

APPROVED

by Resolution No 1317 of the Government of the
Republic of Lithuania of 22 September 2010

PROCEDURE FOR THE EXTERNAL REVIEW OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

I. GENERAL PROVISIONS

1. The Procedure for the External Review in Higher Education (hereinafter referred to as ‘the Procedure’) shall regulate the external evaluation of the activities of public and private higher education institutions as well as branches of foreign higher education institutions active in the Republic of Lithuania (hereinafter referred to as ‘higher education institutions’) (hereinafter referred to as ‘the external review’). The Procedure shall regulate internal evaluation to the extent necessary for carrying out an external review.
2. The aim of the external review shall be to create prerequisites for the improvement of the higher education institution’s activities, to promote its culture of quality, to estimate the basic financing needs with respect to the effectiveness of the institution’s activities, to inform the founders (legal persons), the academic community and the general public about the quality of the higher education institution’s activities, and on the basis of the outcomes of the review to present recommendations for the development of the higher education institution’s activities.
3. The terms used in the Procedure shall be those defined in the Law on Research and Studies of the Republic of Lithuania (*Official Gazette*, 2009, No 54-2140).
4. An external review shall be conducted pursuant to the Law on Research and Studies of the Republic of Lithuania, the Methodology for the Evaluation of Learning Resources of a Higher Education Institution (hereinafter referred to as ‘the Learning Resources Evaluation Methodology’) approved by the Minister for Education and Science, the Methodology for the Institutional Review in Higher Education approved and coordinated with the Ministry of Education and Science by the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education (hereinafter referred to as ‘the Institutional Review Methodology’), and other legislative acts governing higher education institutions’ activities.
5. The external review of higher education institutions shall cover all the activity areas designated in their statutes (by-laws, regulations) and shall be based on the following criteria: compliance with the mission stated in the institution’s statute (by-laws, regulations), conformity with the international research and studies standards; compliance with the requirements for the assessment of learning outcomes; compliance with the requirements for academic ethics and procedures; effectiveness and efficiency of the use of the State Budget appropriations; and cross compliance with legal requirements.
6. The objectives of the external review of a higher education institution shall be the following:
 - 6.1. to evaluate the conformity of the learning resources (learning resources and human resources) of higher education institutions to the minimum quality standards for the infrastructure and organisation of studies provided in the Methodology for the Evaluation of Learning Resources of a Higher Education Institution (hereinafter referred to as ‘evaluation of learning resources’) according to:
 - 6.1.1. adequacy and availability of learning materials, equipment and facilities;
 - 6.1.2. scope of research, applied research (scientific activities), and professional art activities;
 - 6.1.3. composition, organisation and qualifications of the teaching and administrative staff;

- 6.1.4. entrants' academic preparedness for higher education and their motivation in choosing a particular field of studies; changes in student numbers;
- 6.1.5. effectiveness of the use of the State Budget appropriations for studies;
- 6.2. to evaluate the conformity of the activities stated in the statute (by-laws, regulations) of a higher education institution to the requirements established in legal acts and the provisions of the European Higher Education Area (hereinafter referred to as 'activity compliance evaluation') according to:
 - 6.2.1. the level of the studies run by the higher education institution and conditions for life-long learning;
 - 6.2.2. the conditions for research and experimental (social, cultural) development and/or art activities;
 - 6.2.3. cooperation with the domestic and foreign academic and social partners and its significance on the development of the higher education institution;
 - 6.2.4. the need of specialists trained in a specific study field for the national economy and the social and cultural development of the State;
 - 6.2.5. the significance of the institution's research, consultancy, educational, art and any other cultural activity for the economic, cultural and social development of the region and the country;
 - 6.2.6. the rationality of the use of funds for the development of the well-being of the higher education institution;
 - 6.2.7. the effectiveness of the internal quality assurance system;
 - 6.2.8. the level of the academic ethics;
 - 6.2.9. provision of precise and objective information on the activities of the institution to its founders, stakeholders, (juridinio asmens dalyviai) academic community and the general public.

2. *Amendments to the paragraph:*

3. No. [550](#), 18.06.2014, announced in the Register of Legal Acts on 19.06.2014, identification code 2014-07770

7. To obtain more detailed information, the Ministry of Education and Science may organise targeted external reviews focused on the evaluation of one or more activities of a higher education institution or its individual academic units.

II. REVIEW OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

8. Once in six years, the Ministry of Education and Science shall initiate an external review of each institution of higher education.

Amendments to the paragraph:

No. [550](#), 18.06.2014, announced in the Register of Legal Acts on 19.06.2014, identification code 2014-07770

9. An external review of a higher education institution shall comprise the evaluation of the conformity of its learning resources and the conformity of its activities. External reviews shall be organised by the institution authorised by the Ministry of Education and Science (hereinafter referred to as 'the Authorised Agency'). Evaluation of the learning resources and of the activities of a higher education institution may be performed by different authorised agencies; in such cases, the decision on the evaluation of a higher education institution shall be taken by the authorised agency conducting the evaluation of the conformity of the institution's activities.

