

APPROVED

by Order No V-7 of 20 February 2015 of the  
Director of the Centre for Quality Assessment in  
Higher Education

## **METHODOLOGY FOR EVALUATION OF ONGOING STUDY PROGRAMMES OF FOREIGN HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS**

### **I GENERAL PROVISIONS**

1. The Methodology for Evaluation of Ongoing Study Programmes of Foreign Higher Education Institutions (hereinafter referred to as 'the Methodology') shall regulate external study programme evaluation organised by the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education (hereinafter referred to as 'the Centre'), performed in foreign countries in respect of their participants, procedures, evaluation areas, criteria, general requirements for study programme self-evaluation reports (hereinafter referred to as 'self-evaluation reports'), study programme analysis, expert team work organisation, ethical principles and appeals procedures.

2. The Methodology has been developed in accordance with the *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area*.

3. For the purposes of this Methodology:

3.1. Stakeholders shall mean persons, groups of persons or organisations concerned with and capable of affecting the activities of a higher education institution and assuming responsibility for such influence (administrative and academic staff of the institution, students, their parents, alumni, employers, representatives of professional associations and trade unions, public institutions, etc.);

3.2. Evaluation coordinator shall mean an employee or civil servant of the Centre responsible for the organisation of the evaluation of a specific study programme.

4. The Centre or Institution which applies for external evaluation (higher education institution, its subsidiary, state institution, etc.) makes an agreement concerning the conditions of external evaluation (further – agreement concerning external evaluation).

### **II EVALUATION OF STUDY PROGRAMMES**

#### **I. PARTICIPANTS OF THE EVALUATION PROCESS**

5. The main participants of the evaluation process shall include:

5.1. the higher education institution whose study programme is being evaluated;

5.2. the Centre;

5.3. other persons invited by the Centre to help with the evaluation;

5.3.1. the expert team performing the evaluation including team leader;

5.3.2. the Studies' Evaluation Committee (hereinafter referred to as 'the Committee') acting in accordance with its regulations approved by the Director of the Centre's order. The Committee shall review the reports made by the expert team and advise the Centre regarding the objectivity, validity and comprehensiveness of the report of the expert team.

6. Expert team may be formed for the evaluation of several programmes in the same study field or close study fields.

7. The evaluation process shall consist of the following stages:

7.1. application to the Centre for the evaluation;

7.2. planning of the evaluation;

7.3. self-evaluation and the production of the self-evaluation report;

7.4. preparations for the evaluation;

7.5. visit of the expert team at the higher education institution (hereinafter referred to as ‘the visit’);

7.6. production of the evaluation report by the expert team;

7.7. discussions of the evaluation report by the Committee;

7.8. decision on evaluation (if it was agreed in the agreement concerning external evaluation) and publication of evaluation report;

7.9. follow-up activities.

8. The key actors of the planning process shall include the Centre and the higher education institution. The expert team shall not be involved at this stage.

9. The key actor at the self-evaluation stage shall be the higher education institution. The Centre shall be involved only as an adviser on the performance of self-evaluation and the submission of the self-evaluation report.

10. The key actors at the preparation stage shall be the Centre and the expert team it sets up. The higher education institution may make motivated proposals for replacing one or another member of the expert team.

11. During the visit stage, the evaluation coordinator appointed by the Centre shall act as a facilitator in setting the visit date and observing adherence to the schedule of the visit.

12. The key actor in the production of the evaluation report shall be the expert team. The higher education institution may only provide comments on the factual errors in the expert team’s draft report. The role of the Centre at this stage shall be to ensure a timely provision of the expert team’s draft report to the higher education institution and a timely provision of the institution’s comments on the factual mistakes in the report (if any) to the expert team.

13. For purposes of the examination of findings the Centre shall engage Studies’ Evaluation Committee.

14. The key actor at the follow-up stage shall be the higher education institution tasked with improving the study programme with regard to the weaknesses found during the self-evaluation and in the evaluation report.

## II. EVALUATION PROCESS

15. The higher education institution shall be responsible for the proper conduct of its self-evaluation and the timely production of the self-evaluation report.

