



**MINISTER OF EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND SPORT OF THE REPUBLIC OF  
LITHUANIA**

**ORDER  
ON APPROVAL OF THE DESCRIPTOR OF THE STUDY FIELD OF THEOLOGY**

07 January 2021 No. V-15  
Vilnius

In accordance with Paragraph 11 of Article 53 of the Law on Higher Education and Research of the Republic of Lithuania:

1. I approve the Descriptor of the Study Field of Theology (enclosed).
2. I determine that the higher education institutions have to adjust their study programmes to the Descriptor of the Study Field of Theology approved by Clause 1 hereby until 01 September 2021.

Minister of Education, Science and Sport

Jurgita Šiugždiniė

APPROVED

by Order No. V-15 of the Minister of Education,  
Science and Sport of the Republic of Lithuania  
of 07 January 2021

## **DESCRIPTOR OF THE STUDY FIELD OF THEOLOGY**

### **CHAPTER I GENERAL PROVISIONS**

1. The Descriptor of the Study Field of Theology (hereinafter – Descriptor) regulates the special requirements for the study programmes in the study field of theology (N11) in the group of study fields of humanities (N). The Descriptor regulates the study field of religion in the scope not covered by the General Requirements for the Studies approved by Order No. V-1168 of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania of 30 December 2016 “On approval of the General Requirements for the Studies.”

2. The Descriptor’s requirements shall be applicable to the university study programmes of the first and second cycle that are conducted in a full-time and part-time study mode. The volume of the study credits has to satisfy the provisions of the General Requirements for the Studies, unless the particularity of the programme needed different volume of the credits according to the regulations of the content, organisation of studies of certain confession and qualification acquisition, and that need was substantiated.

3. The graduates of the study field of theology will acquire the following degrees:

3.1. the persons, who complete the university studies of the first cycle, receive bachelor’s degree in humanities that is in conformity with the sixth level of the Lithuanian Qualifications Framework and the European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning, and the first cycle of the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area attested by the bachelor’s diploma and its supplement issued by the higher education institution;

3.2. the persons, who complete the studies of the second cycle, receive master’s degree in humanities or licentiate of theology that is in conformity with the seventh level of the Lithuanian Qualifications Framework and the European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning, and the second cycle of the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area attested by the master’s diploma and its supplement issued by the higher education institution.

4. The studies of theology may also be provided as studies within the study programmes classified under two study fields and within interdisciplinary study programmes.

5. There are no special requirements established in the Descriptor for the persons, who want to be admitted to the university study programmes of the first cycle in the field of theology.

6. The persons, who have completed the university study programmes of the first cycle and satisfy the criteria established by the higher education institution, may be admitted to the study programmes of the second cycle in the field of theology. The requirements of studies compensating for differences and/or bridging courses are provided in the descriptors of particular study programmes of the second cycle. The persons, who apply for the studies of licentiate of the Catholic Theology, have to be graduates of the study programme of the first cycle approved by the Holy See.

7. The goals of the study field of theology:

7.1. the goal of the university studies of the first cycle is to prepare the specialists of theology of wide humanwise profile, who would be able to work in the places where wide general and theological education, and skills of theoretical thinking that enable solving the tasks raised in various areas of intellectual, spiritual and practical activities independently and competently are required from the employee;

7.2. the goal of the studies of the second cycle is to prepare the specialists of theology of high qualification, who would be ready to continue studying in the third cycle and to perform scientific research and analytical work in the research and higher education, public and private institutions and bodies, where the deep theoretical preparation and analytical thinking skills enabling independent formulation and creative solution of theoretical and practical problems in particular area are needed, depending on the character of the study programme (e.g., dogmatic theology, pastoral theology, history of the Church, canon law, etc.).

8. Upon completion of the studies in the field of theology, the graduates will be able to research, analyse, interpret, compare, adjust, reason, assess critically and/or evaluate the scientific and practical theological problems in various aspects in different social groups, different historical periods, on the basis of the faith heritage within the Church's context, and to work in various Church organisations, especially to organise and coordinate the pastoral care activities.

