarded	Bachelor of Architecture	Master of Architecture	Master of Architecture
Programme registration date, order No.	1997-05-19, Nr. 565	1997-05-19, Nr. 565	1997-05-19, Nr. 565

Title of study programme	Architecture of Interior	LandArchitecture of Interior
State code	62105M105	62405M104
Kind of study¹	M	M
Mode of study² (duration in years)	F (2)	F (2)
Volume of study programme in credits	80	80
Degree and (or) professional qualification to be awarded	Master of Architecture	Master of Architecture
Programme registration date, order No.	1997-05-19, Nr. 565	1997-05-19, Nr. 565

¹ **NU** – Non-university studies; **U** – Undergraduate studies; **M** – Masters' studies;
SP – Specialised Professional studies; **I** – Integrated studies;

² **F** – Full-time; **PE** – Part-time (Evening); **PX** – Part-time (Extramural).

1. Introduction

The visiting group of experts had the opportunity to spend time with students, alumni, teaching staff and employers related to the study program mentioned above. The experts were made to feel welcome by the Rector and the Vice-Rector of the Academy and the faculty of Architecture. The experts held discussions, conducted interviews, visited all the premises and were shown samples of current and previous works of students.

2. Aims and goals of the study programs :

The undergraduate program's goals and aims are to prepare architects for the profession with a rounded education (see 2. Paragraph on page 6 [of 2.1.1] description of the Self Assessment Report. However the experts respectfully disagree with the statement that the Bachelor is sufficient «... to prepare for independent work ... or teacher in a higher education institute ...».

The aims and objectives of the master's study program of Architecture are appropriate as described in the last paragraph of page 19 of the Self Assessment Report.

The main aims and objectives of the master's study program of History and Theory of Architecture are to provide the skills and knowledge leading to specialization and certification by the Department of Cultural Heritage, as described in the last paragraph of page 28 of the Self Assessment Report.

3. Analysis of the programs:

61205M103 Architecture (Bachelor of Architecture)

3.1.1. Structure, contents and study methods

- The breakdown of the courses into categories of general education, elective subjects and special subjects is useful but must be revised to meet the requirements of the law (see Appendix 6) regarding credit points and electives.
- The value to be included of the course "Managing of Personal Funds" is unclear to the visiting experts.
- The course "History of Art & Architecture is split up into different subjects and the allotted time for it is too short. Normally it is presented comprehensively and more time is allotted.

- The experts were not given a clear picture neither of the type and nature nor of the number and the sequence of the projects. The self-assessment report did not provide enough information about this issue.
- The course “History of Architecture” should be included in the section of core subjects.
- The self-assessment report did not provide any information about several courses in the section of general education.

3.1.2. Execution of studies and support for students:

- According to students’ interviews, teamwork is not encouraged by the teaching staff and there is a lack of space and working facilities. The experts think that these facts are having a very negative effect on the effectiveness of teaching as horizontal learning is an important element in architectural education. So this should be corrected.
- According to students’ interviews, there is no public assessment or presentations of the results of students’ works and there is no transparent feedback for the students. The experts think that these facts have a very negative effect on the success of the education and the horizontal learning. So this should be corrected.
- The experts were shown students’ works of good or better grades but not the works of average or lesser standard that were asked for beforehand. This prevented a more realistic view and evaluation of the method of quality evaluation of students’ work by the visiting experts.

3.1.3. Variation in the number of students

The number of admitted students over the period time monitored according to the self-assessment report shows an increase. The general tendency of the number of students is to increase (from 100 in 2002 to 138 in 2006). There are overall 138 students in the all year (students only in day school form). In final year there are 41 students.

There was no information about the number of graduates provided for evaluation by the experts. The general tendency of the number of students is to increase (from 100 in 2002 to 138 in 2006). There are overall 138 students in the all year (students only in day school form). In final year there are 41 students.

3.1.4. Teaching staff

The teaching staff appear to be active doing research and there is a substantial number of them who are active in professional practice.