16. Evaluation is performed and all of the documents are presented in English.

17. If necessary, the Centre shall advise the higher education institution on issues related to self-evaluation.

18. The higher education institution shall conduct its self-evaluation according to the procedure established by themselves. The self-evaluation report must meet the requirements set in this Methodology. Additional requirements for the self-evaluation report may be raised if that is agreed in the agreement concerning external evaluation. If it is agreed to the evaluation of study programme according to additional evaluation areas and (or) criteria in the agreement, the match for additional evaluation areas and (or) criteria must be analysed during self-evaluation and this must be reflected in self-evaluation report.

19. The self-evaluation process may include the following recommended stages:
  - 19.1. setting up a self-evaluation group, which shall be approved by the order of the institution's head, for performing an internal evaluation of one or several study programmes within a certain study field;
  - 19.2. defining the tasks and responsibilities of each member of the group;
  - 19.3. drawing up the schedule of the group's activities;
  - 19.4. collecting data for self-evaluation;
  - 19.5. analysing the data;
  - 19.6. discussing the results of the self-evaluation performed; and
  - 19.7. producing a self-evaluation report.
20. The self-evaluation group should include active, experienced and competent representatives of the administrative and teaching staff, students and other stakeholders. It is recommended that the self-evaluation group should consist of no more than seven members. In case the higher education institution is conducting self-evaluation of several study programmes within a certain study field, it is possible to set up subgroups. The activities of the subgroups shall be coordinated by a person appointed from among the self-evaluation group members.
21. After its completion, the results of the self-evaluation must be discussed with the community of the institution or one of its units. The discussion should be attended by as many members of the community as possible, including students.
22. The self-evaluation group shall produce a self-evaluation report by taking into account the observations and comments offered during the discussions.
23. The higher education institution shall submit its self-evaluation report to the Centre by the deadline set in the agreement concerning external evaluation .
  
24. The Centre shall start the evaluation only after it receives all the documentation referred to in Point 23.

The Centre may refuse to carry out the evaluation if the higher education institution fails to submit a self-evaluation report by the deadline referred to in Point 23 of the Methodology.
25. Two weeks before the visit of the experts at the latest, the higher education institution may submit information on the essential changes in the study programme introduced after the submission of the self-evaluation report to the Centre.
26. The Centre shall verify the self-evaluation report for compliance with the requirements of the Methodology or additional requirements (if such requirements were set) and shall notify the higher education institution of the necessary amendments within 20 days of the self-evaluation report receipt.
27. The higher education institution shall submit the amended self-evaluation report within 20 days of the receipt of the Centre's notification of its irregularities.
28. Expert selection shall be conducted according to the Expert Selection Procedure approved by the Director of the Centre (hereinafter referred to as 'the Expert Selection Procedure').
29. The Centre shall inform the higher education institution about the composition of the expert team by fax or e-mail. Within five working days of the receipt of this information, the higher education institution may submit motivated proposals on the replacement of one or several members of the expert team. The Centre shall consider all proposals so received and shall inform the higher education institution about the decision made. If the higher education institution fails to make a proposal requesting change in the expert team composition within the time limit set in this point, it shall be deemed that the higher education institution agrees with the composition of the expert team.

30. The Centre shall organise a meeting of the expert team to help the experts understand the aims and objectives of the evaluation, to explain the Methodology and to introduce other legal acts governing external evaluation of study programmes.

31. The Centre shall make the self-evaluation report available to the experts by the deadline set in the agreement concerning external evaluation. In cases when, for reasons beyond reasonable control of the Centre, some of the experts on the team change, and it is objectively impossible to make the said information available to the new members within the time lime set in this point, the self-evaluation report shall be produced immediately after the new experts are included on the expert team.

32. After their analysis of the information contained in the self-evaluation report, the experts shall draw up preliminary report and define the areas and issues requiring special attention during the visit.

33. The Centre shall draw up the visit schedule and coordinate it with the higher education institution, which makes the data and the schedule of the visit publicly available.

34. Usually, the duration of the experts' group visit at the higher education institution shall be 1 to 3 days. The agreement concerning external evaluation may set different duration of the visit sufficient to achieve evaluation aims.