9¹. An external review of a priest seminary shall be conducted by the Holy See's Agency for the Evaluation and Promotion of Quality in Ecclesiastical Universities and Faculties (AVEPRO). AVEPRO shall conduct the external review of priest seminaries together with the external review of study programmes according to the AVEPRO criteria.

Supplemented with a paragraph:

No. [550](#), 18.06.2014, announced in the Register of Legal Acts on 19.06.2014, identification code 2014-07770

10. (repealed).

Amendments to the paragraph:

No. [623](#), 29.05.2012, Official Gazette, 2012, No. 64-3235 (07.06.2012)

11. The evaluation of learning resources shall be based on the institution's financial accounts, official statistical data and the outcomes of the survey of higher education institutions. The evaluation of learning resources shall be carried out according to the procedure established in the Methodology for the Evaluation of Learning Resources of a Higher Education Institution. A report on the state and changes of the learning resources of a higher education institution shall, within 2 working days of its adoption, be submitted to the Authorised Agency which takes a decision on the evaluation of a higher education institution and to the higher education institution. The outcomes of the evaluation of the learning resources shall be publicly announced within 5 working days of the validity date of the decision on the evaluation of a higher education institution on the website of the Authorised Agency which carried out the evaluation of learning resources.

Amendments to the paragraph:

No. [623](#), 29.05.2012, Official Gazette, 2012, No. 64-3235 (07.06.2012)

No. [550](#), 18.06.2014, announced in the Register of Legal Acts on 19.06.2014, identification code 2014-07770

12. Five months prior to the start of the review, at the latest, the Authorised Agency shall publish the deadlines for the submission of self-evaluation reports and for the completion of the institutional review.

13. Higher education institutions shall be reviewed according to the procedures and the review areas as publicly announced in the Methodology for external review. External reviews shall draw on the evaluation outcomes of specific areas and of the learning resources of the higher education institution concerned, the self-evaluation summary report, other documents of the institution, data obtained during the on-site visit, the judgements and recommendations of the previous evaluation, the follow-up data and other information on the performance of the higher education institution. The procedure for self-evaluation shall be determined by the higher education institution concerned.

14. The form of the self-evaluation report (including the summary results of self-analysis) shall be established in the Methodology for the institutional review in higher education.

15. Institutional review shall be performed by a team of experts set up according to the team formation principles drawn up and made public in advance by the authorised agency, which define the composition of the team and the qualification requirements for the experts. According to the procedure established in the Institutional Review Methodology, the higher education institution may present its motivated proposals for replacing any candidate member of the team. External review teams shall include experts from other countries.

16. The institutional review report for the authorised agency shall be made by the experts according to the procedures set in the Institutional Review Methodology. It shall include an analysis and general evaluation of the areas reviewed, proposals and recommendations for improvement and the overall judgement on the activities of the higher education institution.

17. (repealed).

Amendments to the paragraph:

No. [623](#), 29.05.2012, Official Gazette, 2012, No. 64-3235 (07.06.2012)

18. On completing the institutional review, the Authorised Agency shall offer advice on the ways the inadequacies and irregularities identified in the report could be eliminated. The Minister

for Education and Science may authorise the institutional reviewer to monitor the correction process and the implementation of the recommendations given in the review report.

19. The Authorised Agency shall take a decision on the evaluation of the higher education institution within 15 calendar days of the receipt of the external review report from the experts. Within two days of the decision date, the Authorised Agency shall send its decision and the external review by registered mail to the higher education institution concerned and the Ministry of Education and Science.

20. The activities of the higher education institution reviewed shall receive either positive or negative evaluation.

21. Positive evaluation shall be given to a higher education institution which meets the following set of conditions:

21.1. a higher education institution complies with the procedures of external review, i.e. creates adequate conditions for evaluation;

21.2. no essential drawbacks are found when evaluating the conformity of the activities of a higher education institution to the established requirements and all the areas receive a positive evaluation.

Amendments to the paragraph:

No. [623](#), 29.05.2012, *Official Gazette*, 2012, No. 64-3235 (07.06.2012)

No. [550](#), 18.06.2014, announced in the Register of Legal Acts, 19.06.2014, identification code 2014-07770

21¹. Negative evaluation shall be given to a higher education institution which does not comply with any of the conditions set in Paragraph 21.

Supplemented with the paragraph:

No. [623](#), 29.05.2012, *Official Gazette*, 2012, No. 64-3235 (07.06.2012)

22. The Authorised Agency's decision on the evaluation of the higher education institution shall become effective after the expiry of the deadline for lodging an appeal established under the Law on Administrative Proceedings (*Official Gazette*, 1999, No 13-308; 2000, No 85-2566). Lodging an appeal according to the legal procedure shall suspend the validity of the Authorised Agency's decision.

