

*Approved by*  
the Chairperson of the Board of the  
Higher Education Quality Assurance Council  
A. Līce \_\_\_\_\_

1 April 2019

## **Rules of the Study Quality Committee**

Adopted in accordance with  
Paragraph 5 of Cabinet Regulation No. 795 of 11 December 2018  
“Regulations on Licensing of Study Programmes”

### **I. General**

1. The Study Quality Committee (hereinafter - the Committee) is a collegial decision-making body, which has been established to decide whether or not to license a study programme and whether or not to accredit a study direction, in compliance with Sections 55<sup>2</sup> and 55<sup>3</sup> of the Law on Institutions of Higher Education, Cabinet Regulation No. 793 of 11 December 2018 “Regulations on Opening and Accreditation of a Study Direction” (hereinafter - the Cabinet Regulation No. 793), and Cabinet Regulation No. 795 of 11 December 2018 “Regulations on Licensing of Study Programmes” (hereinafter - the Cabinet Regulation No. 795).

### **II. Rights and Obligations of the Committee**

2. The tasks of the Committee are prescribed in Paragraph 2 of Cabinet Regulation No. 793 and Paragraph 6 of Cabinet Regulation No. 796.
3. Apart from the provisions set forth in Paragraph 2 of these Rules, the Committee shall:
  - 3.1. examine the application for the licensing of a study programme (hereinafter - the licensing application), the description of a study programme, and other relevant information to assess the study programme in compliance with the provisions set forth in Section 55<sup>2</sup>, Paragraph five of the Law on Institutions of Higher Education;
  - 3.2. examine the application for the accreditation of a study direction (hereinafter - accreditation application), the self-assessment report of a study direction, the joint report by the experts group on the assessment of a study direction, and other relevant information;
  - 3.3. discuss and analyse the joint report by the experts or the experts group;
  - 3.4. provide recommendations for the improvement of the study directions and/or study programmes; and
  - 3.5. attend the meetings of the Committee in person.
4. The Committee shall be entitled to:
  - 4.1. consult the experts carrying out the assessment (if necessary);

- 4.2. become acquainted with the actual circumstances at the higher education institution or college, including their branches (if necessary);
- 4.3. request from the higher education institutions or colleges and other institutions additional information necessary to make decisions; and
- 4.4. in certain cases, the Committee members may attend a meeting remotely subject to prior coordination thereof with the chairperson and the secretariat of the Committee.

### **III. Composition and Work Organisation of the Committee**

5. The Committee shall be composed of seven Committee members. The members, the chairperson, and the deputy chairperson of the Committee shall be approved by the Higher Education Quality Assurance Council (hereinafter - the Council) for a five-year period. The candidates for the position of a Committee member shall be selected by the Academic Information Centre (hereinafter - the Centre), by taking into account the areas of competence of the Committee members and the Committee as a whole, as stipulated in Paragraph 4 of Cabinet Regulation No. 795.
6. A Committee member shall be entitled to cease his/her activities in the Committee by submitting to the Centre an application on the cessation of his/her duties. In the event that a Committee member should cease his/her work in the Committee, the Council shall approve another candidate for the position of a member of the Committee for the remainder of the term, starting from the day of the approval of such Committee member, in compliance with Paragraph 5 of these Rules.
7. The Committee meetings shall be convened whenever necessary. Extraordinary meetings shall be convened within five working days on the initiative of the Centre or the chairperson of the Committee, or if so requested by at least three Committee members.
8. The work of the Committee shall be organised by the chairperson of the Committee.
9. The chairperson of the Committee shall:
  - 9.1. define the time and agenda of the Committee meetings;
  - 9.2. chair the Committee meetings;
  - 9.3. organise voting by open ballot in compliance with Paragraph 19 of these Rules;
  - 9.4. sign the Committee meeting minutes;
  - 9.5. sign the decisions made by the Committee, the licences of study programmes, the accreditation sheets of study directions, and other documents related to the fulfilment of the tasks set for the Committee;
  - 9.6. decide on the inclusion of additional items in the agenda of the Committee meeting by informing the Committee members thereof no later than five working days prior to the day on which the Committee meeting is to take place;
  - 9.7. invite the representatives of the sectoral ministries to attend the respective Committee meeting and give their opinion, if the Committee examines an application for the licensing of a study programme or accreditation of a study direction, which corresponds the sector falling within the competence of this ministry;
  - 9.8. invite the respective sectoral experts, the representatives of the state and municipal authorities, and non-governmental organisations to discuss the items on the agenda of

