



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

**ORDER
ON THE APPROVAL OF THE DESCRIPTION OF THE PROCEDURE FOR THE
EXTERNAL EVALUATION AND ACCREDITATION OF RESIDENCY STUDIES, THE
EVALUATION AREAS AND THE INDICATORS**

24 August 2020 No V-1269
Vilnius

In accordance with Paragraph 5 of Article 48 of the Law on Higher Education and Research of the Republic of Lithuania:

1. I approve the attached:
 - 1.1. description of the procedure for the external evaluation and accreditation of residency studies;
 - 1.2. evaluation areas and indicators for the external evaluation of residency studies.
2. I instruct the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education to prepare, coordinate with the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport and approve by 1 December 2020:
 - 2.1. the methodology for the external evaluation of residency studies;
 - 2.2. the methodology for the evaluation of residency study programmes to be carried out;
 - 2.3. the external evaluation plan for the residency studies.
3. I declare that study fields of residency studies implemented by all higher education institutions shall be deemed to have been accredited until they have been evaluated and accredited in accordance with the procedures set out in this Order.
4. This Order shall enter into force on 1 December 2020, with the exception of points 2 and 3.

Minister for Education, Science and Sport

Algirdas Monkevičius

APPROVED BY
Order No V-1269 of the Minister of Education,
Science and Sport of the Republic of Lithuania
of 24 August 2020

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROCEDURE FOR EXTERNAL EVALUATION AND ACCREDITATION OF RESIDENCY STUDIES

CHAPTER I GENERAL PROVISIONS

1. The Description of the Procedure for External Evaluation and Accreditation of Residency Studies (hereinafter referred to as ‘the Description’) regulates the procedure for external evaluation and accreditation of residency studies of higher education institutions established in the Republic of Lithuania and authorised to carry out studies and study-related activities (hereinafter referred to as ‘higher education institution), and of the residency studies carried out and to be carried out in the Republic of Lithuania and abroad.

2. The Description has been prepared in accordance with the Law on Higher Education and Research of the Republic of Lithuania and the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG).

3. The terms used in the Description correspond to the terms defined in the Law on Higher Education and Research of the Republic of Lithuania and other legal acts regulating residency studies.

4. External evaluation and accreditation of residency studies implemented by a higher education institution (hereinafter referred to as ‘residency studies’) shall be carried out at least once every 7 years. The external evaluation and accreditation of residency studies shall separately evaluate and accredit the residency studies of each study field provided by the higher education institution.

5. The external evaluation of residency studies shall be carried out in accordance with the plan for external evaluation of residency studies agreed and approved by the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education (hereinafter referred to as ‘the Centre’) and the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport of the Republic of Lithuania (hereinafter referred to as ‘the Ministry’). The plan for the external evaluation of residency studies, taking into account the deadlines for the accreditation of residency studies, shall be approved no later than 6 months before the start of the external evaluation and shall be published in the Register of Legal Acts and on the Centre’s website.

6. The external evaluation of residency studies shall be carried out by the Centre or by another higher education quality assessment agency included in the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR) or by agencies specified in international agreements (hereinafter referred to as ‘the Agency’).

CHAPTER II EXTERNAL EVALUATION OF RESIDENCY STUDIES IMPLEMENTED

7. The external evaluation of residency studies shall be carried out in accordance with the evaluation areas and indicators of the external evaluation (hereinafter referred to as ‘evaluation areas and indicators’) of residency studies approved by the Order of the Minister of Education, Science and Sport of the Republic of Lithuania (hereinafter referred to as ‘the Minister’).

8. A higher education institution shall apply to the Centre for the external evaluation and accreditation of residency studies in accordance with the procedure set out in the methodology for external evaluation of residency studies approved by the Director of the Centre (hereinafter referred to as ‘the evaluation methodology’) by submitting an application for evaluation and accreditation of the residency studies of a specific study field. If a higher education institution seeks to have an external evaluation of its residency studies carried out by the Agency, it shall apply to the Agency in accordance with the procedures established by the Agency.