35. During the visit, the expert team shall meet the administration staff of the institution or its relevant unit, the self-evaluation group, the teaching staff, students, graduates and their employers.

36. A visit shall be deemed effective when at least 2/3 of the expert team members attend the visit.

37. During the visit, the experts shall have access to the learning resources of the study programme, students' term papers and final thesis, examination material and other documents.

38. The higher education institution shall ensure that any member of its community wishing to meet the expert team can have an opportunity to do so.

39. The higher education institution shall ensure that the expert team has the appropriate premises and equipment necessary for its work and meetings.

40. During one visit, a member of the institution's community may participate only at one meeting with the expert team, except for cases agreed separately and in advance with a representative of the Centre.

41. Meetings with graduates and employers may not be attended by persons who study and/or are employed at the higher education institution.

42. The working language of the meetings during the visit shall be English. If necessary, the higher education institution may procure services of quality interpretation. During meetings with students an interpreter may only attend if agreed with the evaluation coordinator.

43. At the end of the visit, the expert team shall hold a discussion of the outcomes of the visit within the team and make an oral presentation of its preliminary conclusions to the community of the higher education institution.

44. Within a month of the visit, the expert team shall produce a draft report and submit it to the Centre by e-mail.

45. The higher education institution may submit to the Centre its comments on what the institution considers to be factual errors in the draft report within 14 days of the draft report's dispatch date.

46. The Centre shall forward the institution's comments on what it considers to be factual errors in the draft report to the expert team.

47. The experts shall take account of the institution's comments on what the higher education institution considers to be factual errors in the draft report and shall, within 14 days, produce and submit an evaluation report to the Centre.

48. For purposes of the examination of findings the Centre shall engage Studies' Evaluation Committee. The expert team leader, or some other member of the expert team, shall present the team's findings in the evaluation report during the meeting of the said Committee. Absence of the expert team leader, or some other member of the expert team, shall not preclude the Committee from examining the report. Representatives of the higher education institution may be involved in this stage of evaluation as needed.

49. Having examined the evaluation report and the arguments presented by the attendees of the meeting, the Committee shall decide on one of the judgements provided in the Committee's Regulations.

50. The Centre shall send the final evaluation report to the higher education institution by e-mail or by letter.

51. The results of external evaluation shall be publicly available.

52. Responsibility for the implementation of follow-up activities shall be vested in the higher education institution.

53. The higher education institution shall define measures for the elimination of its weaknesses identified in the self-evaluation process and the improvement of the study programme. Information on the measures shall be made accessible to the academic community of the institution.

54. During the follow-up activities it may be agreed to the action plan for the improvement of the quality of studies and (or) evaluation of its implementation in the agreement concerning external evaluation.

55. In organising a study programme evaluation, the Centre shall examine the way the study programme providers have acted on the weaknesses found in the latest evaluation and the way they have implemented proposals for the improvement of the programme.

### III. EVALUATION AREAS AND CRITERIA

56. A study programme evaluation shall involve examination of 6 areas: the aims and learning outcomes of the study programme, curriculum design, teaching staff, facilities and learning resources, study process and students' performance assessment and programme management.

57. It may be agreed upon the evaluation of study programme according to additional evaluation areas and (or) criteria in the agreement concerning external evaluation.

58. Each evaluation area shall be analysed according to the established criteria, i.e. on the basis of evidence pointing to the quality of the studies.

59. The programme aims and learning outcomes shall be evaluated according to the following criteria:

- 59.1. the programme aims and learning outcomes are well defined, clear and publicly accessible;
- 59.2. the programme aims and learning outcomes are based on the academic and/or professional requirements, public needs and the needs of the labour market;
- 59.3. the programme aims and learning outcomes are consistent with the type and level of studies and the level of qualifications offered;
- 59.4. the name of the programme, its learning outcomes, content and the qualifications offered are compatible with each other.

60. The curriculum design shall be evaluated according to the following criteria:

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

61. The teaching staff shall be evaluated according to the following criteria:

- 61.1. the qualifications of the teaching staff are adequate to ensure learning outcomes;
- 61.2. the number of the teaching staff is adequate to ensure learning outcomes;
- 61.3. teaching staff turnover is able to ensure an adequate provision of the programme;
- 61.4. the higher education institution creates conditions for the professional development of the teaching staff necessary for the provision of the programme;
- 61.5. the teaching staff of the programme is involved in research (art) directly related to the study programme being reviewed.