## **CHAPTER II CONCEPT AND SCOPE OF THE STUDY FIELD**

9. The field of theology includes the theology based on the studies of the Christian Revelation.

10. Theology consists of the studies of the Christian faith and traditions and resulting **in various Christian** denominations and their confessions that have one common ground – the Bible (the Holy Scriptures). The object of theology is a divine Revelation, to which the Christian faith based on interpretations of human and world as the God's creation, belongs. These interpretations aim at integral understanding of all the reality processes. The object is researched by methodological reflection when the truths and traditions of the Christian faith are applied practically in the modern, always changing world.

11. Theology is a universal research area. It is open to other research fields and is able to integrate the different research fields using the method of theological reflection.

12. Theology as the object of professional work covers the following areas of professional activities (hereinafter – professional activities): teaching and learning (teaching and homiletics, conduction of retreats, selection of appropriate methods, etc.); catechesis (of children, adolescents and adults); administration (coordination, organisation, etc.); training of clergy according to the chosen denomination; pastoral care (pastoral care in diverse areas, for example, of families, adolescents; spiritual direction, i.e., personal conversations, coordination and organisation of informal education, etc.); preparation of team leaders.

13. Theology as an object of studies covers different theoretical and practical methods, how to understand, express and explain the essence of God, human beings and the world, and their interrelations. The theological axioms, concepts and definitions arise from the unchanging divine Revelation and the changing human experience, as well as from the continuously shifting theological reflection.

14. The main elements of the content of the study programmes in the field of theology are studies of the Bible (the Holy Scriptures), history of Christianity, systemic and practical theology and their relations with other scientific areas.

15. The following constituents have to be included into the study process of theology: biblical exegesis, researches and criticism of historical sources, analysis and interpretation of the main theological texts, consideration of fundamental problems of theoretical and practical theology using philosophy and other sciences.

16. The final (precise) content and scope of the study programmes in the field of theology shall be regulated by internal documents of higher education institutions. When the study programmes are implemented in the denominational environment, official instructions of some particular denomination how to conduct the theological studies (if available), may be taken into consideration.

### CHAPTER III GENERAL AND SPECIAL LEARNING OUTCOMES

17. When the university studies of the first cycle of the study field in theology are completed, the following learning outcomes have to be achieved:

17.1. knowledge, its application. The person:

17.1.1. knows and is able to describe the key directions of classical and modern theology, their origins, preconditions, reasoning and argumentation peculiarities;

17.1.2. knows and is able to define and use correctly the main theological concepts;

17.1.3. knows and is able to apply the most important and effective methodologies of theological researches;

17.2. research skills. The person:

17.2.1. is able to find, process, analyse and interpret the information necessary for professional activities;

17.2.2. is able to interpret the historical and cultural context of the Bible, history of Christianity, works of systemic and practical theology, and to assess it critically by linking it to other scientific areas;

17.2.3. is able to apply the selected purposive methods according to the selected theological area and to interpret the research results within wider context of social disciplines and those of humanities;

17.2.4. is able to analyse, interpret and assess the religious, scientific, cultural and social phenomena with regard to theology;

17.2.5. is able to formulate the ideas logically, precisely and in reasoned way orally and in writing;

17.3. special abilities. The person:

17.3.1. is able to present creatively possible solution methods of cultural, political and social problems within the context of systematic and practical theology;

17.3.2. is able to analyse and interpret the classical and modern theological theories, to indicate their assumptions and limits, and to understand the impact of such theories on the modern world;

17.3.3. is able to understand and examine the relation between theology and other sciences, their interaction and significance of theology for science, politics, culture and social life;

17.3.4. is able to adapt the knowledge of the Bible, history of Christianity, systematic and practical theology in scientific, pedagogical, professional, pastoral and public activities;

17.3.5. is able to write academic texts in scientific language;

17.4. social abilities. The person:

17.4.1. is able to solve the problems raised in the professional activities, to use not only theological, but also other modern scientific knowledge of various fields;

17.4.2. is able to create new ideas and to adjust them for solution of relevant moral, social, political and cultural problems;

17.4.3. is able to convey orally the acquired professional knowledge;

17.5. personal abilities. The person:

17.5.1. is able to read and interpret independently the works of classical and modern theology, philosophy and history, and to analyse their interrelation with modern sciences;

17.5.2. is able to learn independently in the area of professional activities and studies and to plan the learning process;

17.5.3. in pursue of personal and professional development, the person is able to use effectively the national and international information sources, the latest technologies, and academic databases;

17.5.4. is able to act in compliance with the values needed for respective professional area and to reflect own values, choices and behaviour;

17.5.5. understands and is able to assume responsibility for the results of own professional activities, to evaluate their impact on society, its sociocultural evolution and human welfare.