9. The Centre carries out the external evaluation of residency studies in accordance with the Description, the evaluation areas and indicators, as well as the evaluation methodology. The Agency shall carry out the evaluation in accordance with the procedures and criteria for the external evaluation of residency studies established by the Agency and published on its website, under agreement with the higher education institution.

10. The external evaluation of residency studies is carried out in the following steps:

10.1. the self-evaluation of the residency studies by the higher education institution and the preparation of the self-evaluation report of the residency studies in accordance with the requirements set out in the evaluation methodology;

10.2. the submission of the self-evaluation report of residency studies to the Centre, during which the self-evaluation report shall be checked for compliance with the requirements set out in the evaluation methodology;

10.3. the examination of the self-evaluation report of the residency studies by an expert panel appointed by the Centre;

10.4. a visit of the expert panel to the place(s) of residency studies;

10.5. preparation of the external evaluation report of the residency studies (hereinafter referred to as 'the evaluation report'), and consideration of the evaluation report by the Study Evaluation Commission established by the Director of the Centre and operating in accordance with the regulations of the Study Evaluation Commission approved by the Director of the Centre (hereinafter referred to as 'the Study Evaluation Commission');

10.6. the adoption and public announcement of the decision on the accreditation of residency studies;

10.7. follow-up activity aimed at improving residency studies, taking into account the findings indicated in the evaluation report and the recommendations made therein for improving residency studies, and monitoring.

11. The evaluation report shall provide an overall analysis of the residency studies in terms of the evaluation areas and indicators and a rating of the evaluation areas according to the evaluation scale for the evaluation areas of evaluation of residency studies set out in the Annex to the Description (hereinafter referred to as 'the evaluation scale').

12. The Agency's report of external evaluation of the residency studies must include a rating of the evaluation areas and indicators or their corresponding evaluation areas applied by the Agency according to the evaluation scale set out in the Annex to the Description.

13. The deadlines for conducting the self-evaluation of the residency studies, for submitting the self-evaluation report and for carrying out the external evaluation of the residency studies are regulated by the Centre's evaluation methodology.

CHAPTER III ACCREDITATION OF RESIDENCY STUDIES

14. The external evaluation of residency studies is the basis for the decision to accredit the residency studies. The Centre decides on the accreditation of residency studies on the basis of the findings of the expert evaluation.

15. When the external evaluation of the residency studies has been carried out by the Agency, the higher education institution shall submit to the Centre, at least 2 months before the expiry of the deadline for accreditation of the residency studies in the specific field:

15.1. an application for accreditation of residency studies;

15.2. evaluation report that is no older than 1 year.

16. Upon receipt of the documents referred to in points 8 or 15 of the Description, the Centre shall take one of the following decisions on the accreditation of the residency studies at the higher education institution no later than within 20 working days (the time limit shall be calculated from the date of sending the evaluation report to the higher education institution in the case where the evaluation is conducted by the Centre):

16.1. to accredit for a period of seven years if all the evaluation areas and indicators have been assessed with a score of at least 3 on the evaluation scale set out in the Annex to the Description;

16.2. to accredit for a period of three years if at least one of the evaluation areas and indicators has been assessed as 'satisfactory' with 2 points or 'unsatisfactory' with 1 point on the evaluation scale set out in the Annex to the Description;

16.3. to provide no accreditation if, for the second consecutive time, at least one of the evaluation areas and indicators has been assessed 'satisfactory' with 2 points or 'unsatisfactory' with 1 point on the evaluation scale set out in the Annex to the Description.

17. The decision on accreditation of residency studies based on the findings of the Agency's evaluation shall be taken after the evaluation report has been examined by the Study Evaluation Commission and it has been established that:

17.1. the external evaluation of residency studies covers all ongoing residency studies in that field at the higher education institution;

17.2. the external evaluation of residency studies has been carried out in accordance with the evaluation areas and indicators of the evaluation areas or their corresponding evaluation areas applied by the Agency and the evaluation scale set out in the Annex to the Description;

17.3. the external evaluation of residency studies has been carried out by the Agency;

17.4. the findings of the evaluation report are no more than 1 year old;

17.5. the findings of the evaluation report are reasoned and based on the data provided by the higher education institution, the information gathered during the visit and other objective data.