62. Facilities and learning resources shall be evaluated according to the following criteria:

- 62.1. the premises for studies are adequate both in their size and quality;
- 62.2. the teaching and learning equipment (laboratory and computer equipment, consumables) are adequate both in size and quality;
- 62.3. the higher education institution has adequate arrangements for students' practice;
- 62.4. teaching materials (textbooks, books, periodical publications, databases) are adequate and accessible.

63. Study process and students' performance assessment should be evaluated according to the following criteria:

- 63.1. the admission requirements are well-founded;
- 63.2. the organisation of the study process ensures an adequate provision of the programme and the achievement of the learning outcomes;

- 63.3. students are encouraged to participate in research, artistic and experimental development activities;
- 63.4. students have opportunities to participate in student mobility programmes;
- 63.5. the higher education institution ensures an adequate level of academic and social support;
- 63.6. the assessment system of students' performance is clear, adequate and publicly available;
- 63.7. professional activities of the majority of graduates meets the programme providers' expectations.
- 64. Programme management should be evaluated according to the following criteria:
  - 64.1. responsibilities for decisions and monitoring of the implementation of the programme are clearly allocated;
  - 64.2. information and data on the implementation of the programme are regularly collected and analysed;
  - 64.3. the outcomes of internal and external evaluations of the programme are used for the improvement of the programme;
  - 64.4. the evaluation and improvement processes involve stakeholders;
  - 64.5. the internal quality assurance measures are effective and efficient.

### **III. PRODUCTION OF A SELF-EVALUATION REPORT**

#### **I. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR THE SELF-EVALUATION REPORT**

65. Higher education institutions shall conduct self-evaluation according to the procedures defined by themselves with due regard to the objectives of the self-evaluation.

66. The self-evaluation report should demonstrate the institution's capacity for analysis, critical evaluation of its own work and for projection of prospects for improvement.

67. Statements in the self-evaluation report should be supported by quantitative and qualitative evidence.

68. The self-evaluation report should present information necessary for evaluation in a succinct manner and the self-evaluation group should be careful not to make the report too long. The recommended scope of the self-evaluation report should not exceed 30 pages (excluding annexes).

69. Self-evaluation shall be conducted according to each criterion specified in the Methodology. If it was agreed upon programme evaluation according to additional evaluation areas and (or) criteria in the agreement concerning external evaluation, self-evaluation shall include these areas and (or) criteria. In case a certain criterion set in this Methodology is not applicable to the analysed study programme, the fact should be duly recorded in the self-evaluation report.

70. Compliance with the criteria specified in the Methodology shall be analysed in the context of the quality of the entire programme: compliance with a certain criterion shall be analysed and judged by taking into consideration its effect on the entire programme.

71. Examination of any area shall include analysis of the changes stimulated by the latest evaluation of the programme.

72. Analysis of each area shall be concluded with a summary of its strengths and weaknesses and the projected improvement actions.

73. The self-evaluation report shall be submitted in English and sent by e-mail at [kokybe@skvc.lt](mailto:kokybe@skvc.lt).

74. The self-evaluation report shall cover data of the past 5 academic years. In case the programme has been provided for a shorter period of time, the report should cover data of the entire period.

75. Each study programme shall be covered by a separate self-evaluation report. In case a study programme in the same study field is provided by a unit of the institution located in another city, it shall always be covered by a separate self-evaluation report. In case a study programme has specializations, those specializations shall be covered in the same self-evaluation report but each examined separately.

76. Full-time and part-time modes shall be examined separately. The mode of studies which is analysed first shall be presented in full while the analysis of the other mode shall present information common to both modes of studies only through references to the description of the mode of studies analysed first.

77. In case the programme is a joint study programme (i.e. it has been developed and provided together with another/other higher education institution(s)), the self-evaluation report shall clearly separate the parts of the programme provided by each institution and their learning resources (equipment, teaching materials and human resources) used for the provision of their part of the programme.

