



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

**ORDER
ON AMENDMENT OF ORDER No
V-1168 OF THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION AND SCIENCE OF 30 DECEMBER 2016
“ON THE APPROVAL OF THE DESCRIPTOR OF THE GENERAL REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF STUDIES”**

7 July 2023 No V-953
Vilnius

1. I a m e n d Order No V-1168 of the Minister of Education, Science and Sport of the Republic of Lithuania of 30 December 2016 “On the Approval of the Descriptor of the General Requirements for the Implementation of Studies” and word it as follows:

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

**ORDER
ON THE APPROVAL OF THE DESCRIPTOR OF THE GENERAL REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF STUDIES**

In accordance with Paragraph 11 of Article 53 of the Law on Higher Education and Research of the Republic of Lithuania,

I a p p r o v e the Descriptor of the General Requirements for the Implementation of Studies (enclosed”).

2. I e s t a b l i s h that this Order shall enter into force on 1 September 2023.

Minister of Education, Science and Sport

Gintautas Jakštas

APPROVED BY
Order No V-1168 of Minister of Education,
Science and Sport of 30 December 2016
(Amended version, as revised by Order No V-953 of
the Minister of Education, Science and Sport of the
Republic of Lithuania of 7 July 2023)

DESCRIPTOR OF THE GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF STUDIES

CHAPTER I GENERAL PROVISIONS

1. The General Requirements for the Implementation of Studies (hereinafter referred to as “the General Requirements”) set out the basic principles for the organisation of cycle (excluding doctoral) studies, which are necessary to create an appropriate learning environment and to ensure the quality of studies. The general requirements are prepared in accordance with the Law on Higher Education and Research of the Republic of Lithuania, the Lithuanian Qualifications Framework approved by Resolution No 535 of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania on 4 May 2010 “On Approval of the Lithuanian Qualifications Framework”, taking into account the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG), the European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes and the provisions of the ECTS User’s Guide for the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (hereinafter referred to as “the ECTS Guide”), as approved at the 2015 Conference of the Ministers of the European Higher Education Area in Yerevan (Armenia).

2. The general requirements must be followed by higher education institutions carrying out and/or intending to carry out cycle (short cycle, first cycle, second cycle) or integrated and vocational studies, as well as by the bodies assessing and/or accrediting the studies carried out and/or intended to be carried out in a given study field. The General Requirements for Catholic studies in the field of theological studies apply to the extent that they are not regulated by documents of the Holy See.

3. Short cycle studies are carried out by colleges, and may also be carried out by universities in accordance with the Descriptor of Procedures for Carrying Out Short Cycle and Collegiate Study Programmes at a University, approved by the Resolution No 149 of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania of 1 March 2017 “On Implementation of the Law of the Republic of Lithuania on Higher Education and Research”, and the List of Qualifications and Study Fields in which Short Cycle Studies may be Conducted approved by the Order No V-1065 of the Minister of Education, Science and Sport of the Republic of Lithuania of 14 July 2020 “On the Approval of the List of Qualifications and Study Fields in which Short Cycle Studies may be Conducted”. Studies are carried out in accordance with study programmes approved by higher education institutions (hereinafter referred to as “programme(s)”). Study programmes can also be joint study programmes between two or more national or national and foreign higher education institutions authorised to offer university or college studies attributed to the same study cycle. Joint study programmes may be carried out by universities together with colleges in coordination with the Ministry of National Defence of the Republic of Lithuania and the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport of the Republic of Lithuania for the purpose of training specialists required by the national defence system.

4. Study programmes must meet the requirements of the Lithuanian Qualifications Framework, approved by the Resolution No 535 of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania of 4 May 2010 “On the Approval of the Lithuanian Qualifications Framework”, the descriptors of the study fields (hereafter referred to as “study field”, “study fields”), and the short cycle study programmes must also meet the requirements of the professional standards, approved by the Minister

of Education, Science and Sport. If the study programme leads to a qualification for which the requirements are laid down in Lithuanian or international legislation, it must also meet these requirements.