18. If the decision is taken to accredit the residency studies for a 3-year period, after 2 years the higher education institution must submit a progress report on the implementation of the recommendations of the external evaluation of the residency studies to the Centre (hereafter referred to as the 'progress report'). The progress report shall be considered by a commission formed by the Minister and composed of representatives of the Ministry, the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Lithuania, the State Food and Veterinary Service, the Centre, representatives of higher education institutions delegated by the Lithuanian University Rectors' Conference, representatives of the social partners of the higher education institution, and representatives of the institutions representing the interests of resident students (hereafter referred to as 'the Commission'). The Commission, in accordance with the Commission's approved rules of procedure, shall assess whether the higher education institution has implemented the recommendations contained in the evaluation report and shall submit proposals on the continuation of the residency studies to the Centre no later than within 2 months from the date of receipt of the Progress Report. The Director of the Centre, taking into account the Commission's proposals on the continuation of the residency studies, shall take a decision on the accreditation of the residency studies:

18.1. to accredit for the remaining accreditation period until the next external evaluation of these residency studies, but not exceeding 4 years, provided that the higher education institution implements the recommendations of the evaluation;

18.2. to provide no accreditation if the higher education institution fails to implement the recommendations of the evaluation.

19. If a decision is taken provide no accreditation for the residency studies, the admission of resident students to these residency studies cannot take place.

20. If there are resident students enrolled in the residency studies for which the decision to provide no accreditation was taken, the higher education institution must, within 2 months (excluding July and August) from the date of the decision to provide no accreditation for residency studies:

20.1. establish a plan for the implementation of measures to ensure that resident students studying in the residency programme have the opportunity to complete their studies in a high-quality manner (hereinafter referred to as the 'plan of measures') (i.e. to indicate the measures that the higher education institution will take in order to remedy the fundamental deficiencies in the residency studies). The plan of measures also includes proposals for further study opportunities for residents, agreed with the institution representing the interests of the residents;

20.2. submit a plan of measures to the Ministry and inform the Ministry of the number of resident students studying in the residency study programme.

21. The Commission shall consider the plan of measures and, no later than 3 months after the date of receipt of the plan of measures, shall submit proposals to the Minister on the possibilities of further studies for the resident students studying at that time. The Minister shall take a decision on the possibilities of further studies for resident students studying at a higher education institution, taking into account the Commission's proposals. The Ministry shall inform the Centre and the higher education institution of the decision within 5 working days. The Centre, in accordance with the decision taken by the Minister on the possibilities of further studies of residents studying at a higher education institution, shall take a decision on the extension of the term of accreditation of studies in the field of study and the duration of the term of accreditation. The term of accreditation of residency studies may be extended until all residents admitted prior to the decision not to accredit residency studies have completed their studies, but for no longer than 5 years.

22. The term of accreditation of residency studies may be extended without an evaluation procedure when:

22.1. all residency studies are terminated, i.e. no new resident students are accepted or are expected to be accepted, and the term of accreditation for residency studies expires before the last class of accepted resident students completes their residency studies, but for no longer than 5 years;

22.2. it is necessary for the completion of the statutory procedures for the external evaluation of the residency studies and any possible appeals against the results of the external evaluation of the residency studies, but for no longer than 6 months;

22.3. the start of the residency studies was less than 3 years before the relevant external evaluation of the residency studies.

CHAPTER IV

EVALUATION OF THE RESIDENCY STUDIES TO BE CARRIED OUT

23. Before starting implementing the residency study programme to be carried out (hereinafter referred to as 'the study programme to be carried out') it shall be assessed in accordance with the procedure set out in the Description of the Procedure for the Registration of the Objects of the Register of Study and Training Programmes and Qualifications, approved by the Order of the Minister, registered in the Register of Study and Training Programmes and Qualifications (hereinafter referred to as 'the Register').