18. When the studies of the second cycle of the study field in theology are completed, the following learning outcomes have to be achieved:

18.1 knowledge, its application. The person:

18.1.1. is able to describe independently the peculiarities of the selected theological programme, content of studies, and area of researches in accordance with the latest professional information based on the fundamental and/or applied research results;

18.1.2. is able to define and use correctly the terms and concepts of professional work;

18.1.3. is able to reason the selection of the most effective research methodologies of professional work;

18.2. research skills. The person:

18.2.1. is able to analyse, synthesise and assess the research data needed for theological studies, research and/or professional activities, and introduction of novelties into various work environments;

18.2.2. is able to integrate the latest interdisciplinary knowledge into the professional researches;

18.2.3. is able to find and systemise the information, to present its thorough written or oral analysis and evaluation;

18.3. special abilities. The person:

18.3.1. is able to solve the scientific theological problem and applies the most relevant theories of classical and modern Bible study and theology;

18.3.2. is able to evaluate the topicalities and challenges of pastoral care of the Church and faith communities;

18.3.3. is able to adapt the knowledge of chosen professional activity in practice and knows its organisation principles; performs the activities by analysing and considering the relevant sociocultural processes and fostering dialogue between religiosity and worldliness;

18.3.4. is able to analyse the modern cultural and social processes and to interpret them within general theoretical and historical context of theological reflection;

18.3.5. is able to decide and/or respond to modern society's problems and/or questions with regard to the chosen area of studies and particularity, to integrate the needed knowledge of other scientific areas and to observe social responsibility;

18.4. social abilities. The person:

18.4.1. is able to act in accordance with conscious and contemporary culture and to apply practically the skills and habits of constructive social communication and harmonious cooperation with other society members in all the life situations;

18.4.2. is able to lead the group of persons, who have to make collective conceptual decisions;

18.4.3. is able to convey the generalised information in clear and reasoned way to specialists and other persons, and to assess it critically;

18.4.4. is able to demonstrate orally and in writing the acquired knowledge by expressing own opinion about the theological topics, to participate effectively in the professional activities and in public discussions on the religious issues with the professionals of other areas, experts and general society;

18.5. personal abilities. The person:

18.5.1. is able to formulate reasoned theological position in writing and orally;

18.5.2. is able to reflect and assess critically own profession and its challenges, to train and develop own professional competences;

18.5.3. is able to make innovative decisions, to assess possible public and moral consequences of the activities;

18.5.4. is able to act understanding moral responsibility for the impact of own activities and their results on the development and environment of the Church, denominations, society, economics, politics and culture;

18.5.5. is able to analyse independently the peculiarities of the content of studies of the selected programme and research area, to identify and solve the arising problems, their causality, and relation with the development of modern society and culture.

## **CHAPTER IV TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT**

19. The harmony between the teaching, learning and assessment principles and methods has to contribute to creation of interactive environment that promotes creativity and provides cooperation and mutual assistance in the course of studies, and to provide knowledge and skills necessary to achieve the goals of the study programme.

20. It is necessary to stress the studying methods that enable to perceive, interpret and assess the content of the Christian faith. It is offered to select the studying methods that induce analysis, interpretation and creation of the theological theories, statements and paradigms. The elements of problematic analysis, construction of theoretical hypothesis and logical possibilities, and paradigm thinking have to be applied to the modern lecture.

21. The traditional studying forms (lectures, seminars, discussions, disputes, text analysis, papers) and interactive teaching methods (imitation and analysis of situations, projects, social and imitation actions, debates, conflict analysis and solutions, virtual environment used for teaching) have to be applied in the course of learning and teaching.

22. The teaching and learning activities have to be planned by coordinating the proportions of compulsory, optional and independent studies, by providing volumes of written works, research projects, projecting the possibilities of personal consultations, group work, assessment and self-evaluation of the works, and possibilities to use virtual spaces.