5. Terms used in the General Requirements:

5.1. **Academic mobility** is the process of physical and/or virtual mobility of students and/or lecturers, which enables students to acquire knowledge, skills and experience in a different academic environment, and for lecturers to undertake internships, share professional experience, develop competences and practical teaching skills.

5.2. A **study module** is a unit of study of a certain number of study credits (as part of the cluster of study credits), with a common aim and expected learning outcomes.

5.3. **Learning outcomes** - student's knowledge, understanding, skills and attitudes at the end of a study module (subject) and/or the entire study programme.

5.4. **Interdisciplinary studies** - studies designed to achieve linked outcomes in two or more study fields.

5.5. Other terms used in the General Requirements correspond to those used in the Law on Higher Education and Research.

CHAPTER II QUALIFICATION DEGREES

6. A qualification degree (professional bachelor's, bachelor's, master's) may be awarded on completion of the relevant study programme and achievement of the learning outcomes set out in the study programme. A joint study programme may lead to a joint degree. The qualification is certified by a diploma (in the case of a joint programme, it may be a joint diploma) and a diploma supplement. A qualification may be awarded alongside a qualification degree if the higher education institution has the approval of the authority responsible for regulating the qualification. Completion of a vocational or short cycle study programme leads to a qualification, which is evidenced by a study certificate.

7. The following types of qualification degrees are awarded:

7.1. a qualification degree obtained by completing a study programme of a single study field. The name of the qualification degree corresponds to the name of the group of fields to which the study field belongs, as set out in the Framework of Qualification Degrees approved by the Order No V-1075 of the Minister of Education, Science and Sport of the Republic of Lithuania of 1 December 2016 "On the Approval of the List of Study Fields and Groups of Study Fields in Higher Education Institutions, the Procedure for Changing the List, the Framework of Qualification Degrees and the Principles for the Establishment of Titles of Degree Programmes", or a qualification degree other than the one included in the Framework of Qualification Degrees may be awarded when the higher education institution runs a joint study programme with a higher education institution in a foreign country (the right to award such a degree is granted to the higher education institution by the Minister of Education, Science and Sport). Applicable to first cycle, second cycle and integrated studies (in cases specified in the descriptors of the study fields). The second cycle of studies can lead to the Master of Laws (LL.M.), the Master of Business Administration (MBA), the Master of Public Administration (MPA), and the Licentiate of Theology;

7.2. a qualification degree awarded on completion of a two-field study programme, where study activities and methods are based on the interaction of subjects in an interdisciplinary environment in order to acquire new knowledge and skills. The title of the qualification degree corresponds to the names of both groups of fields to which the fields belong, or to one if the fields belong to the same group of fields. Applies to the first cycle of studies, and each study field must be accredited. If there is a choice of a study field, the options are specified in the descriptor of the study programme;

7.3. a qualification degree awarded on completion of an interdisciplinary study programme, where the aim is to achieve a combination of knowledge and skills. The programme may

include a maximum of three study fields, which may be specified in the diploma supplement. The title of the qualification degree corresponds to the name of the group of study fields to which the main (dominant) study field belongs. Applicable to first cycle and second cycle studies. If there is a choice of field, the options are specified in the descriptor of the study programme

CHAPTER III STRUCTURE OF STUDY PROGRAMMES

8. The study programmes must reflect the qualitative differences inherent in the binary system of studies and study cycles, as set out in the Descriptor of Study Cycles, approved by the Order No V-1012 of the Minister of Education, Science and Sport of the Republic of Lithuania of 16 November 2016 “On the Approval of the Descriptor of Study Cycles”, and to ensure the comparability of the degrees awarded at home and abroad.

9. A short cycle study programme may consist of 90 or 120 study credits (hereinafter referred to as “credits”), of which:

9.1. a minimum of 50 credits shall be allocated to the study field, including the preparation of the applied project and the final examination, if prescribed by the regulatory acts, which together shall be allocated at least 5 credits;

9.2. an internship placement in a real workplace shall be allocated 30 study credits (if the study programme is worth 90 credits) or 40 credits (if the programme is 120 credits);

9.3. the remaining study credits may be used for studies prescribed by the higher education institution or chosen by the student (for internship, development of digital competence, other general competences, etc.).