23. The Authorised Agency's decision on the evaluation of the higher education institution and the institutional review report shall be published on the website of the Authorised Agency which took the decision on the evaluation of a higher education institution within 3 working days of the decision's validity date.

Amendments to the paragraph:

No. [550](#), 18.06.2014, announced in the Register of Legal Acts, 19.06.2014, identification code 2014-07770

24. Where the activities of the higher education institution receive a negative evaluation, a repeat institutional review shall be initiated within two years of the validity date of the decision on the evaluation of the higher education institution in accordance with the evaluation areas and procedures established in the Institutional Review Methodology. The repeat institutional review shall be based on the outcomes of the repeat evaluation of the learning resources of the higher education institution, the repeat self-evaluation report presenting the progress report on the implemented and/or envisaged measures for the elimination of drawbacks identified during self-analysis and/or previous external review and for the improvement of the activities of the higher education institution. Where the activities of the higher education institution receive a negative evaluation after the repeat institutional review, no subsequent reviews of the higher education institution shall be carried out.

Amendments to the paragraph:

No. [623](#), 29.05.2012, *Official Gazette*, 2012, No. 64-3235 (07.06.2012)

25. Within 14 calendar days of the receipt of the institutional review, the higher education institution may apply to the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education for accreditation.

III. PROCEDURE FOR APPEALS

26. The higher education institution may appeal in writing against the decision on the evaluation of the higher education institution within 14 calendar days of its receipt before the Minister of Education and Science, who shall set up a committee for the examination of the appeal (hereinafter referred to as ‘the Committee’).

Amendments to the paragraph:

No. [550](#), 18.06.2014, announced in the Register of Legal Acts, 19.06.2014, identification code 2014-07770

27. Upon the Committee’s request, the Authorised Agency which took the decision on the evaluation of the higher education institution shall, within 5 working days of the receipt of such a request, submit to the Committee explanations and documents relating to the evaluation of the higher education institution or their copies certified according to the legal requirements. The appeal of the higher education institution shall be examined by the Committee within 30 calendar days of its receipt by the Ministry of Education and Science.

Amendments to the paragraph:

No. [550](#), 18.06.2014, announced in the Register of Legal Acts, 19.06.2014, identification code 2014-07770

28. While examining the appeal, the Committee is not supposed to carry out evaluation procedures, it is merely supposed to establish that no legislation has been violated in evaluating the higher education institution and that the Authorised Agency has acted within the scope of its authority.

29. The Committee may reject or sustain the appeal; in the latter case, it shall request the Authorised Agency which took the decision on the evaluation of the higher education institution to conduct a new evaluation of the higher education institution within the time period set by the Committee. The Ministry of Education and Science shall send the Committee’s decision to the higher education institution and the Authorised Agency which took the decision on the evaluation of the higher education institution within 5 working days of the Committee’s decision date. If the appeal is sustained, the Authorised Agency which took the decision on the evaluation of the higher education institution shall start a new evaluation process within 15 working days of the receipt of the Committee’s decision.

Amendments to the paragraph:

No. [550](#), 18.06.2014, announced in the Register of Legal Acts, 19.06.2014, identification code 2014-07770

30. The Authorised Agency’s decision may be appealed to the Commission of Administrative Disputes or a court in accordance with the procedure prescribed by the legislation.

IV. FINAL PROVISIONS

31. Institutional reviews shall be financed from the approved state budget appropriations to the Ministry of Education and Science and other funds.

32. The higher education institution shall post the Authorised Agency’s decision and the institutional review report on its website within 5 working days and shall keep it posted until the next external review.

Amendments to the paragraph:

No. [550](#), 18.06.2014, announced in the Register of Legal Acts, 19.06.2014, identification code 2014-07770

II. ACCREDITATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

5. Higher education institutions shall undergo regular accreditation based on the judgments of their external review.

6. To obtain accreditation, a higher education institution shall submit a request to the Centre within 14 calendar days of the receipt of the external review report accompanied with the external review report or its copy certified in accordance with the procedure established by legal acts.

7. Within 20 working days of the receipt of the accreditation request and the external review report, the Centre shall take a decision:

7.1. to accredit the higher education institution for 6 years if, after the latest external review, the institution authorised by the Ministry of Education and Science took a decision on a positive evaluation of the higher education institution;

7.2. to accredit the higher education institution for 3 years if, after the latest external review, the institution authorised by the Ministry of Education and Science took a decision on a negative evaluation of the higher education institution (except in cases where a negative evaluation was given repeatedly);

7.3. not to accredit the higher education institution if it has repeatedly received a negative evaluation.

Amendments to the paragraph:

No. [623](#), 29.05.2012, *Official Gazette*, 2012, No. 64-3235 (07.06.2012)

8. The Centre shall inform the higher education institution about its decision to accredit and not to accredit the higher education institution within 5 working days of the decision date.