- the Committee meeting, provided that the invited persons participate in the meeting in an advisory capacity;
- 9.9. ensure the representation of the Committee; and
  - 9.10. fulfil other obligations to ensure the work of the Committee.
10. In the absence of the chairperson of the Committee, his/her duties shall be performed by the deputy chairperson of the Committee.
  11. The Committee shall fulfil the tasks stipulated in Part II of these Rules and comply with other binding provisions of these Rules.
  12. The Accreditation Department of the Centre - the “Higher Education Quality Agency” - shall fulfil the secretariat functions.
  13. The secretariat shall:
    - 13.1. provide to the Committee technical and organisational support;
    - 13.2. verify the compliance of the licensing application and the documents attached thereto or the application on the changes to the license of a study programme with the provisions set forth in Cabinet Regulation No. 795 and other regulatory enactments, and, if necessary, request the missing information in writing;
    - 13.3. verify the compliance of the accreditation application and the documents attached thereto, the application on the changes to the accreditation sheet of a study direction, the application on the changes to the accredited study direction, and the application on the inclusion of the licensed study programme in the accreditation sheet with the provisions set forth in Cabinet Regulation No. 793 and other regulatory enactments, and, if necessary, request the missing information in writing;
    - 13.4. in the cases specified in Paragraph 28 of Cabinet Regulation No. 793 and Paragraph 27 of Cabinet Regulation No. 795, ask the coordinator for the recognition of professional qualifications to give his/her opinion and send him/her the invitation to attend the respective Committee meeting;
    - 13.5. in the cases specified in Paragraph 27 of Cabinet Regulation No. 793 and Paragraphs 19 and 20 of Cabinet Regulation No. 795, ask the State Education Quality Service, the certification bodies, the Ministry of Defence, and other sectoral ministries to give their opinion;
    - 13.6. submit, for examination, to the Committee the joint report by the experts, the licensing application and the documents attached thereto, the accreditation application and the documents attached thereto, the application on the changes, the application on the inclusion of the licensed study programme in the accredited study direction, and other information necessary to make the respective decision;
    - 13.7. prepare drafts for the decisions of the Committee in compliance with the requirements set forth in the Administrative Procedure Law;
    - 13.8. prepare the accreditation sheet of a study direction in compliance with Cabinet Regulation No. 793 and the license of a study programme in compliance with Cabinet Regulation No. 795, and submit them, for signature, to the chairperson of the Committee.
    - 13.9. issue licenses, accreditation sheets, and decisions to the higher education institutions or colleges, as well as register and keep records of the licenses, accreditation sheets, and decisions;

- 13.10. keep records, as well as ensure the documentation and archiving of the documents related to the licensing and accreditation procedure;
  - 13.11. prepare draft minutes for the Committee meeting and electronically send it to the Committee members for electronic coordination thereof within five days following the Committee meeting. The draft minutes shall be coordinated within three working days;
  - 13.12. no later than five working days before the Committee meeting, inform the Committee members about the date and agenda of the Committee meeting and send them the information and materials required for the meeting by electronic means; and
  - 13.13. fulfil other tasks necessary to ensure the organisation of the licensing process and changes to the license of a study programme, in compliance with the provisions set forth in Cabinet Regulation No. 795 and other regulatory enactments, as well as the organisation of the accreditation of a study direction, assessment of the changes to the accredited study direction, and the inclusion of the study programme, as licensed after the accreditation of the study direction, in the accreditation sheet, in compliance with Cabinet Regulation No. 793 and other regulatory enactments.
14. The Committee meeting minutes shall contain the information regarding the persons attending the meeting, the items on the agenda of the Committee meeting, the key information provided by the higher education institution or college, the opinions of the Committee members, the voting results, and the decisions made.
  15. Within three working days following the receipt of the draft minutes for electronic coordination thereof, the Committee members shall submit, by electronic means, to the secretariat objections or proposals regarding the draft minutes. If the secretariat has received any objections or proposals, it sends the corrected minutes to the Committee for repeated coordination thereof. If the Committee has no objections towards the corrected minutes, it shall deem coordinated, and the secretariat shall inform the Committee thereof.
  16. The Committee meeting minutes shall be signed by the chairperson of the Committee, or, in case of his/her absence, the deputy chairperson of the Committee, as well as the secretary appointed by the secretariat.

#### **IV. Decision-making Procedures**

17. The Committee members shall become acquainted with the materials submitted by a higher education institution or college, the joint report by the experts, the findings and opinions of other institutions, and the information prepared by the secretariat, as well as hear the explanations provided by a higher education institution or college, if their representatives are attending the respective meeting.
18. The meetings of the Committee shall be valid only if at least four Committee members, including the chairperson and the deputy chairperson of the Committee, are present. A Committee member shall inform the chairperson of the Committee, if he/she has any

direct or indirect interest in the respective decision or has become aware of any circumstances, which may give rise to a conflict of interest.<sup>1</sup>

19. The Committee shall make a decision by mutual agreement among the Committee members. If the Committee members fail to reach an agreement, an open ballot shall take place, and the decision is made by simple majority. In the event that the number of votes should be equal, the chairperson or, in his/her absence, the deputy chairperson of the Committee shall have the casting vote.
20. For more efficient operation of the Committee, issues falling within the competence of the Committee may be discussed by electronic means, provided that the Committee members have agreed upon it. In such case, the secretariat shall send the draft documents to all Committee members. If the Committee members have not made any proposals or raised any objections within two working days, the draft shall be considered as agreed upon by the Committee members without any reservations.
21. The Committee meetings shall be open, unless otherwise determined by the chairperson of the Committee.
22. The decision made by the Committee shall be signed by the chairperson of the Committee.
23. The secretariat notifies the higher education institution or college of the decision made by the Committee within ten working days of the day on which the decision was made or the copy thereof was sent to the Ministry of Education and Science.
24. If the Committee has made a decision on the licensing of a study programme or the changes to the license, the secretariat shall send to the higher education institution or college the decision made by the Committee along with the license signed by the chairperson of the Committee.
25. If the Committee has made a decision on the accreditation of a study direction or the changes to the accreditation sheet of a study direction, the secretariat shall send to the higher education institution or college the decision made by the Committee along with the accreditation sheet of the respective study direction signed by the chairperson of the Committee
26. The decision made by the Committee may be contested before the Appeals Committee, whereas the decision made by the Appeals Committee may be appealed before the court, in compliance with the procedures set forth in the Administrative Procedure Law.

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<sup>1</sup> *Committee members have, or over the last two years have had, contractual relationship with the higher education institution/college, or the father, mother, grandmother, grandfather, child, grandchild, adoptee, adopter, brother, sister, stepbrother, stepsister or the spouse of the Committee member is involved in the implementation of the study direction or the study programmes subject to assessment.*