10. The first cycle study programme may consist of 180, 210 or 240 study credits, of which:

10.1. the total number of credits normally allocated for the achievement of the outcomes of the study field (including the internship and the final thesis) shall be at least 120; the total number of internships shall be worth at least 15 study credits for university studies and 30 credits for collegiate studies (for collegiate studies, the practical training shall be at least a third of the programme); the number of study credits allocated to the final thesis/project or to the final thesis/project and the final examinations shall be at least 15 credits for university studies and 9 credits for collegiate studies;

10.2. the remaining credits may be allocated to the higher education institution’s prescribed or the student’s choice (deeper studies in the same study field, modules (subjects) in another study field (hereinafter referred to as “module(s), subject(s)”), minor studies in a related study field(s), pedagogical studies, additional internships, digital competence, development of other general competences, etc. The scope of the study field(s) and the expected learning outcomes shall be set out in the higher education institution’s descriptor of the minor studies offered;

10.3. a two-field study programme must meet the requirements of both field descriptors, and study credits may be awarded for elective studies if part of the expected learning outcomes overlap;

10.4. in a qualification degree and teacher qualification (teacher training) study programme:

10.4.1. a minimum of 60 credits shall be allocated for the study of the subject(s) and/or pedagogical specialisation (up to 180 credits for modules in the case of the training of teachers in two or more subjects or pedagogical specialisations);

10.4.2. the acquiring of the qualification of a teacher shall be awarded 60 credits, of which 30 credits shall be allocated to studies in the field of pedagogy (including a final thesis worth at least 3 credits) and 30 credits shall be allocated to teaching practice; the final thesis shall be related to, or integrated with, the final thesis in the study field being studied.

11. Second cycle study programmes may be either 90 or 120 credits, except for the Master of Laws (LL.M.) or the Master of Business Administration (MBA), which may be 60 credits. In a study programme:

11.1. studies in the study field(s) leading to the acquisition of the study outcomes set out in the descriptor of the study field shall be awarded at least 60 credits, excluding the final thesis/project and the final examinations, if prescribed by regulatory acts, and at least 45 credits for the Master of Law (LL.M.), Master of Business Administration (MBA) or Master of Public Administration (MPA) degree;

11.2. a minimum of 15 credits shall be awarded for the final thesis/project, or for the final thesis/project and the final examinations, if prescribed by the regulatory acts. A final thesis/project is not required for the Master of Law (LL.M.) or Master of Business Administration (MBA). The final thesis of the Master of Arts must be a creative project and a research paper related to this project;

11.3. the remaining credits may be allocated to studies prescribed by the University or chosen by the student (for studies of the study field and/or research work (artistic work), additional internship, modules (subjects) in another study field, minor field studies, digital competence, development of other general competences, etc.). The scope of the minor study of related field(s) and the expected learning outcomes shall be set out in the higher education institution's descriptor of the minor studies offered.

12. Integrated study programmes can be either 300 or 360 credits, of which:

12.1. the total number of internships must be worth at least 20 credits, unless otherwise specified in the descriptor of the study field;

12.2. at least 15 credits of the study field shall be allocated for the preparation and defence of the final thesis/project or for the final thesis/project and the final examinations (where provided for in the regulatory acts), unless otherwise provided for in the descriptor of the study field;

13. A higher education institution must provide students of short cycle, first cycle and integrated study programmes with the opportunity to acquire knowledge of at least one foreign language (a widely used official language of the European Union - English, French, German) and the ability to communicate using subject-related vocabulary with specialist audiences.

CHAPTER IV IMPLEMENTATION OF STUDIES

14. A study programme is launched when the study field is accredited and the programme is registered in the Register of Studies, Training Programmes and Qualifications in accordance with the procedure laid down by the Minister of Education, Science and Sport.