24. If the study field of residency studies implemented by a higher education institution is not evaluated and accredited in accordance with the procedure set out in the Description, the Centre shall make a simplified evaluation of the study programme to be carried out in order to assess whether the description of the study programme to be carried out has been prepared in accordance with the procedure set out in the Methodology for the Evaluation of Residency Study Programmes to be Carried out (hereafter referred to as 'the methodology for the evaluation of study programmes'), as well as to determine whether the study programme to be carried out complies with the Description of the Requirements and Supervision Procedure for the Execution of Medical Residency Study Programmes and Odontology Residency Study Programmes, as adopted by the Government of the Republic of Lithuania by its Decision No 144 on 13 February 2019, 'On Approval of the Description of the Requirements and Supervision Procedure for the Execution of Medical Residency Study Programmes and Odontology Residency Study Programmes' (where the residency study programme belongs to the group of study fields of health sciences), or the Description of the Requirements and Supervision Procedure for the Execution of Veterinary Medicine Residency Study Programmes, as adopted by the Government of the Republic of Lithuania by its Decision No 149 on 1 March 2017, 'On the implementation of the Law on Higher Education and Research of the Republic of Lithuania' (where the residency study programme belongs to the group of study fields of veterinary sciences), including requirements for the duration, theoretical and practical content of residency study programmes, and for

the supervisor of resident students. The higher education institution must submit to the Centre the documents referred to in Point 29 of the Description.

25. If a higher education institution's residency study programme is accredited for a period of 7 years in accordance with Point 16.1 of the Description, the study programme to be carried out shall be evaluated in accordance with the procedure established by the higher education institution. The higher education institution sends the information on study programme to be carried out that has been evaluated to the Centre. It shall be accompanied by the documents referred to in points 29.3 to 29.5 of the Description.

26. Where the study programme to be carried out is one of the residency study programmes that has been accredited for a period of 3 years in accordance with Point 16.2 of the Description, or where the higher education institution does not provide residency studies in that field, an external evaluation of the study programme to be carried out shall be conducted. A higher education institution shall apply to the Centre for the evaluation of a study programme to be carried out in accordance with the procedure laid down in the methodology for the evaluation of study programmes.

27. A higher education institution shall apply to the Agency for an external evaluation of the study programme to be carried out in accordance with the procedure established by the Agency.

28. The external evaluation of the study programme to be carried out shall be made on the basis of the evaluation areas and indicators (excluding those that are not relevant (cannot be assessed) for the new study programme).

29. When submitting a study programme to be carried out to the Centre for evaluation, a higher education institution shall submit:

29.1. an application for evaluation of the study programme to be carried out (if the higher education institution does not have accredited residency studies in that field, the application shall state that accreditation of residency studies in that field is also requested);

29.2. a description of the study programme to be carried out, drawn up in accordance with the procedure laid down in the methodology for the evaluation of study programmes;

29.3. the Ministry of Health's report on the need for the specialists to be trained and the services to be provided (where the residency study programme belongs to the group of study fields of health sciences);

29.4. the report of the State Food and Veterinary Service on the need for the specialists to be trained (where the residency study programme belongs to the group of study fields of veterinary sciences);

29.5. the data necessary for the registration of a study programme as indicated in the Description of the Procedure for the Registration of Objects in the Register of Study and Training Programmes and Qualifications, approved by the Minister's Order.

30. The external evaluation of the study programme to be carried out shall be made using the following steps:

30.1. the submission to the Centre of a description of the study programme to be carried out and assessment of its compliance with the provisions of the methodology for the evaluation of study programmes;

30.2. the examination of the description of the study programme to be carried out, which shall be made by an expert panel appointed by the Centre;

30.3. a visit by the expert panel to the higher education institution that is to implement the study programme to be carried out;

30.4. the preparation of the report of the external evaluation of the study programme to be carried out (hereinafter referred to as 'the report of the programme evaluation'), consideration by the Study Evaluation Commission, adoption of a decision on the evaluation of the study programme to be carried out and public announcement;

30.5. follow-up and monitoring of activities aimed at improving the residency studies, taking into account the programme evaluation report and the recommendations for improvement contained therein.

