



**MINISTER FOR EDUCATION AND SCIENCE OF THE REPUBLIC OF
LITHUANIA**

**ORDER
REGARDING THE APPROVAL OF THE STATUTE OF THE CENTRE FOR QUALITY
ASSESSMENT IN HIGHER EDUCATION**

14 November 2016 No V-1002
Vilnius

Pursuant to Article 22 of the Law on Higher Education and Research of the Republic of Lithuania and Article 6 of the Law on Budgetary Bodies of the Republic of Lithuania,

1. I hereby approve the Statute of the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education (enclosed).

2. I hereby authorise Director of the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education to sign the Statute of the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education approved by Paragraph 1 of this Order and present it and other changed data to the Register of Legal Entities according to the provisions of legal acts.

3. I hereby declare invalid the Order No ISAK-992 of the Minister for Higher Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania of 1 June 2005 on the Approval of the Statute of the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education, with all its amendments and supplements.

4. The present Order, save for Paragraph 2, comes into force from 1 January 2017.

Minister for Education and Science

Audronė Pitrenienė

APPROVED
by Order No V-1002
of 14 November 2016
of the Minister for Education
and Science of the Republic of
Lithuania

STATUTE OF THE CENTRE FOR QUALITY ASSESSMENT IN HIGHER EDUCATION

CHAPTER I. GENERAL PROVISIONS

1. The Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education (hereinafter referred to as 'the Centre') is an independent public institution implementing the policy on higher education quality and free movement of persons in accordance with the principles and procedures established herein and in other legal acts, as well as the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area and good practice of the academic recognition of education and qualifications related to higher education and acquired under educational programmes of foreign countries and international organisations (hereinafter referred to as the 'foreign qualifications').

2. The Centre is a public legal entity with its own bank account and a seal featuring the national emblem of the Republic of Lithuania and its own name. Its legal entity code is 111959192. The logo of the Centre is registered in the State Patent Bureau of the Republic of Lithuania. The short name of the Centre is the SKVC. Legal form of the Centre is a budgetary institution.

3. The Owner of the Centre is the state. The implementing institution of the rights and obligations of the owner is the Ministry for Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania (hereinafter referred to as 'the Ministry'). The competence for the Ministry to implement the rights and obligations of the owner is set in the Law on Budgetary Bodies of the Republic of Lithuania, in the Statute of the Ministry for Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania, approved by the resolution No 914 of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania of 21 July 1998 regarding the approval of the Statute of the Ministry for Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania, as well as in other legal acts of the Republic of Lithuania related to the implementation of the Centre's functions.

4. In its activities the Centre shall be guided by the Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania, the Convention of the Council of Europe and the UNESCO Convention of the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region, the Law on Higher Education and Research of the Republic of Lithuania, international treaties, European Union legislation, and other legal acts of the Republic of Lithuania concerning the Centre's activities, and this Statute.

5. The Centre plans its activities in accordance with the national strategic aims for long-term development and the need to implement the international commitments of Lithuania in the field of higher education and research.

6. The remit of the Centre shall be public administration in higher education and research following the procedure established by law.

7. The activities of the Centre shall include (according to the Classification of Economic activities types):

7.1. core activities: general public management (code 84.11), regulation of healthcare, education, culture and other social services, except social insurance, activities (code 84.12);

7.2. other activities: publication and multiplication of recorded storage media (code 18), publishing (code 58), other information technology and computer services (code 62.09), data processing, internet server (hosting) services and related activities (code 63.11), organisation of meetings and business events (code 82.30), typical education services (code 85.60).

CHAPTER II. PURPOSE, OBJECTIVES AND FUNCTIONS OF THE CENTRE

8. The purpose of the Centre's activity in performing the external review and accreditation of higher education institutions is to encourage them to improve the quality of their activity and promote the quality culture by performing the evaluation and recognition of foreign qualifications, providing information and creating favourable conditions for the free movement of persons. The Centre seeks to harmonise the principles of the Lithuanian study system and the European Higher Education Area and, within its competence, guarantees the fulfilment of the international commitments of Lithuania in the field of research and higher education.

9. The Centre shall pursue the following objectives:

9.1. by performing the activities of the agency for quality assessment in higher education, promote improvement in the quality of the activities and quality culture of higher education institutions, increase international content by organising external review, accrediting, consulting, making public, carrying out follow-up activities after the external evaluation and analysing the results of related activities;

9.2. by performing the activities of the national centre for academic recognition and information (ENIC/NARIC), create favourable conditions for the free movement of persons by performing evaluation, academic recognition of foreign qualifications in the Republic of Lithuania and providing related information.