78. The electronic versions of the self-evaluation reports on the study programmes of the same study field shall be submitted on CD or sent to the Centre by e-mail. The common part of the report relevant to all the study programmes of the same study field shall be submitted as a DOC or PDF document. The self-evaluation report and its annexes shall be compressed in WinZip or WinRAR format. The cover of the file shall carry the name of the higher education institution (abbreviated) and the title of the study programme (it is recommended that titles consisting of more than three words should be shortened) in English. The titles of the files shall contain no Lithuanian characters. Each annex of the self-evaluation report shall be submitted as a separate document. Annexes submitted in separate documents shall be attached to the same folder.

79. The first page of the self-evaluation report shall contain the name of the higher education institution conducting the self-evaluation, its logo, the study field, the year of the self-evaluation report and the title of the study programme. The lower part of the page shall contain the personal details (title, first and last names) and the signatures of the head of the higher education institution and the leader of the self-evaluation team.

80. The bottom of the first page shall carry the venue, year and month of the self-evaluation report.

81. The second page of the report shall contain the title of the study programme, higher education type, level (first, second) or type (in cases of integrated studies), mode, duration in years, the scope of the programme in credits, qualifications awarded and the registration date of the study programme. It may also contain certain additional information such as the start of the programme provision, the language of instruction and other details.

82. The lower part of the second page shall contain personal details of the self-evaluation group members: academic rank, scientific degree, first and last name, position at the higher education institution, telephone numbers (office, mobile) and e-mail address, which will be necessary while organising the visit or clarifying issues relating to the self-evaluation report.

83. The self-evaluation report shall consist of the following parts: introduction, analysis of the programme, annexes.

84. The introduction should contain the following:

- 84.1. a brief description of the organisational structure of the higher education institution providing the study programme, its units, their management and interrelations, the appropriateness and weaknesses of the institution's organisational structure;
- 84.2. the composition of the self-evaluation group, the scope of the work and responsibilities of each member and the schedule of the team activities;



- 84.3. reference to the previous evaluation of the study programme, if any, and the evaluators.
85. The analytical part of the self-evaluation report shall cover six areas to be evaluated according to the criteria established in this Methodology or additional evaluation areas and (or) criteria set by the Centre and higher education institution in the agreement concerning external evaluation.
86. The self-evaluation report shall be accompanied with the following annexes:
- 86.1. descriptions of the study subjects and/or modules;
  - 86.2. list of the teaching staff;
  - 86.3. descriptions of the teaching staff's activities;
  - 86.4. list of the students' final thesis;
  - 86.5. summary of the report (if there is such) of the previous evaluation (up to two pages);
  - 86.6. agreement between the higher education institutions providing a joint programme.
87. The first annex to the self-evaluation report shall contain descriptions of the study subjects and/or modules. The descriptions may be presented in the form established by the higher education institution, but they shall contain the following information: title of the subject/module, scope in credits and hours, annotation, intended learning outcomes and their evaluation criteria, contents, literature, etc. In case the higher education institution has produced a publication including the information on the subjects/modules referred to herein, their description may be replaced by the relevant extracts from the publication.
88. The second annex to the self-evaluation report shall contain data on the teaching staff: their names, surnames, dates of birth, the subjects taught and their scientific (artistic), educational and practical experience in years.
89. The third annex to the self-evaluation report shall contain descriptions of the teaching staff's activities presented in a free form. The description shall contain the following information: the person's name and surname, educational background, work experience (positions and duties involved), the most significant scientific (artistic) or methodological publications in the past 5 years, proficiency in foreign languages. The list of the teaching staff shall be presented in the alphabetical order of their surnames. In case of a joint study programme, the annex shall include descriptions of each institution's teaching staff involved in the provision of the programme. Descriptions of the activities of the staff teaching general subjects shall not be required.
90. The fourth annex to the self-evaluation report shall contain the list of the students' final thesis and their evaluation for the past two years.