3.1.5. Advantages and disadvantages of the program:

The visiting group of experts understands the difference of the architectural curriculum offered by an academy of Arts compared to other institutes of higher education. The profile of the program carries the stamp of the presence of various fields of Art which is expressed by the strong emphasis given to composition within the curriculum. The visiting experts consider it excessive to extend this subject to more than the first 3 semesters of the curriculum. It is important that the emphasis has to be shifted to design and that the free time and reduced workload of the students should be allotted to issues of design of various building types and consequently increasing the number of building design exercises.

The financing of the program is inadequate and the salaries of teachers are unjustifiably low. Teachers work with great devotion and at the expense of higher personal well-being.

62405M104 Landscape Architecture (Master of Architecture)

3.2.1. Structure, contents and study methods

The list of courses within proposed curriculum except four courses is exactly the same as the proposed list of courses for the other Master Programs (please see attached analysis in Appendix No 1) A deepening (in-depth) Master program demands to be a much more extensive and intensive curriculum in the area of specialization.

3.2.2. Execution of studies and support for students:

- According to students' interviews, teamwork is not encouraged by the teaching staff and there is a lack of space and working equipment. The experts think that these facts have a very negative effect on study success because horizontal learning is not implemented in this program.

- According to students' interviews, there is no public assessment or presentations of the results of students' works and there is no public critique and feedback for the students. The experts think that these facts have a very negative effect on the study success of the program because of the lack of horizontal learning.
- The experts were shown students' works of good or better grades but not the works of average or lesser standard that were asked for beforehand. This prevented a more realistic view and evaluation of the method of quality evaluation of students' work by the visiting experts.

3.2.3. Variation in the number of students

There were only two students in the study year 2006/2007. In the final year there are no students. Further data were not provided.

3.2.4. Teaching staff

The information provided for evaluation by the group of experts was not sufficient. Teachers of 6 subjects are not professors or assoc.professors (Applied botany, Landscape science and ..., Planning of territories,...etc).

"No less than 10 per cent of the volume of Master's programme must be taught by professors whose trend of research conforms to the subjects taught." (APPROVED by Ministry of Education and Science, the Republic of Lithuania 26 October 2000 Order No. 1326)

3.2.5. Advantages and disadvantages of the program:

The students' projects shown to the experts did not express the full range of landscape architecture requirements and do not demonstrate in-depth expertise in the field of landscape architecture.

The financing of the program is inadequate and the salaries of teachers are unjustifiably low. Teachers work with great devotion and at the expense of higher personal well-being.

3.3. Program 62105M105 Interior Architecture (Master of Architecture)

3.3.1. Structure, contents and study methods

The list of courses within proposed curriculum except one course (which isn't specific for the program) is exactly the same as the proposed list of courses for the other Master Programs. (please see attached analysis in Appendix No 1) A deepening (in-depth) Master program demands to be a much more extensive and intensive curriculum in the area of specialization.

3.3.2. Execution of studies and support for students:

The visiting group of experts find the support for students regarding literature very poor. There was no further decisive information provided. According to students' interviews, teamwork is not encouraged and it appears that there is no detailed information of sequence and type of exercises.

3.3.3. Variation in the number of students

There were six students in the study year 2006/2007 but finally only one remained and continued her studies. There are overall 6 students in the all year (students only in day school form), but in the final year there are no students.

3.3.4. Teaching staff

In the analytical research and final project category of courses no specialists as faculty have been reported. In the other courses (as mentioned above) the same faculty is listed for all the master programs. The fact that they have not got specialists is reflected in the design of the curriculum.

3.3.5. Advantages and disadvantages of the program:

The experts have come to the conclusion that the study program in its actual form has no advantages. A further disadvantage is that there is a similar study program at the same institute at the undergraduate level on Interior Design. Finally the premises of the Department are not sufficient to host this MA program. (There is a shortage of workplace and working stations).

3.4. Program 62405M106 Architecture of Buildings (Master of Architecture)

3.4.1. Structure, contents and study methods

- The structure and content of the study program provides a broad spectrum of courses; the focus of all these courses should be the design exercises and the design thesis (please see also Paragraph 2 on objectives and goals of the previous program).