10. While implementing the objective referred to in Point 9.1 hereof, the Centre shall perform the following functions according to the procedure established by law:

10.1. organise evaluation and/or evaluate study programmes of higher education institutions of the Republic of Lithuania;

10.2. grant accreditation to the study programmes of higher education institutions of the Republic of Lithuania;

10.3. perform external reviews of the higher education institutions of the Republic of Lithuania;

10.4. perform external reviews of the branches of foreign higher education institutions;

10.5. grant accreditation to higher education institutions of the Republic of Lithuania;

10.6. evaluate applications of higher education institutions and branches of foreign higher education institutions for licences to provide higher education studies and conduct activities related to higher education studies and make conclusions on the conformity of the latter institutions with the conditions established in the Law on Higher Education and Research of the Republic of Lithuania;

10.7. evaluate branches of foreign higher education institutions to provide study programmes in the Republic of Lithuania or cooperate when such evaluation is conducted by any other agency for quality assessment in higher education, included into the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education Agencies, or on other grounds, as stipulated by the international treaties signed by the Republic of Lithuania;

10.8. evaluate the activities and study programmes offered by foreign higher education institutions at the request of foreign bodies;

10.9. develop and improve methodologies and guidelines for self-evaluation, external review, accreditation and follow-up activities;

10.10. collect, analyse and disseminate the good practice of other countries in quality assurance and quality evaluation in higher education, within its competence, provide consultations to higher education institutions, institutions implementing education and research policy, and other Lithuanian and foreign entities, provide training, as well as organise other events in the field of quality assurance and increase of international content in higher education;

10.11. on the website of the Centre, publish the conclusions, decisions, recommendations and summaries of the evaluation of the activities of higher education institutions and their study programmes.

11. While implementing the objective referred to in Point 9.2 hereof, the Centre shall perform the following functions according to the procedure established by law:

11.1. evaluate and/recognise higher education qualifications acquired in foreign institutions;

11.2. collect and provide information about educational systems of the Republic of Lithuania and foreign countries, qualifications and their providers, higher education studies, the system of recognition of foreign qualifications in Lithuania;

11.3. monitor the decision of higher education institutions on academic recognition of foreign qualifications and provide methodological assistance;

11.4. examine appeals against decisions taken by higher education institutions on the academic recognition of foreign qualifications;

11.5. provide training and consultations related to the assessment and recognition of foreign qualifications, foreign and Lithuanian education systems, etc.;

11.6. provide information and/or recommendations to higher education institutions, employers and other interested persons regarding the assessment and recognition of Lithuanian and foreign qualifications and part-time studies, attribution of higher education qualifications to a respective study programme, when no study programme is specified in the higher education documents, and there is no higher education institution that granted qualification, which would attribute the higher education qualification to the respective study programme or qualification acquired abroad;

11.7. collect, analyse and disseminate the good practice of the assessment and recognition of foreign qualifications;

11.8. make decisions on establishment of equivalents of modules completed in foreign institutions and grade conversion for persons applying to first-cycle or integrated studies and competing for state-funded studies or scholarships, as well as provide information and recommendations;

11.9. develop methodical and information aids related to the assessment and recognition of qualifications, grade conversion, educational systems of the countries, other international matters.

12. Within its competence, the Centre participates in the implementation of the Lithuanian qualifications framework.

13. During the implementation of its objectives, the Centre shall also perform other functions provided for in the legislation and regulations of the Republic of Lithuania, the resolutions of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania, orders of the Minister for Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania (hereinafter referred to as 'the Minister') and other legal acts, including the participation in drafting laws of the Republic of Lithuania, resolutions of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania and other legal acts of the Republic of Lithuania, European Union and international legal acts, as well as submitting comments and proposals on draft legal acts of other public institutions, bodies, organisations.

CHAPTER III. RIGHTS AND DUTIES

14. While performing its functions, the Centre shall have a right to:

14.1. take appropriate, transparent, proportional and non-discriminating actions and/or measures to implement the purposes and objectives referred to in Points 8 and 9 hereof;

14.2. be a member of international non-profit organisations and networks working in the fields related to the activities of the Centre, participate in international events devoted to the discussion of issues related to higher education;