23. The assessment has to be based on various methods enabling observation of the students' achievements and assessment of the student's theoretical knowledge and practical skills. The following assessment methods may be used: written or oral examination, oral individual or group survey colloquium, test, text analysis and interpretation in writing, scientific essay, report, project and research scientific activity, public defence of works. However, other assessment methods may be also selected and applied in accordance to the particularity of the professional activity, requirements and practice of higher education institution.

24. The appropriately organised and planned studying methods have to comply with the assessment goals and methods that promote the students' independence and responsibility: assessment and self-evaluation of the students' works, collective or group discussions and reviews of written works, collective and group analysis and interpretation of the texts.

25. The system of assessment of learning outcomes has to be such as to make it possible to monitor and control progress of studies and intended learning outcomes, to identify changes in the study process on time, to keep a feedback, and to create preconditions for changes in the study programmes in a timely manner. The assessment is determined by the requirements of the study programmes.

26. The learning outcomes have to be assessed according to the following criteria:

26.1. the integrity criterion allows evaluating whether the students are able:

26.1.1. to describe the key directions of classical and modern theology, their origins, preconditions, peculiarities of reasoning and argumentation, content of the independently selected study programme, and research field; to define and use correctly the main theological concepts; to apply the most important and effective theological research methodologies;

26.1.2. to understand, analyse, interpret, assess the religious, scientific, cultural and social phenomena and problems; to apply not only theological, but also knowledge of other relevant

modern sciences; to analyse the meaning of theology for science, politics, culture, social life, and to solve the problems arising in the professional activities in response to the questions of modern society, and in compliance with social responsibility;

26.1.3. to analyse, interpret and explain historically (chronologically) the phenomena and works of the Bible (the Holy Scriptures) and history of Christianity, systematic and practical theology, modern cultural and social processes; to take the historical, cultural, general theoretical and historical context of theological reflection into consideration, and to assess critically the relationship with other scientific areas;

26.1.4. to integrate the latest interdisciplinary knowledge, to apply the selected purposive methods for the professional researches and to interpret the research data within the wider context of humanities and social sciences;

26.1.5. to analyse and apply the knowledge in the selected professional activity on the basis of the relevant sociocultural processes; to know the organisational principles and to foster the dialogue between the religiosity and the worldliness;

26.2. the criterion of critical and creative thinking allows evaluating whether the students are able:

26.2.1. to find, process, analyse, interpret, synthesise, assess the necessary research data of the selected professional activities, to indicate their presumptions and limits, while understanding the impact of these theories on modern world; to submit a written or oral critical analysis and evaluation; to apply the most relevant theories of the classical and modern Bible studies and theology, hence solving the scientific theological problems;

26.2.2. to create new ideas and to apply the knowledge of the Bible (the Holy Scriptures), history of Christianity, systematic and practical theology in scientific, pedagogical, professional, pastoral and public activities; to solve relevant moral, social, political and cultural problems;

26.2.3. to assess the pastoral topicalities and challenges of the Church and various faith communities and to present creatively the possible solution methods of the systemic and practical theology, cultural, political and social problems;

26.2.4. to provide clear and reasoned generalised information to the specialists and other persons and to assess it critically; to apply practically the systemic skills and habits of constructive social communication and harmonious cooperation with other society members; to act in compliance with provisions of conscious and active public citizenship;

26.3. the individuality criterion allows evaluating whether the students are able:

26.3.1. to analyse independently the problems of spiritual and social life, their solution possibilities; to search for positive measures and methods to solve these problems;

26.3.2. to consider and select alternative and independent methods of public and personal activities;

26.3.3. to observe the unity and consistency of attitudes, words and actions;

26.3.4. to read, interpret and analyse independently the peculiarities of the content of the selected study programme or research field, works of classical and modern theology, philosophy and history, to identify their relationship with the modern sciences, when the arising problems, their causes are solved, and the relationship with the development of modern society and culture;

26.3.5. to formulate reasoned theological position in writing and orally;

26.4. the meaningfulness criterion allows evaluating whether the students are able:

26.4.1. to learn independently aiming at personal and professional development in own professional area and in the area of studies; to reflect and assess critically own profession and its challenges; to plan the learning process; to train and develop continuously the professional competences, to use effectively the national and international information sources, the latest technologies and academic databases;

26.4.2. to be open to changes in reality, to be able to assess its character and changes and to select responsibly, i.e., to be able to make innovative decisions, to evaluate possible public and moral consequences of the activities;

26.4.3. to reflect own values, choices and behaviour, i.e., to be able to act in conformity with the values needed for professional activities;

26.4.4. to write logical and reasoned academic texts in the professional scientific language, to formulate the thoughts precisely, to demonstrate the acquired knowledge in writing and orally, to participate effectively in the professional activities and public discussions on the issues of religion and other fields with the professionals of other areas, experts, and general society;

26.4.5. to assume moral responsibility for the results of own professional activities, to assess their impact on the development of the Church, various churches or denominations, society, economics, politics, culture, environment, and human welfare.

## **CHAPTER V**

### **REQUIREMENTS FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF STUDY PROGRAMMES**

27. The basis of successful implementation of the study programmes:

27.1. qualified university teachers, who are able to convey the professional knowledge and appropriate behaviour to the students, and to train the abilities needed for future professional activities;

27.2. sufficient academic and other staff servicing the studies;

27.3. the approved content of the study programme;

27.4. sufficient material and methodical resources.

28. Requirements for the teachers of the study programmes in the field of theology:

28.1. the competence of the university teachers is assessed according to their research and pedagogical experience: level of scientific research, effectiveness of pedagogical work, participation in the scientific events, spread of science, language competences, ability to advise the students about the study plans and career, and other criteria;

28.2. the persons, who have at least master's degree or equivalent higher education qualification in the study or research field of the taught subject may teach in the university study programmes of the first cycle and the study programme of the second cycle;

28.3. the supervisor of the final work of the university study programmes of the first cycle must have at least master's degree;

28.4. the supervisor of the final work of the study programme of the second cycle must have a PhD degree;

28.5. the supervisors of practical training must have at least master's degree.

29. Requirements for the content of the study programme in the field of theology:

29.1. the content of the study programme has to be based on the scientific and pedagogical potential of the higher education institution and it has to assure the standards of quality of the studies, innovation and relevance;

29.2. when the studies are organised, the possibilities have to be created for the students to select the subjects according to their interests. The proportion of compulsory and optional subjects is determined in accordance with the General Requirements for the Studies;

29.3. the higher education institution has to create possibilities for the students' mobility on the national and international level;

29.4. the practical training of various forms has to be provided in the university study programmes of the first cycle in the field of theology, and it may be provided in the study programmes of the second cycle. The practical training of all the cycles shall be organised in accordance with the General Requirements for the Studies. The goals, tasks, learning outcomes of the particular study programme and the achievements' assessment system, support to the student in the course of practical training, as well as criteria, according to which the students' skills acquired in the course of practical training are identified and assessed, shall be indicated in the descriptor of the practical training module;

29.5. the content of the study programmes should be updated all the time, in consideration of the modern state of the science of theology and the development of the study process;

29.6. the university study programmes of the first cycle and the study programme of the second cycle end in the final work. The assessment commission of final works shall be formed according to the procedure established by higher education institutions.

30. The higher education institution must have the following material and information resources:

30.1. the lecture halls have to satisfy the requirements of hygiene and work safety and they must have modern audio and video equipment and demonstration aids;

30.2. the lecture halls have to be adapted to the students with special needs;

30.3. the libraries and/or reading rooms must have enough of computerised work places with appropriate software that covers standard packages of communication, text and graphical programmes. The access to the necessary information sources has to be available in the work places: literature named in the descriptors of the study programme's subjects, national and international electronic databases, bibliographical catalogues, search systems, information sources of larger libraries, etc.;

30.4. the higher education institutions have to supply the students with academic, methodical and other aids: to prepare introductory lectures or introductory study weeks, to survey, to assure a feedback, to create conditions to study for persons with disabilities and working persons, to provide psychological, health promotion support, to introduce to future career possibilities, etc.;

30.5. information related to studies – curricula, subjects' descriptors, schedules and other necessary material – has to be easily accessible to the students and staff performing and servicing the study programme.

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