- Some of the subjects are not directly related to the field of architecture (e. g. History of Film, History of Theatre).
- The options of choice for the students among the elective subjects are rather limited (19 proposed electives ► 30 credits) whereas the experts find important subjects missing (see Appendix 1).
- The visiting experts are of the opinion that the Master of Architecture (Building) must advance the knowledge and design abilities of the students who have a first level education in Architecture.

3.4.2. Execution of studies and support for students:

The visiting group of experts finds the support for students regarding bibliographic references very poor. There was no further specific information provided. According to students' interviews, teamwork is not encouraged and it appears that there is no detailed information of sequence and type of exercises.

3.4.3. Variation in the number of students

The general tendency of the number of students is to stability (from 17 in 2002 to 18 in 2007). There are overall 18 students in the all year (students only in day school form), but in the final year there are 10 students.

3.4.4. Teaching staff

The teaching staff is sufficiently active in the research area and there is a substantial part of them who are active in current professional practice. The experts are of the opinion that it will be useful to include also more recently graduated architects of various experiences and backgrounds and prepare the next generation of teachers.

3.4.5. Advantages and disadvantages of the program:

The visiting experts see the potential for a high profile in educating artist-architects on an advanced level. The presence of various fields of Art can and should be an inspiration for the study program, strengthening its profile even more. Beside these comments additional comments for improvement are mentioned above (see 3.4.1) regarding development of the curriculum.

The financing of the program is limited and the salaries of teachers are reported to be very low. Teachers work with great devotion and at the expense of higher personal well-being.

3.5. Program 62405M103 Architecture and Heritage Protection (Master of Architecture)

3.5.1. Structure, contents and study methods

The list of courses within proposed curriculum except three courses is exactly the same as the proposed list of courses for the other Master Programs (please see attached analysis in Appendix No 1) A deepening (in-depth) Master program demands to be a much more extensive and intensive curriculum in the area of specialization.

3.5.2. Execution of studies and support for students:

- According to students' interviews, teamwork is not encouraged by the teaching staff and there is a lack of space and working equipment. The experts think that these facts have a great negative effect on study success because horizontal learning is not implemented in this program.
- According to students' interviews, there is no public assessment or presentations of the results of students' works and there is no transparent feedback for the students. The experts think that these facts also have a great negative effect on the success of the program because horizontal learning is not implemented.
- The experts were shown students' works of good or better grades but not the works of average or lesser standard that were required beforehand. This prevented a more realistic view and evaluation of general quality by the visiting experts.

3.5.3. Variation in the number of students

The number of students varies from six to ten across the period monitored (2002 – 2007). There are overall only 4 students in the all year and in the final year there are 2 students.

3.5.4. Teaching staff

It appeared that there were not enough experts in this area amongst the faculty. Teachers of heritage preservation subjects are only one professor, no more professors or assoc. professors for other speciality subjects (Research work, Projecting, Graduation work,...etc).

"No less than 10 per cent of the volume of Master's programme must be taught by professors whose trend

of research conforms to the subjects taught.” (APPROVED by Ministry of Education and Science, the Republic of Lithuania 26 October 2000 Order No. 1326)

3.5.5. Advantages and disadvantages of the program:

The experts find that without a sufficient number of experts in this area and with limited resources and facilities it is not advisable to go on with this Master program. The financing of the present program is inadequate and the salaries of teachers are reported very low. Teachers work with great devotion and at the expense of higher personal well-being.

4. Material conditions

- During interviews the students reported that there was a lack of space to work on the premises individually or in groups.
- The experts had visited the central library at another building but they recognized the need of a supporting and more extensive library on the premises.
The lack of such a supporting library (especially for the consulting of periodicals also after hours) was also mentioned by the students during interviews.
- The scarcity of PC stations and current software was reported by students as well as by teachers.

5. External relations

The faculty takes part in current exchange programs for students (e. g. ERASMUS) and teaching staff is very receptive to international co-operations.