- 14.3. represent the Republic of Lithuania in international organisations and networks and international events related to higher education;
 - 14.4. set up working groups, expert teams and committees, and seek help of experts for the performance of its functions;
 - 14.5. according to the procedure established in the legislation of the Republic of Lithuania, remunerate the members of the working groups, expert teams, committees, and engaged experts for the work performed;
 - 14.6. obtain all the information needed for the implementation of its objectives and the performance of its functions from the Ministry, national institutions of higher education and other persons;
 - 14.7. conclude agreements needed for the implementation of its objectives or the creation of its working conditions with natural and legal persons of the Republic of Lithuania and foreign countries;
 - 14.8. issue information publications, publish information in the mass media or in other ways.
15. The Centre shall also have other rights provided for in legal acts of the Republic of Lithuania.
 16. When implementing its objectives, the Centre has the following duties:
 - 16.1. to perform its functions in a timely and proper manner;
 - 16.2. once a year to provide information to the public about its activities by publishing a report on the Centre's activities in the previous calendar year and the summaries of quality evaluation in higher education;
 - 16.3. to provide the Ministry, research and higher education institutions, as well as other legal persons with the information related to the activities of the Centre;
 - 16.4. once in the period of five years, to be subject to external review, to improve its activities and make this information publicly available on the basis of self-evaluation and review recommendations.
 17. The Centre shall also have other duties provided for in legal acts of the Republic of Lithuania.

CHAPTER IV. ORGANISATION OF ACTIVITIES

18. The Centre shall be governed by the Council of the Centre (hereinafter referred to as 'the Council') and the Director.
19. The Council is a collective management body composed of 11 members. One member is delegated for the term of six years by the Committee of the Seimas dealing with the matters of research and higher education and one by the Minister of Education and Science, two members are delegated for the term of six years by organisations uniting universities and colleges, four members are delegated for the term of six years by organisations uniting social partners, one member is delegated for the term of two years by the students organisation. A member delegated to the Council by the Committee of the Seimas dealing with the matters of research and higher education shall be an international expert residing and working outside the Republic of Lithuania. The composition of the Council shall be promulgated by the Minister.
20. Members of the Seimas, the Government of the Republic of Lithuania, political appointees and the civil servants and employees of the Centre may not be appointed as members of the Council of the Centre.
 21. A Council member shall serve a full term in office except in cases where:
 - 21.1. a Council member resigns;
 - 21.2. a Council member is recalled by the person who appointed him/her;
 - 21.3. a Council member fails to perform the Council member's duties in a proper manner;
 - 21.4. a Council member has been convicted of an offence by the effective judgement;

- 21.5. A Council member dies.
22. A person may be appointed as a Council member for no more than two successive terms of office.
23. In the case of a vacancy, the Chairman of the Council shall request the appointing entity to appoint a new member for the remaining term of office of the former member, who can no longer perform the functions of the a Council member.
24. In case no new Council member is appointed at the end of the term of office of the Council member, the former Council member shall hold office until a new member is appointed.
25. Entities authorised to appoint Council members shall do so within one month from the Minister's request. When at least two thirds of all Council members are appointed, the Chair of the Council shall be elected. The Chair shall be elected for the term of office of 3 years by the majority of votes of the Council members. The Deputy Chair of the Council shall be elected by the same procedure upon the proposal of the Chair.
26. The Council shall draw up and approve its Regulation. Decisions shall be made by the majority of votes of all Council members. A meeting shall be legitimate if it is attended by at least 8 Council members.
27. Council members shall be remunerated for their work according to law.
28. Conditions for the work of the Council shall be ensured by the Centre.
29. The Council shall perform the following functions:
- 29.1. following the procedure established in the Law on Research and Higher Education of the Republic of Lithuania, participates in the appointment of the Director of the Centre;
- 29.2. discuss and approve the vision and mission of the Centre, and strategic action plan presented by the Director;
- 29.3. make proposals on annual operating plans of the Centre and discuss them;
- 29.4. discuss and approve the annual operating report of the Centre presented by the Director;
- 29.5. draw up and publish its annual operating report on the website of the Centre.
30. When implementing its functions, the Council shall have the right to receive information from the Centre and the Ministry that is needed for implementation of its functions, and to hold extended meetings of the Council with civil servants and employees of the centre, experts, representatives of the public institutions, research and higher education institutions, other social partners invited.
31. Council members shall be obliged to attend Council meetings, fulfil their tasks in a timely and proper manner, adhere to the code of ethics when the question considered may cause the conflict of private and public interest of the Council member, opt out from consideration of such question and voting, act independently, refrain from disclosing confidential information, and commenting on voting of individual members of the Council.
32. The activities of the Council shall be open to public. In cases provided for in the Regulation, the Council may also hold closed meetings.
33. The Director is a one-person managing body of the Centre appointed and recalled following the procedure established by the Law on Research and Higher Education of the Republic of Lithuania.
34. The Director of the Centre shall perform the following functions:
- 34.1. act on behalf of the Centre;
- 34.2. represent the Centre in its dealings with legal and natural persons of the Republic of Lithuania and foreign countries or delegate part of such functions to the civil servants or employees of the Centre in accordance with their remit;
- 34.3. organise the work of the Centre to ensure fulfilment of the goal, objectives of the Centre and completion of the established functions;
- 34.4. ensure enforcement of the laws, other legal acts and the Statute of the Centre;
- 34.5. report to the Council and the Ministry;

