

Last amended on 23/10/2020

The order published in the Register of Legal Acts on 09/01/2020, ID 2020-00253

Unofficial translation

APPROVED

Order No. V-2 of the Director
of the Centre for Quality Assessment
in Higher Education of 8 January 2020

THE STATUTE OF THE COMMISSION OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS' REVIEW

CHAPTER I GENERAL PROVISIONS

1. The Statute of the Commission of the Higher Education Institutions' Review (hereinafter referred to as 'the Statute') establishes the functions, rights, duties, responsibility, formation and activity organisation procedure for the Higher Education Evaluation Commission (hereinafter referred to as 'the Commission') established by the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education (hereinafter referred to as 'the Centre').

2. The Commission is a collegial body which considers expert external review reports of higher education institutions and branches of foreign higher education institutions in the Republic of Lithuania, higher education institutions operating in exile conditions, applications for licences to provide studies and related activities (hereinafter referred to as the 'Report'), and advises the Centre on issues related to the activities of higher education institutions and the regulation of the institutional review of higher education institutions. The Commission shall be accountable to the Centre.

Amendments to sub-paragraph:

No V-82, 20/10/2022, published in the Register of Legal Acts on 22/10/2022, ID 2022-21939

3. The Commission shall carry out its activities in accordance with the Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania, Law on Higher Education and Research of the Republic of Lithuania, Procedure for the External Review and Accreditation of Higher Education Institutions and Branches of Foreign Higher Education Institutions, approved by the order of the Minister of Education, Science and Sport of the Republic of Lithuania, the Procedure for the External Review of Higher Education Institutions Operating in Exile Conditions, approved by the Resolution of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania, other legal acts regulating the system of education, research and higher education system, the present Statute, and the Standards and guidelines for quality assurance in the European higher education area.

4. The Commission shall adhere to the following principles:

4.1. The principle of objectivity. When considering review reports, expressing his/her opinion, putting questions and making suggestions, and taking decisions, the member of the Commission shall act without any prejudice and shall refer to the facts, the information provided;

4.2. The principle of impartiality. A member of the Commission shall act independently, shall not represent any institution's or person's interests, rely on his/her own competence, shall declare his impartiality before each meeting, indicate his interests regarding the issues set on the agenda, shall take all possible measures to avoid conflicts of interest, and shall disqualify himself/herself from the examination, consideration and voting.

Amendments to sub-paragraph:

No V-82, 20/10/2022, published in the Register of Legal Acts on 22/10/2022, ID 2022-21939

4.3. The principle of respect. A member of the Commission shall behave in a professional and courteous manner, shall not abuse his/her position, shall not use financial, psychological or other pressures, shall listen to persons attending the meeting or other members of the Commission, shall be prepared for the meeting, shall acquaint himself/herself thoroughly with the material submitted, shall be concise in his/her remarks, and shall refrain from criticism of, or from offering any suggestions or advice to, higher education institutions in relation to the performance of their activities.

4.4. The principle of confidentiality. All information relating to the peer review (questions raised in the meetings, during the visit, opinions expressed by the participants, the application documents, the self-evaluation report and the additional documents submitted for the review) shall be used for the sole purpose of the Commission and shall not be made public or disclosed to any third party.

4.5. The activities of the Commission shall be communicated to the public in the Centre's Annual Activity Report, on the Centre's website and on social media.

5. The activities of the Commission shall be communicated to the public in the Centre's Annual Activity Report, on the Centre's website and on social media.

CHAPTER II FUNCTIONS, RIGHTS, DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITY

6. The Commission shall perform the following functions:

6.1. consider if the review reports submitted by the experts to the Centre are objective, comprehensive, substantiated, and accept one of the recommendations set forth in Point 7 of the Statute;

6.2. at the meetings of the Commission, submits proposals on legal acts regulating the activities of higher education institutions, branches of foreign higher education institutions in the Republic of Lithuania, higher education institutions operating in exile conditions, their external review, and the licensing to conduct of studies and related activities;

6.3. At the meeting of the Commission, analyse the progress reports of the higher education institutions and provide the Centre with feedback and recommendations for higher education institutions.