## **II. ANALYSIS OF THE STUDY PROGRAMME**

91. Study programmes shall be examined according to six areas and the criteria established in the Methodology and according to additional evaluation areas and (or) criteria if that was agreed in the agreement concerning external evaluation.
92. The aim of the evaluation of the programme aims and learning outcomes shall be to ascertain the validity and appropriateness of the need for the programme, its aims and learning outcomes
93. Analysis of the programme aims and learning outcomes shall concentrate on and present the aims and learning outcomes of the programme.
94. It is also recommended that the analysis of the programme aims and learning outcomes includes the analysis of:
- 94.1. public resources (information publications, websites, etc.) containing the description of the programme aims and learning outcomes;
  - 94.2. data on the regularity of evaluation of learning outcomes and the involvement of stakeholders;

- 94.3. compliance with legal acts and other documents establishing academic or professional requirements or recommendations for the qualifications of specialists trained;
- 94.4. research findings in the respective area of professional practice to support the validity of the intended learning outcomes;
- 94.5. professional activity areas of the specialists trained under the programme in terms of their links to the learning outcomes;
- 94.6. indication where the programme fits among the other programmes of the same study field provided by the higher education institution.
- 95. Evaluation of the curriculum design should seek to ascertain the appropriateness of the study plan and its contents.
- 96. Evaluation of the curriculum design shall involve the analysis of:
  - 96.1. the study plan;
  - 96.2. descriptions of the subjects taught and/or modules.
  - 96.3. the logic of the programme (relationship between the learning outcomes of the programme, learning outcomes of subjects/modules and study methods);
  - 96.4. requirements for bachelor's and master's final thesis.
- 97. The aim of the teaching staff evaluation is to ascertain that the programme is being implemented by an adequately qualified teaching staff.
- 98. Evaluation of the teaching staff shall involve the analysis of:
  - 98.1. the list of the teaching staff complete with information on each member's academic rank and scientific degree (if any); teaching experience; research interests; subjects taught; practical work experience in the area of the subjects taught;
  - 98.2. description of each member's activities (to be presented as Annex 3 to the self-evaluation report);
  - 98.3. information on the teaching staff's involvement in applied research, projects and research (artistic) activities directly related to the study programme being evaluated;
  - 98.4. student/teacher ratio in the provision of the study programme;
  - 98.5. data on the teaching staff exchange (visiting/outgoing teaching staff ratio).
- 99. It is recommended that the analysis of the teaching staff also includes:
  - 99.1. data to prove compliance of the staff composition with legal requirements;
  - 99.2. data on the teaching staff turnover;
  - 99.3. data on the participation of the teaching staff in scientific conferences, workshops, exchange programmes, long-term visits, etc.
  - 99.4. methods of professional (educational, scientific, practical) development of the staff;
  - 99.5. professional development areas and statistics of participation;
  - 99.6. age profile of the academic staff;
  - 99.7. workload of the academic staff (in the provision of the programme under evaluation and other programmes; time allocated for research and/or other (professional) activities, etc.).
- 100. In evaluating facilities and learning resources it is necessary to ascertain that the learning materials, equipment and facilities are adequate to ensure a successful provision of the study programme.
- 101. Evaluation of this area should include:
  - 101.1. data on the facilities used for the delivery of the programme and their capacity;
  - 101.2. data on the equipment used for the delivery of the programme;
  - 101.3. data on the facilities used for students' practice;
  - 101.4. data on the teaching/learning materials available at the institution's library, reading rooms and subject rooms; access to e-publications, etc.

102. It is also recommended to include and/or analyse information on the updating and upgrading of the learning resources.

103. Analysis of the study process and students' performance assessment should seek to evaluate the adequacy and appropriateness of such processes as student admission and selection, organisation of studies, student support and the employment success of graduates.

104. Evaluation of the study process and students' performance assessment should include the analysis of:

- 104.1. admission requirements;
- 104.2. average cut-off marks or other indicators significant of academic preparation for studies.
- 104.3. student retention ratio;
- 104.4. extent and forms of student participation in research, art and experimental development activities;
- 104.5. forms of student support;
- 104.6. principles of student performance assessment;
- 104.7. list of the bachelor's and master's final thesis for the past two years with the indication of the subject, supervisor and assessment of the project.

