



Augstākās izglītības
kvalitātes aģentūra

Study field assessment process: methodology and criteria

Quality Agency for Higher Education
Head of Quality Assessment Unit
Ilva Grigorjeva

30.08.2021

Content

1. Regulatory framework
2. The aim and results of the study field assessment and accreditation process
3. Stages of the study field assessment process
4. Structure of the joint opinion of the expert group
5. Link between the expert group's joint opinion and HEI's self-assessment report
6. Recommendations for the work of experts during assessment procedures

REGULATORY FRAMEWORK (main regulatory acts for procedure)

Law on Higher Education Institutions (Section 55.³ Opening and Accreditation of an Academic Discipline)

<https://likumi.lv/ta/en/en/id/37967>

Cabinet Regulation No. 793 of 11 December 2018 “Regulations on Opening and Accreditation of a Study Direction”

<https://likumi.lv/ta/en/en/id/303956>

Methodology for the Assessment and Accreditation of Study Fields <https://www.aika.lv/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Methodology-for-the-Assessment-and-Accreditation-of-Study-Fields-amended-08.12.2020..pdf>

The Guidelines for the Preparation of the Joint Report by the Experts Group on the Assessment of a Study Direction

<https://www.aika.lv/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/The-Guidelines-for-the-Preparation-of-the-Joint-Report-by-the-Experts-Group-on-the-Assessment-of-a-Study-Direction.pdf>

The aim and results of the study field assessment and accreditation process

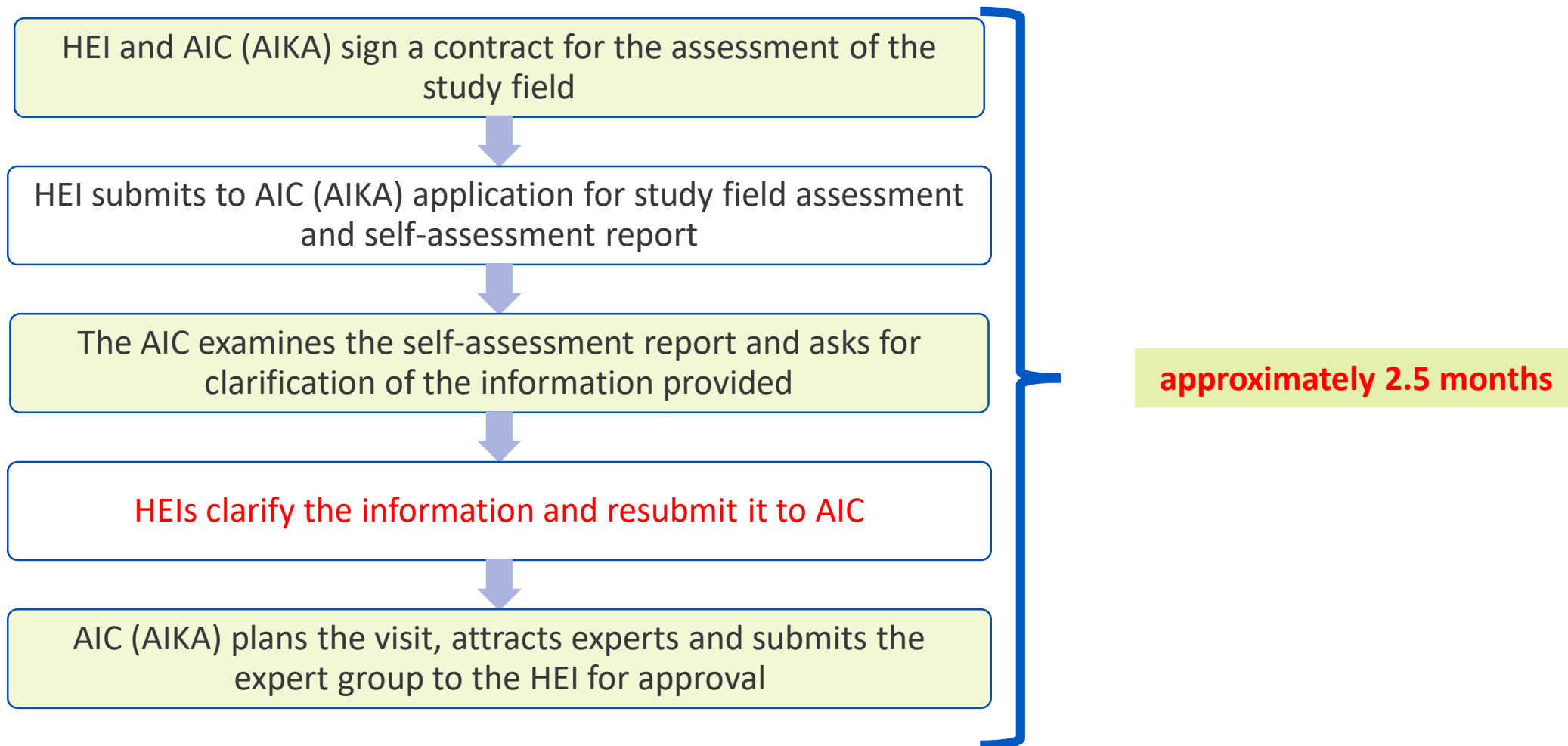
ASSESSMENT procedure of the study field	ACCREDITATION procedure of the study field
<p>Aim: To perform a comprehensive assessment of the study field and the corresponding programmes and to provide recommendations for the improvement of the study field and the corresponding study programmes.</p> <p>Parties involved: Group of experts, AIC, HEIs, Other Organizations</p> <p>Outcome of the procedure: Assessment and joint opinion</p>	<p>Aim: To make a decision on the accreditation of the study field and the corresponding study programmes or the refusal to accredit the study field.</p> <p>Parties involved: Study Quality Commission, AIC, HEI, Other organizations</p> <p>Outcome of the procedure: Decision on accreditation of a study field for 6 or 2 years, or refusal to accredit a study field</p> <p>*In the case of accreditation, HEIs have the right to issue a state-recognized diploma to students</p>