Amendments to sub-paragraph:

No V-82, 20/10/2022, published in the Register of Legal Acts on 22/10/2022, ID 2022-21939

7. Once the review report drawn by the experts is examined, the Commission shall recommend the following to the Centre:

7.1. to approve the report drawn by the experts;

7.2. to reject the report drawn by the experts.

8. While performing its functions, the Commission shall have the right to:

8.1. at its meeting, request the experts, research and higher education institutions, employees of the Centre – evaluation coordinators, other interested persons to give their opinion on the matter in question;

8.2. receive information from the experts and the Centre needed for the activities of the Evaluation Commission;

8.3. organise extended meetings of the Evaluation Commission, to which specialists interested in the issue under consideration, scholars, representatives of research and higher education institutions, public institutions, social partners of research and higher education institutions can be invited.

9. Members of the Evaluation Commission are obliged to:

9.1. attend the meetings of the Commission, and if they may not attend the meeting, must give at least three working days' notice to the Centre;

9.2. perform the tasks delegated to them in a timely and proper manner, to attend the meeting only after having studied the reports and the meeting materials to be discussed at the meeting;

9.3. to adhere to the principles and ethical requirements, set in p. 4 of the Statute;

9.4. to act in accordance with the functions defined in the Statute, and to refrain from making proposals to the representatives of the higher education institutions on the implementation of activities;

9.5. to inform the Centre in advance of the intended agenda of the meeting of any potential conflicts of interest and to abstain from the consideration, discussion, debate, voting and tabling of such matters.

10. The Committee shall be responsible for preparing and submitting to the Centre reasoned, substantiated proposals in the cases set out in sub-paragraphs 6.1 to 6.3 of this Statute.

Amendments to sub-paragraph:

No V-82, 20/10/2022, published in the Register of Legal Acts on 22/10/2022, ID 2022-21939

11. The members of the Commission shall be responsible for the implementation of the functions assigned to the Commission and for compliance with legal acts, in accordance with the procedures laid down in the legislation.

CHAPTER III FORMATION PROCEDURE

12. The Evaluation Commission shall be composed of at least 9 members, but not more than 12 members. Members to the Commission shall be appointed by the Centre. The members of the Commission shall be nominated by the entities identified in p.14 of the Statute. The nominations shall be considered by a permanent internal Commission of the Centre and the members of the Commission shall be selected by means of public procurement. The members of the Commission shall be appointed for a maximum period of 3 years (except for the student representative, who shall be appointed for a maximum period of 2 years). The same person may not be appointed as a member of the Commission more than 2 times consecutively.

Amendments to sub-paragraph:

No V-82, 20/10/2022, published in the Register of Legal Acts on 22/10/2022, ID 2022-21939

13. Scientists, specialists of a respective field distinguished for their competence and creativity, famous public figures, employees of the administration of higher education institutions, lecturers experienced in performing an expert review, students, representatives of social partners of higher education institutions, and civil servants of public institutions performing the functions of public administration of research and higher education can be appointed as members of the Commission. The Centre strives for gender balance in the composition of the Evaluation Panel and to include individuals from different fields of science and studies.

14. The Committee is composed of:

14.1. persons from higher education institutions of the Republic of Lithuania:

14.1.1. at least 2 from different universities;

14.1.2. at least 2 from different colleges;

14.1.3. at least 2 persons with experience in higher education institution management or administration;

14.2. student - a member nominated by Lithuanian student representations or their union;

14.3. at least 1 person from the social partners of higher education institutions;

14.4. a civil servant or employee of a public authority exercising public administration functions in science and studies;

14.5. other persons (staff of research and higher education institutions, researchers, specialists with a record of competence and creativity in teaching, lecturers, persons with experience in expert assessment, employees and civil servants of public institutions).

14¹. When the Commission is considering the external review report of a higher education institution operating under exile conditions, the person(s) delegated by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Lithuania is (are) invited to attend the meeting.

Sub-paragraph added:

No V-82, 20/10/2022, published in the Register of Legal Acts on 22/10/2022, ID 2022-21939

15. The Chairperson of the Commission shall be appointed by the Centre from among the members of the Commission. The Vice-Chairperson of the Commission shall be selected by the Commission by a majority vote of the members.