15. Studies may be carried out only in the territory of the municipality in which the head-office of the higher education institution or its branch is located (except in the case of municipalities of the same name in the same city and district) or in a branch of the higher education institution established in a foreign country (hereinafter collectively referred to as the "branch of the higher education institution"). If more than a third of the study programme is delivered in a branch of a higher education institution, this must be indicated in the Register of Studies, Training Programmes and Qualifications. Studies may only be carried out in a branch of a higher education institution after the approval of the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education to carry out such studies, in accordance with the procedures set out in the Procedures for the External Evaluation and Accreditation of Study Programmes. Joint study programmes are launched once they have been validated in all the partner higher education institutions' countries. First cycle study programmes, when students have the opportunity to choose their study field at the start of their studies, are launched when the relevant study fields of have been accredited for the first cycle. Short cycle study programmes can be launched if the higher education institution offers first cycle studies in the relevant study field.

16. Students shall be admitted in accordance with the procedure established by the higher education institution, according to the criteria established by the higher education institution, taking into account the necessary preparation of the persons for studying the study programme of the relevant study field at the relevant level. The minimum admission criteria for first cycle and integrated study

programmes must be at least equal to those approved by the Minister of Education, Science and Sport. Applicants to a joint study programme where at least one of the partner higher education institutions is a foreign higher education institution must have a level of proficiency in the foreign language(s) in which the studies will be conducted.

17. An agreement for studies shall be concluded with each admitted student for the entire study period and approved, the standard terms of which are approved by the Order No V-1010 of the Minister of Education, Science and Sport of the Republic of Lithuania of 16 November 2016 “On the Approval of Standard Terms and Conditions of a Learning Agreement for Studies”.

18. A higher education institution may include the results of students' part-time studies and competences acquired through formal and non-formal education and informal learning in the scope of the study programme. In the case of a joint study programme, if the partner higher education institution is not a member of the European Higher Education Area, the results of the studies shall be credited in accordance with the procedures laid down by the partner higher education institutions.

19. The study programme is delivered through modules (subjects). Studies of a module (subject) shall be completed by an examination or by an assessment of the student's independently completed work (project), which shall be assigned to the excellent, standard or threshold level of study achievements in accordance with the procedure publicly available procedure for the assessment of students' study achievements approved by the higher education institution. The final thesis cannot be divided into parts.

20. The joint study programme is implemented ensuring the integrity of the content and learning outcomes of the programme strands delivered by the partner higher education institutions, academic mobility of students and lecturers, and partnership-based administration. A significant part of the joint study programme must be based on academic physical mobility, and physical mobility of students is compulsory. The recommended amount of physical mobility is at least 15 study credits, except during a nationally declared emergency when physical mobility is not possible. In cases determined by the Minister of Education, Science and Sport (during a state of national emergency, state of emergency or for other reasons under a special or particular legal regime in a country), physical mobility may be replaced by remote learning. Higher education institutions must enable students to achieve all the intended learning outcomes.

21. An internship is a module (subject) designed to help a student gain the professional experience needed for practical work. The internship shall be implemented by the higher education institution concluding a practical training agreement with the student and the internship institution (institution, company, organisation), the sample form of which is approved by the Order No V-1011 of the Minister of Education, Science and Sport of the Republic of Lithuania of 16 November 2016 “On the Approval of the Sample Form of Student Practical Training Agreement”. In cases determined by the Minister of Education, Science and Sport (during a state-declared emergency, state of emergency or for other reasons in the presence of a special or extraordinary legal regime in the country), the internship module (subject) may include internship carried out remotely in accordance with the procedure laid down by the institution of higher education, unless the specific nature of the study programme makes it impossible to carry out the internship remotely. The following may be counted towards the internship module (subject):

21.1. an internship carried out under a bilateral agreement with the employer, provided that the competences acquired during the internship are in line with the learning outcomes of the internship as set out in the study programme;

21.2. the achievements of an employed student in informal and work-based learning, provided that their relevance to the learning outcomes of the internship established in the study programme has been assessed and the acquired competences have been recognised in accordance with the procedures laid down by the higher education institution.