6. Feedback

The visiting group of experts had the opportunity to converse with institutional and private sector employers. The experts came to the conclusion that the graduates are in good demand and successful in finding employment. The main point was that the alumni are appreciated as employees particularly for their understanding of quality issues of design.

7. Internal assurance of study quality

Although all questionnaires filled in by students are very positive, during the interviews the students expressed some criticism. The reported issues of deficiency were:

- The lists of references/bibliographies and resources recommended by teaching staff should be more detailed and ought to be revised and updated.
- The students see a lack of input about the legal framework of their future profession.
- The students report a lack of discussion and participation during the project reviews.
- The students feel that they do not get good enough access to actual information about developments on the field of Architecture and expressed a special interest for the faculty to improve external relations.
- The students wished more electives.

8. General assessment of the programs within the study field

8.1. Recommendations to the higher education institution

1. The group of experts' recommendation is to concentrate all efforts of the Faculty on improving (a) the Bachelors and (b) the Masters programs. The Bachelors study program should be strengthened by means of restructuring the curriculum. The Experts find that the course of Architectural composition is too extended, whereas the one in the history of architecture is split into different subjects. It should be united and included into the section of core subjects, and generally further develop the opportunities of architectural studies in an Academy of Arts.

2. The Master's level should be improved by means of revising the existing master's program in "Architecture of Buildings" instead of expanding into four directions with limited human and material resources.

Taking specifically into consideration:

- the number of students in the existing masters study programs (Landscape Architecture, Interior Architecture and Architecture and Heritage Protection) is extremely small,
- the differences in the content of all master level study programs are insignificant,
- there are included only few subjects special in the area of study and relating to each programs,
- there is a number of subjects that are not included but are essential or at least highly recommended for each study program (in Landscape Architecture, Interior Architecture and Architecture and Heritage Protection),
- the above mentioned programs are not supported with sufficient and specialized teaching staff,

- the above mentioned programs in their present form offer not significant advantages,
- there is very poor support for students work (teaching spaces, library resources, literature/bibliographic references etc).

The group of experts doesn't find reasonable the further continuance of the existing study programs in Landscape Architecture, Interior Architecture and Architecture and Heritage Protection.

The group of experts recommends the broadening of only one general Master's study program in Architecture including in such a program subjects that provide possibility for the students to choose options in directions that broaden their knowledge, and professional know-how in different fields of architecture, such as Landscape Architecture, Interior Architecture and Conservation of Cultural Heritage. Pursuing directions in these fields of architecture can be implemented by including the general curriculum of master study program sections of optional subjects as recommended in the Appendix 1.

Remarks to VILNIUS ACADEMY OF FINE ARTS
second level (master) study programs
“Landscape Architecture”, “Interior Architecture”, “Architecture of Buildings”
and “Architecture and Heritage Protection”

In the following analysis, the second level (**master**) study programs are indicted as follows:

- [2] - Landscape Architecture;
- [3] - Interior Architecture;
- [4] - Architecture of Buildings;
- [5] - Architecture and Heritage Protection.

The group of experts recognized that there are a number the same courses in all study programs:

A. In the block of basic subjects:

- Scientific Research Methodology: in programmes [2], [3], [4], [5]³;
- Architectural Structural Systems: in programmes [2], [3], [4], [5];
- Methods of Computer Design: in programmes [2], [3], [4], [5]⁴;
- Methodology and Management of Design: in programmes [2], [3], [4], [5];
- Construction of Buildings: in programmes [2], [3], [4], [5]⁵;
- Engineering Systems of Buildings: in programmes [3], [4], [5];
- Planning of Territories: in programmes [2], [4], [5];
- Heritage Interior; in programmes [3], [4], [5]⁶;
- Restoration and Renovation of Constructions: in programmes [3], [4], [5];
- Environment Planning: in programmes [3], [4]⁷;

B. In the block of elective subjects:

All subjects in all programmes, with only few exceptions are the same.