105. It is also recommended that the evaluation of the study process and students' performance assessment includes:

- 105.1. data on admission to the study programme:
  - 105.1.1. the number of applications for admission;
  - 105.1.2. the number of admissions;
  - 105.1.3. the highest and lowest admission marks;
- 105.2. data on the students' progress (examination marks) by linking this information to admission marks and attrition (drop-out) rates;
- 105.3. data on attrition rates (by each year);
- 105.4. causes for attrition;
- 105.5. proportion of students' time allocated to contact hours, practice and independent work;
- 105.6. number of students participating in mobility programmes (by indicating the number of outgoing and incoming exchange students pursuing studies under the programme);
- 105.7. statistical data on students completing their studies and the need for specialists trained under the study programme (reference to the source of information on the need for specialists must be provided);
- 105.8. data on the time needed for specialists fresh from a higher education institution to find permanent employment in the labour market;
- 105.9. data on the employment of graduates who obtained qualifications under the evaluated study programme (employment (any) and employment according to the specialist qualifications) (including those who were in employment before leaving higher education);
- 105.10. methods and strategies applied to tackle the problem of plagiarism and cheating;
- 105.11. opportunities for selecting optional subjects and/or modules according to need.

106. In evaluating the programme management, it is necessary to ascertain that the programme is properly administered and the internal quality assurance of the programme is effective and transparent.

107. Analysis of programme management shall involve the following:

- 107.1. programme management and decision-taking procedures;
- 107.2. ways (means) to ensure the quality of the programme;
- 107.3. summary of the latest evaluation of the programme (if any) (up to two pages; could be provided as an annex to the self-evaluation report).

108. It is recommended that the programme management analysis also includes the analysis of:

- 108.1. documents defining the responsibilities of the programme providers;
- 108.2. opinion of the programme's administrative and teaching staff on the distribution of responsibilities;
- 108.3. documents regulating internal quality assurance within the higher education institution;
- 108.4. data on information accumulation and analysis for the past 5 years. Where the programme has been provided for a shorter period than that, the report should present data on the entire period of its existence;
- 108.5. data on the involvement of stakeholders in the process of programme evaluation and improvement and their impact on the improvement of the programme;
- 108.6. ways of making the process and outcomes of programme evaluation and improvement accessible to the institution's (faculty's) community and social partners and the impact of such publicity;
- 108.7. feedback from the teaching staff, students, alumni and employers on the provision of the programme;
- 108.8. sources of information on the quality of studies;
- 108.9. most important changes triggered by the latest evaluation outcomes.

## IV EXTERNAL EVALUATION

### I. EXPERT TEAM WORK

109. The general principles of expert team formation and work shall be defined by this Methodology and the Procedure for Expert Selection.

110. In setting up an expert team, the Centre shall adhere to the principles of objectivity transparency, impartiality and reasonableness.

111. All the members of the expert team shall complete and sign a Declaration on the Expert's Interests and a pledge not make the information obtained during the evaluation publicly available.

112. Expert team members shall be guided by the principles of objectivity, impartiality, respect for the participants of the evaluation process, confidentiality and cooperation.

113. Objectivity principle. An expert shall be fair in his/her efforts to achieve the aims of the evaluation and to evaluate the study programme objectively. While expressing his/her opinion, formulating conclusions or taking decisions, an expert shall draw on precise facts and information and his/her own competence.

114. Impartiality principle. In evaluating a study programme, an expert shall act as an independent person, shall not represent any institution or any interests and shall rely on his/her own competence.

115. The principle of respect for the participants of the evaluation. During an evaluation, an expert shall act with good grace, as a professional, shall not abuse his/her functions of an expert and shall not use any financial, psychological or any other pressure. An expert shall treat the participants of the evaluation as persons capable of taking responsibility for their actions therefore, when referring to the strengths and weaknesses of the study programme, an expert shall refrain from advice on what, in his opinion, could lead to the best solutions.

116. Confidentiality principle. All the information relating to the evaluation (issues considered at meetings, opinions offered by other participants of the evaluation, the self-evaluation report and documents provided for evaluation) shall be used strictly for the purposes of the evaluation and may not be divulged for any other purpose.