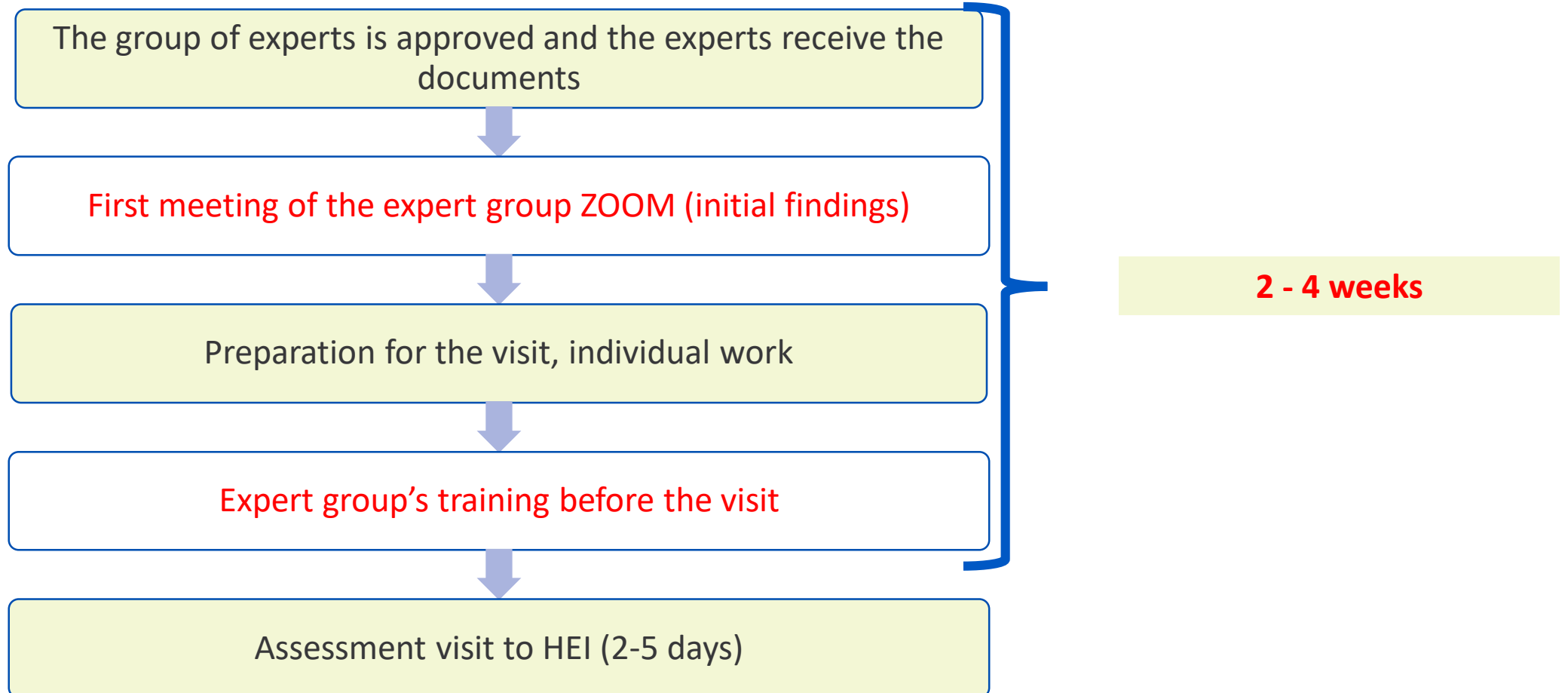
Augstākās izglītības
kvalitātes aģentūra