The are only few exceptionally distinctive subjects to particular programs:

- For Programme [2]:
 - 1) Landscape science and nature protection;
 - 2) Applied Botany;
 - 3) Stylistic Development of Park Art;
 - 4) Methods of Landscape Analysis;
- For Programme [3]:

³ In [2] named „Research methodology”.

⁴ In [2] and [5] included in elective subjects. The title of the subject doesn't differ from the one of the undergraduate study programme.

⁵ The title of the subject doesn't differ from the one of the undergraduate study programme.

⁶ In the Course unit title named “Monument Interior”.

⁷ The title of the subject doesn't differ from the one of the undergraduate study programme.

Psychology in Management⁸;

● For Programme [4]:

none;

● For Programme [5]:

1) Historical Technologies and Conservation;

2) Architectural Research;

3) Methodology of Regeneration of Historical Cities.

The group of experts indicated a number of subjects that are compulsory or highly recommended to be included in the study programs. They are as follows:

* For Programme [2]: Regional Planning, History of Landscaping, Ecology, Dendrology, Geology, Outdoor Furniture, etc;

* For Programme [3]: History of Furniture, Furniture Design, Finishing Materials, Anthropometrics, Ergonomics, Psychology of Colouristic, etc;

* For Programme [4]: Typology of Buildings, Building materials, Theoretical Mechanics, Building Statistics, Steel, Timber and Reinforced concrete structures, Sustainable Constructions etc;

* For Programme [5]: Methodology of Conservation, Legal Framework in Conservation, Material Science, Documentation and Preservation of Cultural Heritage, Investigation of Buildings, etc.

The group of experts indicated that the titles of several subjects in graduate study programs don't differ from the ones of the undergraduate study programme (see footnotes 2, 3 and 5).

Some remarks should be made concerning particular subjects:

* Subject "Methods of Landscape Analysis" (Kraštovaidžio analizės metodai), as named in the table of the programme [2], in the Course unit title is named "Environmental Formation" (?). Content of the subject is described too briefly. List of recommended literature isn't satisfactory. For instance, master plan of a city can't be mentioned as didactic material or literary source. Bibliographical descriptions are incorrect.

* Content of the subject "Planning of Territories" (programmes [2], [4] and [5]) lacks theoretical background and deals mainly with legislative acts, listed also in the list of recommended literature but not available in the library of VAFA.

* Majority of the lists of recommended literature are incorrect or are totally formal. For instance, in the list of the subject "Scientific Research Methodology" (for the programmes [2], [3], 4 and [5]), which in the Course unit title is named more correctly "Methodology of Scientific Research", the list of literature contains 5 titles, but only [3] of them are actual books. Others are simple abstract indications of existence of scientific works in some institutions or sayings that one can find periodicals.

* The only less or more correct list of recommended literature is included in the description of the subject "Applied Botany" (for the programme [2]),

⁸ Isn't specific subject only for programme [3].

Appendix: Credits Breakdown

Extract from Ministerial Order:

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University undergraduate study programme (its volume being 160 credits) **shall consist of three groups of subjects** the volume of which for every trend of studies shall be determined by the regulations of the trend of studies. Determining the volume of the groups of subjects the following requirements must be observed:

24.1. The volume of **subjects of general university education (A)**– no less than **24** credits. No less than one third of the volume of subjects of this group must consist of fundamental disciplines of philosophy and world outlook, covering philosophical basics of the field of research or arts under studies. No less than another third of this subject group must consist of subjects of other fields of studies: in the study programmes of humanities, social sciences and arts – physical, biomedical or technological sciences, in study programmes of other fields – humanities, social sciences or arts.

24.2. The volume of **subjects of the basics of the study programme (B)** (usually from the main field of studies or arts) - no less than **40** credits.

24.3. The volume of **subjects of special training of the study programme (C)** (from the main field of studies or arts) –no less than **64** credits. This group shall include final examination and final work (project).

No less than **5 per cent (9 kr.)** of the volume of the study programme must be left for a student's free-chosen subjects which may be from another field of research or arts. **(LP)**

...

Credits Breakdown:

VAFA A – 28 kr, B – 60 kr, C – 72 kr LP – 6 kr