34.6. if disagreeing with a decision of the Council, the Director may submit a motivated request to the Council for reconsideration of the decision. The Council shall examine the Director's request within the period of 30 days from the day of the receipt of the request. At the Director's request, a decision of the Council can be reconsidered only once;

34.7. approve the organisational structure of the Centre, regulations of its structural divisions, job description without exceeding the maximum number of posts permitted;

34.8. approve the job descriptions of the civil servants and employees of the Centre;

34.9. according to the procedure established in the legal acts of the Republic of Lithuania, appoint and recall civil servants and employees of the Centre working under employment contracts, motivate them by incentives, impose official and disciplinary sanctions, award one-off allowances and benefits;

34.10. within the limits of the annual payroll fund, in accordance with the procedure established in legal acts of the Republic of Lithuania, determine the salaries of the civil servants and employees of the Centre;

34.11. according to the procedure established in the Law on Civil Service of the Republic of Lithuania, ensure professional development of the civil servants of the Centre and appraisal of their performance;

34.12. organise the examination of complaints regarding the actions of the civil servants and employees of the Centre;

34.13. organise and coordinate the activities of the Centre, make decisions on all matters of the Centre or according to the procedure established by law delegate a part of such functions to the civil servants and/or employees of the Centre in accordance with their remit;

34.14. issue orders and approve other documents of the Centre, and monitor their implementation;

34.15. approve the annual operating plans of the Centre;

34.16. attend the meetings of the Council;

34.17. maintains intellectual, tangible and financial resources of the Centre;

34.18. guarantee that collections of reports and statistical reports submitted under the Law on Accountability of Public Sector of the Republic of Lithuania are correct;

34.19. ensure rational and economical use of funds and property, development of effective internal control system in a budgetary institution, its operation and improvement;

34.20. perform other functions established in the legal acts of the Republic of Lithuania.

35. The Director of the Centre shall be responsible for:

35.1. the compliance with the laws and other legal acts of the Republic of Lithuania in the activities of the Centre;

35.2. production of the annual report on the activities of the Centre for the previous year and its accessibility to public and the Ministry;

35.3. the implementation of the set objectives of the Centre, the completion of its functions and duties, economic and financial activities of the Centre;

35.4. occupational safety in the Centre.

36. The Director shall be deputised in his/her temporary absence due to illness, leave or mission, by a civil servant or employee of the Centre appointed by the Minister or his/her authorised person.

CHAPTER V. FUNDS, THEIR USE AND FINANCIAL AUDITS

37. The Centre shall be financed from the State Budget of the Republic of Lithuania. The Centre may receive income from the evaluation of studies and activities of foreign schools at the request of foreign entities, the organisation of events and the provision of other services, the implementation of projects, and generate other legitimate revenues.

38. The Centre shall be financed from the State Budget of the Republic of Lithuania in accordance with the Law on Budget Structure of the Republic of Lithuania and legal acts regulating financial accounting of budgetary institutions.

39. Pursuant to the Law on Charity and Support of the Republic of Lithuania, the Centre may receive support and use it according to the procedure established by the above-mentioned law.

40. Performance and financial audits of the Centre shall be carried out by the authorised public institutions according to the procedure established by the laws and other legal acts of the Republic of Lithuania.

CHAPTER VI. FINAL PROVISIONS

41. The Centre may undergo reorganisation or liquidation according to the principles, procedures and conditions established in the legal acts of the Republic of Lithuania.

42. Public notices of the Centre shall be published on its website www.skvc.lt.

43. Amendments to the Statute of the Centre may be initiated by the Director of the Centre, the Council, and the Ministry.

44. Draft amendments to the Statute of the Centre shall be considered at the meeting of the Council. Upon approval by the Council, the Director of the Centre shall submit the amendments to the Statute of the Centre to the Ministry for approval.

45. Any amendments to the Statute of the Centre will come into effect from the day of their registration in the Register of Legal Entities. The Director of the Centre is held responsible for presentation of the Statute of the Centre to the Register of Legal Entities.
