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APPROVED

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21 of of the Director of the Centre for  
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## **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 conduct studies and related activities (hereinafter referred to as the 'Report'), progress reports on the implementation of the recommendations of the external institutional review of higher education institutions (hereinafter referred to as "Progress Reports") 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.
3. The Commission shall be guided by the Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania, the Law on Higher Education and Research of the Republic of Lithuania, the Procedure for Institutional 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 Institutional Review and Accreditation of Higher Education Institutions Operating in the Exilic Conditions approved by the Resolution of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania, other legal acts regulating the system of education, science and studies, the Regulations as well as the European Higher Education Area quality assurance regulations and guidelines.
4. The Commission shall adhere to the following principles:
  - 4.1. The principle of objectivity. When considering Reports and (or) Progress 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 and 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/her 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.

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 (self-evaluation report, additional documents submitted for institutional review, comments submitted by higher education institutions regarding factual errors, information received in any way (by e-mail, etc.) submitted in preparation for the meeting, meetings, issues examined during the visit, opinions expressed by participants, statements of participants, conclusions, Progress Reports, documents of the application for a position expressed by experts in writing or orally, self-evaluation report and 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.

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 RESPONSIBILITIES**

6. The Commission shall perform the following functions:

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

6.2. consider Progress Reports and provide feedback to the Centre and, as appropriate, recommendations addressed to higher education institutions;

6.3 at the meetings of the Commission, submit 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;

7. After examining the Report prepared by the experts, 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. After examining the Progress Reports prepared by higher education institutions, the Commission provides the Centre with substantiated feedback on the implementation of the recommendations of the institutional review of higher education institutions and the appropriateness of the Progress Report.

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

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

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

9.3. organise extended meetings of the 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.

10. Members of the Commission are obliged to:
- 10.1. attend the meetings of the Commission;
  - 10.2. If they are not able attend the meeting, must immediately give notice to the Centre;
  - 10.3. perform the tasks delegated to them in a timely and proper manner, to attend the meeting only after having studied the meeting materials to be discussed at the meeting;
  - 10.4. to adhere to the principles and ethical requirements, set in paragraph 4 of the Statute;
  - 10.5. to act in accordance with the functions defined in the Statute;
  - 10.6. after having read the scheduled agenda of the meeting, inform the Centre in advance (no later than 5 working days before the start of the scheduled meeting) of possible conflicts of interest (including contacts with representatives of the higher education institution whose external review report, progress reports are being considered, members of the expert group, etc.) and to abstain from the consideration, discussion, discussion, voting and finalization of the results of such issues.
11. The Commission 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.
12. 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**

13. The Commission shall be composed of at least 9 but not more than 12 members. The members to the Commission shall be appointed by the Centre. Nominations for members of the Commission shall be considered by a permanent internal panel of the Centre. 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 for more than 2 times consecutively.
14. The members of the Commission may be appointed scientists, lecturers, specialists of impeccable reputation, with good work (or study) results and/or expert experience, specialists notable for their competence and creativity, employees of the administration of higher education institutions, students, representatives of the social partners of higher education institutions, and a civil servants or employees of a public authority exercising public administration functions in science and studies. The Centre aims to involve individuals from different fields of science and studies, public and non-state higher education institutions located in different regions of Lithuania.
15. The Commission is composed of:
- 15.1. persons from higher education institutions of the Republic of Lithuania:
    - 15.1.1. at least 2 from different universities;
    - 15.1.2. at least 2 from different colleges;
    - 15.1.3. at least 2 persons with experience in higher education institution management or administration;
  - 15.2. student - a member nominated by Lithuanian student representations or their union;
  - 15.3. at least 1 person from the social partners of higher education institutions;
  - 15.4. a civil servant or employee of a public authority exercising public administration functions in science and studies;
  - 15.5. 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).

16. When the Commission is considering institutional 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 shall be invited to attend the meeting.

17. The Chair of the Commission shall be appointed by the Centre from among the members of the Commission. The Vice-Chair of the Commission shall be selected by the Commission by a majority decision of the members of the Commission.

18. 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.

19. 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 Chair 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**

20. The main form of the activities of the Commission shall be a meeting. Meetings of the Commission usually shall be held in the premises of the Centre. Members of the Commission who are unable to attend the meetings organised on the premises of the Centre, may also participate remotely in agreement with the Chair of the Commission and the Secretary. Working conditions of the Commission shall be established by the Centre.

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

22. The meeting materials shall normally be made available to the members of the Commission 5 working days before the meeting. In special cases, the meeting material may be made available at a later date, in agreement with the Commission. For each issue under consideration, 2 rapporteurs shall be appointed to present the material submitted and to make reasoned proposals in accordance with the functions of the Commission as set out in paragraph 6. All members of the Commission present at the meeting shall take note of the proceedings and participate in the deliberations for the purpose of taking decisions and/or making proposals. Members of the Commission may be requested to present a reasoned written opinion on the matter before the meeting.

23. A meeting of the Commission shall be valid if at least two thirds of the total number of members of the Commission are present, except as provided for in paragraph 25 of the Statute. The proposals of the Commission set out in point 7 of the Statutes shall be adopted by open ballot, with a vote in favour or against. Abstentions shall be prohibited. A proposal shall be deemed to have been adopted when a majority of the members of the Commission present at the meeting and not absent vote in favour of it. In the event of a tied vote, the person presiding over the meeting of the Commission shall have a casting vote.

24. The meetings of the Commission are recorded. The extract of the meeting protocol (summarising the matter discussed and the proposal adopted by the Commission) shall be signed by the member of the Commission who chaired the meeting and the secretary of the meeting

25. 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 the Statute's paragraph 7 and (or) paragraph 6.2 hereof may not be adopted at such meeting. Draft recommendation can be developed at the meeting. Draft minutes of the meeting protocol are sent to all members of the Commission after

the meeting (including draft recommendations). Upon making themselves familiar with the draft protocol, the members shall vote 'for' or 'against' every recommendation by email. 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 meeting protocol. Upon expiry of the voting term, the secretary of the meeting shall issue the meeting protocol and send it to the Chair of the Commission via email. The date of adoption of the decision of the Commission shall be deemed to be the date of the meeting protocol of the vote in favour of the proposal.

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

26.1. chair the meetings of the Commission;

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

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

27. In absence of the Chair of the 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.

28. 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.

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

29.1. 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;

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

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

29.4. inform the Centre about the activities of the Commission.

30. 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**

31. The members of the Commission shall be contracted for public procurement services in accordance with the procedure laid down by law.

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

33. The Statutes may be amended at the proposal of the Commission or the Centre.