117. Cooperation principle. As a member of the external evaluation team, an expert shall seek common aims with the other members of the team and shall carry out his/her assignments in a timely manner. In his/her relations with the higher education institution, an expert shall make every effort to help the institution enhance its culture of quality and shall seek to develop mutual understanding.

118. Trust principle. During evaluation it shall be deemed that information presented by higher education institution is true if other objective data do not testify contrarily.

119. Analysis principle. During evaluation the analysis of presented documents and other data gathered during the visit is performed.

120. The work of the expert team shall be organised by the leader of the team, who shall chair the meetings of the team, set tasks for the team members and bear the general responsibility for the team's work. During the visit, the team leader shall chair meetings with target groups or appoint another member of the team to chair such meetings.

121. The expert team shall receive the self-evaluation report from the Centre. The Centre shall introduce the expert team to the Methodology and other documents governing studies and their evaluation.

122. In their analysis of the self-evaluation report, the experts shall be guided by the criteria defined in this Methodology and other documents governing quality evaluation in higher education. Based on their analysis of the self-evaluation report, the experts shall produce a preliminary report and determine areas and questions to be concentrated upon during the visit.

123. The visit shall be organised by the evaluation coordinator appointed by the Centre, who will coordinate the schedule of the visit with the higher education institution and the expert team.

124. During the visit, the expert team shall meet target groups such as the administration of the higher education institution and its units, the self-evaluation group, providers of the programme, students, alumni and their employers. The expert team shall also see the premises and equipment used for the implementation of the programme, students' term and final thesis, examination materials and other documents.

125. The aim of the visit is to collect as much information on the programme as possible so as to enable the experts to produce a comprehensive and objective evaluation of the programme.

126. At the end of the visit, the expert team shall discuss the outcomes of the visit among themselves and present their opinion on the strengths and weaknesses of the programme to the institution's community.

## II. EVALUATION OF THE PROGRAMME

127. The expert team shall evaluate the programme according to the areas and criteria defined in this Methodology and additional evaluation areas and (or) criteria if that was agreed in the agreement concerning external evaluation.

128. After evaluating each area according to the established evaluation criteria, the experts shall identify the strengths and weaknesses of each area, present recommendations for programme improvement and evaluate the institution's efforts to enhance the quality of the programme.

129. In evaluating the programme aims and learning outcomes, the experts shall determine the need for the programme and the validity and suitability of its aims and learning outcomes.

130. In evaluating the curriculum design, the experts shall express their opinion on the study plan and its content.

131. In evaluating the teaching staff, the experts shall evaluate the competence and adequacy of the teaching staff for the successful provision of the programme.

132. In evaluating facilities and learning resources, the experts shall determine the suitability and adequacy of the facilities, equipment and teaching materials for the successful provision of the programme.

133. In evaluating the study process and students' performance assessment, the experts shall determine the adequacy and effectiveness of the admission requirements and selection procedures, assessment of the students' performance, organisation of the studies and student support and the success of the graduates in finding employment in general and in their specialist areas.

134. In evaluating the programme management area, the experts shall establish the adequacy, effectiveness and transparency of the programme management and the internal assurance of the programme quality.

135. It may be that evaluation of each evaluation area is presented in the report in the following scale if this was agreed in the agreement concerning external evaluation:

135.1. Very good. The area is developed systematically and implemented effectively;

135.2. Good. The area mainly meets legal requirements, there are no essential shortcomings;

135.3. Satisfactory. The area meets legal requirements but there are shortcomings that must be eliminated and higher education institution is capable of doing it;

135.4. Not satisfactory. There are essential shortcomings for which the programme can no longer be run.

136. Overview evaluation of study programme may be presented in the report in the cases set by the agreement concerning external evaluation.

## **V. APPEALS PROCEDURE**

137. In case it objects to the external evaluation report, the higher education institution may lodge a motivated appeal with the Centre within 20 days of the dispatch of the decision.

138. The appeal shall be dealt with within 60 days of its receipt by the Study Programmes' Appeals Committee (hereinafter referred to as the Appeals Committee) on acting according to its regulations approved by the Centre Director's order. The Centre shall notify the higher education institution of the Appeals Committee decision by letter.