22. Studies can be full-time or part-time in terms of form of implementation:

22.1. full-time studies shall have a normal duration of 60 study credits per year, but not less than 45 credits, and it shall be the main form of study organisation;

22.2. the duration of part-time studies may be less than 45 credits per year, but the total

duration of such studies shall not be more than one and a half times the duration of full-time studies.

23. The study outcomes, the number of credits and the amount of contact work required are the same regardless of the form of study. Depending on the expected learning outcomes, one study credit may involve between 25 and 30 hours of student work. The ECTS manual is used for the accumulation and inclusion of study credits.

24. Part-time studies shall be carried out in accordance with a plan approved for the entire period of study or an individual study plan, which shall be drawn up taking into account the expected results of the studies, the safety and health requirements for students approved by the higher education institution, and the possibility for students to combine their studies with their professional and/or other occupation.

25. The timetable of studies, the methods of assessment of learning and achievement, the amount of contact work and the student's independent work shall be determined by the higher education institution in accordance with the descriptors of the study fields and the following regulations:

25.1. the amount of contact work (including remote learning) in the short cycle, first cycle and integral study programme corresponding to the first cycle of studies shall be at least 20 per cent, and in the case of direct participation of lecturers and students (not remote contact learning) - at least 10 per cent, and the amount of student's independent work shall be at least 30 per cent, if not otherwise indicated in the descriptor of the study field;

25.2. the amount of contact work (including remote learning) for the remainder of other study programmes and programmes of full-time study shall be at least 10 per cent, and in the case of direct participation of lecturers and students (other than remote contact learning) - at least 5 per cent, and the amount of student's independent work shall be at least 50 per cent, if not otherwise indicated in the descriptor of the study field.

26. For remote learning, it is recommended to apply:

26.1. a hybrid mode of study, where contact time (lectures, seminars, communication and collaboration) is delivered combining physical and digital spaces, where all students in the same group or flow study in the same environment, either physical or digital, under the same conditions and intensity;

26.2. the organisation of hybrid studies, where different modes of learning are combined in parallel, with students from the same group or flow studying, interacting and collaborating in different spaces at the same time (some physical, others digital).

27. In cases determined by the Minister of Education, Science and Sport (during a state of national emergency, state of emergency or for other reasons under a special or extraordinary legal regime in the country), the scope of contact work with the direct participation of lecturers and students may be replaced by remote learning. Higher education institutions must enable students to achieve all the intended learning outcomes.

CHAPTER V STUDY MANAGEMENT

28. The higher education institution shall make public the documents regulating studies, information about the conditions and procedures for admission of students, inform students about the course of studies and study options, the procedure for submitting and examining appeals and complaints, and consistently provide assistance to students in their studies.

29. Responsibility for study programme implementation and decision-making must be shared within the higher education institution. The management functions of the joint study programme shall be allocated as set out in the Joint Programme Agreement concluded by all partner higher education institutions, which shall specify: the title of the programme in the language(s) in which the studies will be conducted, the scope, duration, language(s), learning outcomes, quality assurance measures, student admission conditions and study procedures, provisions for the financing of the studies, the provision of grants and other support to students, the principles of assessment and

crediting of students' achievements, the conditions for the academic mobility of students and lecturers, the administration of studies, the award of joint qualification degrees and the issue of higher education qualification document(s), other obligations, the liability of the partner higher education institutions for the obligations undertaken, the term of the contract, the procedure for amendment, termination and settlement of disputes, and any other terms and conditions agreed between the parties.

30. The implementation of the study programmes is based on monitoring their quality by involving internal and external stakeholders, periodically collecting and analysing reliable data on the quality of studies, assessing the relevance of the study programmes in terms of the economic, social and cultural development needs of the country and the future development perspective.

31. Information on the quality assurance processes, the results of the evaluation and accreditation of the study fields, and the updating of study programmes is published on the website of the higher education institution. The information must be clear, objective, accurate and regularly updated.