Study field assessment procedure (6 months)

Stages of the study field assessment process [1]



Stages of the study field assessment process [2]



Assessment visit

On-site visit

- All experts participate in the visit in person

Partially online assessment visit

- In cases of force majeure or other objectively justified exceptional circumstances justifying the inability of one of the experts to attend the assessment visit, the experts shall participate in the assessment visit at a distance, except for the head of the team or, in exceptional cases, the expert who is chairing the meetings

Fully online assessment visit

- In cases of force majeure or other objectively justified exceptional circumstances which make it impossible for any of the experts to attend the assessment visit, all experts shall participate in the assessment visit at a distance and only the assessment coordinator shall participate in the assessment visit on-site. In cases where the objectively justified exceptional circumstances make impossible assessment coordinator to participate assessment visit on-site, the assessment coordinator shall participate in the assessment visit at a distance.

Visit shall include following meetings

HEI management

The working group
responsible for Self-
Assessment Report

Directors of study
programmes

Teaching staff

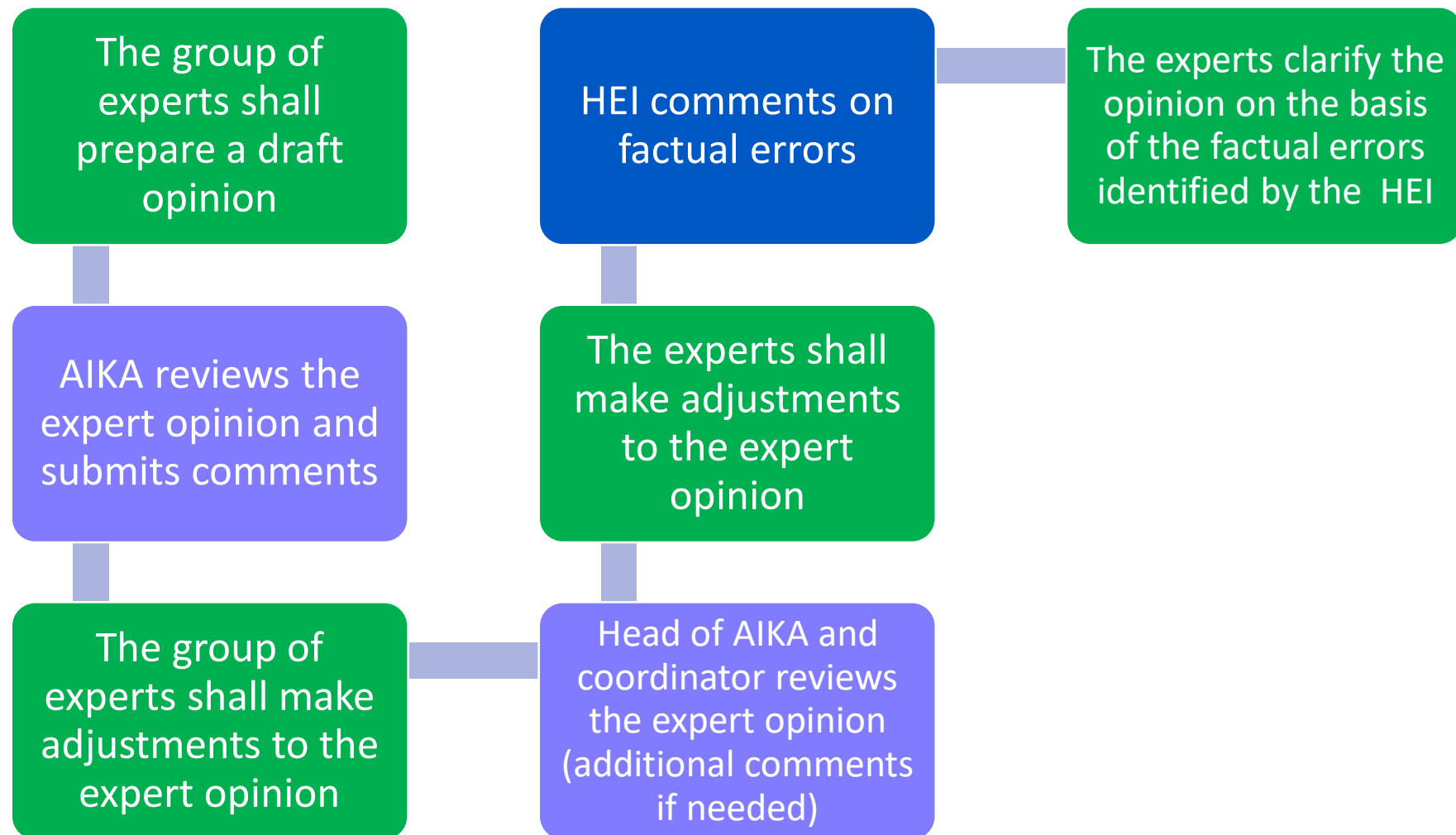
Students

Graduates

Representatives of employers
and/or professional
organizations

Other meetings
(if necessary)

Stages of the study field assessment process [3]