16. If no new member of the Commission is appointed after the expiry of the term of office of a member of the Commission, the member whose term of office has expired shall remain in office until a new member has been appointed in his/her place, but not later than 6 months after the expiry of the term of office.

17. A member of the Commission who fails to perform his/her duties in a timely and proper manner (by refusing to attend or failing to attend 3 consecutive meetings without prior notice, by failing to comply with ethical requirements, by failing to carry out or by improperly carrying out the work entrusted to him/her by the Chairperson of the Commission or by the Secretary of the Commission, or by failing to carry out or by improperly carrying out any of the other duties set out in the present Statute), may be dismissed by the Centre and replaced by a replacement in accordance with the procedures laid down in the Statute.

CHAPTER IV ORGANISATION OF ACTIVITIES

18. The main form of the activities of the Evaluation Commission shall be a meeting. Meetings of the Evaluation Commission usually shall be held in the premises of the Centre. Members of the Commission may also participate remotely in meetings organised on the premises of the Centre, in 4 agreement with the Secretary. Working conditions of the Evaluation Commission shall be established by the Centre.

19. The Centre shall convene meetings of the Commission as required.

20. The meeting material is normally made available to the members of the Commission 5 working days before the meeting. In special cases, the meeting materials may be made available at a later date, in agreement with the Chairperson and the intended referring members.

21. A meeting of the Commission shall be legitimate if at least two thirds of the members of the Commission are present, except as provided for in paragraph 23 of the Statutes. The proposals of the Commission, as set out in paragraph 7 of the Statute, shall be adopted by open ballot. A proposal shall be deemed to have been adopted when a majority of the members of the Commission present and not absent at the meeting vote in favour of it. In the event of a tied vote, the person presiding over the meeting of the Commission shall have the casting vote. The members of the Commission may vote for or against the review report when voting on their approval. Abstentions are prohibited.

22. The meetings of the evaluation panel are minuted. The minutes of the meeting shall be signed by the member of the Commission who chaired the meeting and the secretary of the meeting.

23. If less than two thirds of the Commission members are present at the meeting, the agenda of the meeting can be considered, but the recommendations established in paragraph 7 hereof may not be adopted at such meeting. Draft recommendation can be developed at the meeting. Draft minutes of the meeting are sent to all members of the Commission after the meeting (including draft recommendations). Upon making themselves familiar with the minutes, the members shall vote 'for'

or 'against' every recommendation by post or electronic mail. The recommendation of the Commission shall be considered approved, when more than half of all members of the Commission vote for it within five working days from the dispatch of the draft minutes of the meeting. Upon expiry of the voting term, the secretary of the meeting shall issue the minutes of the meeting and send it to the Chairperson of the Commission via email. The date of adoption of the decision of the Commission shall be deemed to be the date of the minutes of the vote in favour of the proposal.

24. The Chair of the Commission shall perform the following functions:

24.1. chair the meetings of the Commission;

24.2. represent the Commission or delegate this function to his/her Deputy, and if not possible – to any member of the Commission;

24.3. assume responsibility for quality and effectiveness of the activities of the Commission.

25. In absence of the Chair of the Evaluation Commission, his/her functions shall be performed by the Deputy Chair of the Commission, and in absence of them both – a member of the Commission present at the meeting shall be elected by the majority of votes of the members present at the meeting.

26. The work of the Commission shall be organised by the Secretary of the Commission, appointed by the Centre from among the civil servants and/or staff of the Centre. The Secretary shall not be a member of the Commission.

27. The Secretary of the Commission shall perform the following functions:

27.1. notifies the members of the Commission of the time and place of the scheduled meeting, prepares the agenda for the meetings, and provides the members of the Commission with the meeting materials;

27.2. provide the Director of the Centre with information on the estimated costs required for the operation of the Commission;

27.3. drafting documents relating to the work of the Commission and taking minutes of its meetings;

27.4. inform the Centre about the activities of the Commission. 28. All documents relating to the activities of the Commission shall be kept at the Centre in accordance with the procedures established by the Centre.

CHAPTER V FINAL PROVISIONS

29. Service agreements shall be signed with the members of the Commission following the procedure established by the legal acts.

30. The members of the Commission shall be remunerated in accordance with the procedures laid down by law.

31. Any amendments to the Statute may be made by the proposal of the Commission or the Centre.