31. The Centre shall take one of the following decisions after examining the programme evaluation report prepared by the experts, no later than 20 working days after its receipt:

31.1. to evaluate the study programme to be carried out positively if no more than one of the evaluation areas and indicators is evaluated at least 'satisfactory' with a score of 2 points according to the evaluation scale set out in the Annex to the Description;

31.2. to evaluate the study programme to be carried out negatively if at least one of the evaluation areas and indicators is evaluated as 'unsatisfactory' with a score of 1 point or at least two evaluation areas are evaluated as 'satisfactory' with a score of 2 points according to the evaluation scale set out in the Annex to the Description.

32. In the event that a higher education institution does not have an accredited residency programme in that study field, and the study programme to be carried out is evaluated positively, the residency programme shall be accredited for the period until the next external evaluation of the residency programme in that study field at other higher education institutions is scheduled. If there are no other higher education institutions offering residency studies in that study field, the residency studies are accredited for 3 years.

33. After the decision referred to in Point 31.1 of the Description to evaluate positively the study programme to be carried out, which is the only residency study programme in that study field conducted by a higher education institution, during the period of accreditation of that study field, another study programme to be carried out may be registered in the Register only after an external evaluation has been made accordance with the procedure laid down in points 28 to 31 of the Description, and the Centre has taken a decision to evaluate positively such a study programme to be carried out positively.

CHAPTER V FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES

34. Once the Centre's decision on the accreditation of the residency studies or the evaluation of the study programme to be carried out has come into force, the higher education institution starts its follow-up activities.

35. The follow-up activities are designed to implement the suggestions made during the external evaluation of the residency studies or the residency studies to be carried out to improve the quality of the residency studies, and to ensure that the shortcomings identified during the external evaluation of the residency studies are addressed.

36. Steps for the follow-up activity:

36.1. provision of improvement measures - a higher education institution, having received a decision of the Centre on accreditation of residency studies or on the evaluation of a study programme to be carried out, shall, in accordance with the proposals made in the evaluation report, provide measures for the improvement of residency studies;

36.2. implementation of the planned measures - the higher education institution implements the planned measures to improve residency studies;

36.3. monitoring the results of the implementation of the measures - the Centre shall monitor the improvement of residency studies and the implementation of the recommendations.

CHAPTER VI FINAL PROVISIONS

37. Where a decision to provide no accreditation, as referred to in points 16.3 or 18.2 of the Description, is taken, the study programmes to be carried out belonging that particular study field may be submitted for evaluation no earlier than one year after the decision to provide no accreditation for residency studies comes into force.

38. The Ministry may initiate an extraordinary evaluation of accredited residency studies before the expiry of the term of accreditation of the residency studies in the event that it receives

information about the non-compliance of the ongoing residency studies with the requirements of legal acts.

39. Appeals against the external evaluation and accreditation of residency studies shall be dealt with in accordance with the procedures established by the Centre or the Agency.

40. The higher education institution and the Centre that carried out the external evaluation must publish the report of the external evaluation of the residency studies and the decision on the accreditation of the residency studies on its website no later than one month after the decision on the accreditation of the residency studies comes into force.

41. The personal data referred to in the Description are processed in accordance with Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 April 2016 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data, and repealing Directive 95/46/EC (General Data Protection Regulation), and the Law of the Republic of Lithuania on the Legal Protection of Personal Data for the purpose of the external evaluation and accreditation of residency studies and the registration of study programmes.