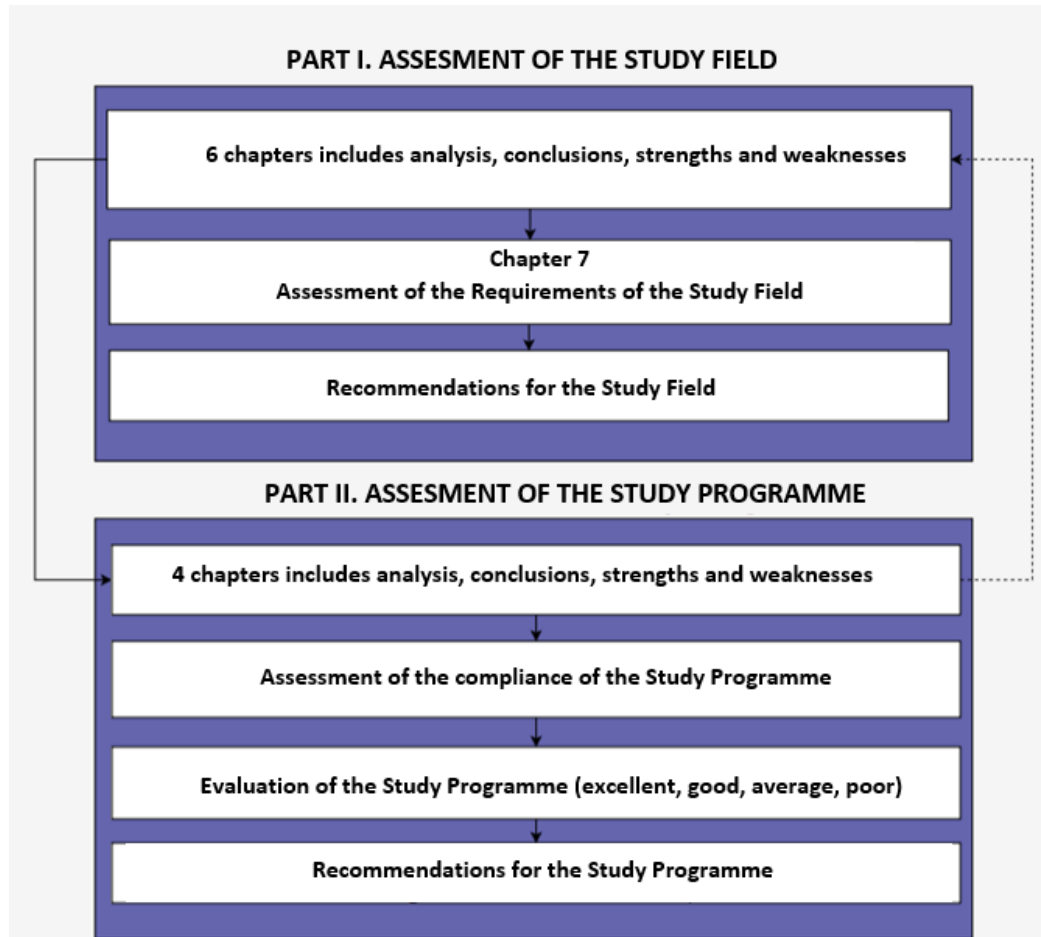




Augstākās izglītības
kvalitātes aģentūra

Joint opinion

Structure of the joint opinion [1]



- The sections contain **criteria** on which the experts analyze and summarize the conclusions
- The opinion includes 8 **requirements** set in the regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers
- The assessment of requirements **must be aligned** with the analysis made in the criteria

Structure of the joint opinion [2] – Assessment of the study field

1. Management of the Study field
2. Efficiency of the Internal Quality Assurance System
3. Resources and Provision of the Study field
4. Scientific Research and Artistic Creation
5. Cooperation and Internationalisation
6. Implementation of the Recommendations Received During the Previous Assessment Procedures
7. **Assessment of the Requirements for the Study field**
8. **Recommendations for the Study field**

Example of criteria under assessment:

I. Assessment of the Study Direction

1. Management of the Study Direction

Criteria:

- 1.1. The aims of the study direction are clearly defined and attainable. The study direction and the relevant study programmes comply with the main directions of the strategic development of the higher education institution/ college and meet the needs and the development trends of the society and national economy.
- 1.2. The structure of the management (administration) of the study direction and the relevant study programmes is oriented towards the development of the study direction. Decision-taking is efficient. The support provided by the administrative and technical staff contributes to meeting all needs with regard to the relevant study programmes of the study direction.
- 1.3. The higher education institution/ college has established a system and developed/ implemented procedures for the admission of students, the recognition of the study period, professional experience, and the previously acquired formal and non-formal education, as well as for the evaluation of the achievements and learning outcomes of the students, and these procedures are logical and efficient.

Structure of the joint opinion of the expert group [2] - assessment of study programmes

1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme
2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof
3. Resources and Provision of the Study Programme
4. Teaching Staff
5. Assessment of the Compliance of the Study Programme "..."
6. Recommendations for the Study Programme "..."