32. The higher education institution needs to apply tools for students and lecturers that facilitate the understanding, implementation and development of:

32.1. student-centred study methods, methods of assessing study achievements and activities that enable students to take an active role in the study process;

32.2. the use of the learning outcomes in order to reveal their idea and logic, and their causal links to the didactic system;

32.3. the compatibility of the learning outcomes with the principles and practices of academic integrity and social responsibility;

32.4. communication and cooperation with students, pupils, employers, other social stakeholders and the general public in order to attract applicants, to present the diversity of studies, the desired learning outcomes and the commitment to provide the conditions for achieving them.

CHAPTER VI LECTURERS AND MATERIAL RESOURCES

33. A higher education institution must ensure:

33.1. diversity in the composition of the teaching staff by involving researchers and practitioners in the delivery of studies;

33.2. a rational workload structure for lecturers, allocating sufficient working time for their research and other activities related to the performance of their functions, in accordance with the procedures laid down by the higher education institution;

33.3. a creative (scientific) study environment, the involvement of employers in the process of organising studies, and support for students in planning their studies and preparing for professional activities;

33.4. the development of the subject competences of lecturers, the encouragement to participate in mobility programmes, internships, conferences, and the involvement of students in their own scientific research activities;

33.5. the development of the educational competence of lecturers;

33.6. the development of digital competences and other generic competences of lecturers;

33.7. informing lecturers about internal and external evaluation criteria, methodologies and accreditation procedures, as well as new legislation governing studies;

33.8. a sufficient number of teaching and other staff with at least B2 level of proficiency in a foreign language in accordance with the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, if the study programme is conducted in a foreign language.

34. At least 50 per cent of first cycle university subjects of a study field and at least 10 per cent of short cycle and collegiate subjects of the study field must be taught by scientists or

recognised artists (for art-related subjects). More than half of the lecturers at short cycle and collegiate level must have at least 3 years of practical experience in the subject they teach. Practical activities (practical work, exercises, student internships, etc.) for short cycle and collegiate students may be supervised by a person holding a Bachelor's or Professional Bachelor's degree or higher.

35. At least 80 per cent of the lecturers of the Master's degree study programmes (except for study programmes leading to the Master of Laws (LL.M.), the Master of Business Administration (MBA) or the Master of Public Administration (MPA)) must have a degree in science (art) (be recognised artists). Others may be practitioners who have at least 3 years of professional experience in the last 7 years in applied subjects relevant to the subject taught. At least 20 per cent of the subjects in the field must be taught by lecturers working as professors. To be awarded the Master of Law (LL.M.), Master of Business Administration (MBA) or Master of Public Administration (MPA) degrees, more than half of the lecturers in the study field must have practical experience in the specific field.

36. The premises in which the studies are conducted must meet the requirements of hygiene and occupational safety and be sufficient, the classrooms must be modern, equipped with visualisation equipment, large classrooms must be equipped with sound equipment, and there must be specially equipped rooms for working in groups to develop students' communication skills and teamwork skills.

37. Each lecturer must be provided with a workstation with an internet connection in accordance with the procedures laid down by the higher education institution.

38. If the study programme requires laboratory equipment and apparatus and other facilities for study, the level of equipment must be sufficient for the student to learn to apply modern research methods. Where particularly expensive or bulky equipment is required to achieve the learning outcomes, it must be ensured that every student, regardless of the owner of the equipment, has access to it, either directly or with the assistance of support staff.

39. Libraries and reading rooms must have sufficient printed or digital scientific literature, textbooks, methodological publications, reference books and other publications in Lithuanian and foreign languages to support the study of the subject. Libraries should be equipped with computers with internet access to international databases, printing and photocopying facilities.

40. Students must be provided with a full range of academic, psychological, career planning and social support to ensure a positive learning experience and successful study outcomes. If there are students with special needs in the study programme, the quality of the studies must be ensured by providing them with appropriate facilities to meet their special needs.

41. For remote learning, a higher education institution must:

41.1. have the hardware and software necessary for remote learning;

41.2. have lecturers who are prepared to work remotely;

41.3. have access to study materials adapted for remote learning, digital scientific literature, methodological publications and other study resources;

41.4. ensure fairness in the study process and the proper and reliable assessment of students' achievements;

41.5. provide regular counselling for lecturers and students working/studying remotely.