SCALE FOR ASSESSING THE EVALUATION AREAS OF RESIDENCY STUDIES

| Score | Rating | Description |
|--------------|---------------------|---|
| 5 | Exceptional quality | The area is rated exceptionally well in the national context and internationally. |
| 4 | Very good | The area is rated very well in the national context and internationally, without any drawbacks. |
| 3 | Good | The area is being developed systematically, without any major drawbacks. |
| 2 | Satisfactory | The area meets the minimum requirements, and there are drawbacks that must be addressed. |
| 1 | Unsatisfactory | The area does not meet the minimum requirements, there are fundamental drawbacks. |

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EVALUATION AREAS AND INDICATORS FOR THE EXTERNAL EVALUATION OF RESIDENCY STUDIES

| No | Evaluation areas | Objectives | Indicators |
|----|--|--|--|
| 1. | Objectives, outcomes and content of residency studies | Studies are based on the needs of the state and society and enable residents to achieve their study objectives and outcomes. | <p>1.1. Assessment of the relevance of the higher education institution's residency study programmes to the needs of the state and society.</p> <p>1.2. Assessment of the compliance of the study plan and the content of the residency study programme with the requirements of the legal acts and the objectives and outcomes of the study.</p> <p>1.3. Assessment of the definition of competences for learning, professional activities in the healthcare system and the empowerment of residents for autonomous activities.</p> <p>1.4. Assessment of the coherence of the objectives, learning outcomes, teaching (learning) and assessment methods of the residency study programmes.</p> |
| 2. | Residency study process and assessment of achievements | Residency studies prepare resident students for independent work | <p>2.1. Assessment of selection of students for residency studies.</p> <p>2.2. Evaluation of resident students' participation in the study process and in research activities (not applicable to the residency study programmes to be carried out).</p> <p>2.3. Assessment of the conditions for the academic mobility of resident students (not applicable to the residency study programmes to be carried out).</p> <p>2.4. Evaluation of the implementation of the academic integrity, tolerance and non-discrimination policy.</p> <p>2.5. Evaluation of the feedback provided to resident students during their studies to encourage evaluation of their performance and planning for further progress (not applicable to the residency study programmes to be carried out).</p> <p>2.6. Evaluation of the appropriateness, sufficiency and effectiveness of the academic, financial, social, psychological and other support provided to resident students.</p> <p>2.7. Evaluation of the effectiveness of the application of the procedures for appeals and complaints about the study process.</p> |

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|----|--|---|--|
| | | | <p>2.8. Evaluation of the effectiveness of the system for assessing resident students' achievements.</p> <p>2.9. Assessment of the conditions for access to study for socially vulnerable groups and resident students with special needs.</p> |
| 3. | Staff of residency studies | The staff of the residency studies is appropriate and sufficient to ensure the achievement of the learning outcomes | <p>3.1. Evaluation of the links between the research carried out by lecturers teaching in residency study programmes and residency studies.</p> <p>3.2. Assessment of the suitability of the practical/clinical experience of staff working in residency programmes to achieve the expected competences of resident students.</p> <p>3.3. Assessment of the support and conditions for the staff (academic and non-academic/administrative) involved in the conduct of the residency studies and the effective learning of the resident students, and the conditions for the continuous development of their professional competences (scientific, didactic, professional).</p> |
| 4. | Material resources of residency studies | Residency studies are delivered with sufficient and appropriate resources to achieve the learning outcomes | <p>4.1. Assessment of the availability, suitability and sufficiency of information and methodological resources for studies.</p> <p>4.2. Assessment of the availability, adequacy and sufficiency of the infrastructure (facilities, equipment, etc.) for residency studies and clinical practice.</p> <p>4.3. Evaluation of the adaptation of the infrastructure of the residency studies for people with special needs.</p> <p>4.4. Continuous evaluation of the renewal of the infrastructure for residency studies, taking into account the innovations and needs of medical, veterinary and odontology science and practice.</p> |
| 5. | Managing and publicising residency studies | The organisational structure of the management of residency studies ensures an efficient process of planning, organisation, evaluation and improvement of residency studies | <p>5.1. Evaluation of the organisational structure and responsibilities of the management of the residency studies.</p> <p>5.2. Assessment of the effectiveness of involving social stakeholders in internal quality assurance.</p> <p>5.3. Evaluation of resident students' feedback on the quality of their residency studies and use of this feedback to improve their studies (not applicable to residency study programmes to be carried out).</p> <p>5.4. Evaluation of the collection, use and dissemination of information on residency studies, their evaluation and improvement processes and outcomes (not applicable to residency study programmes to be carried out).</p> |