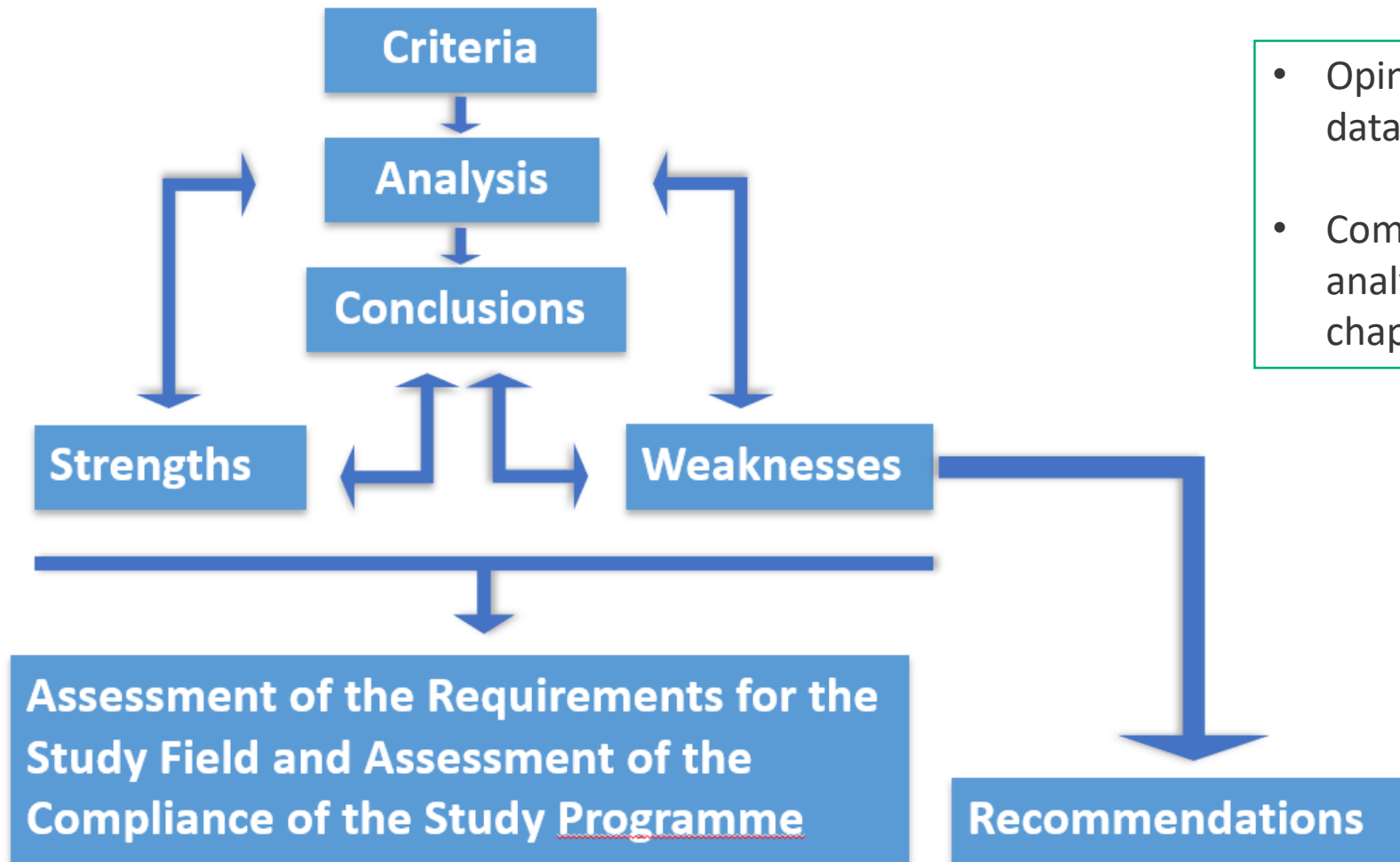
Example of criteria under assessment:

2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof

Criteria:

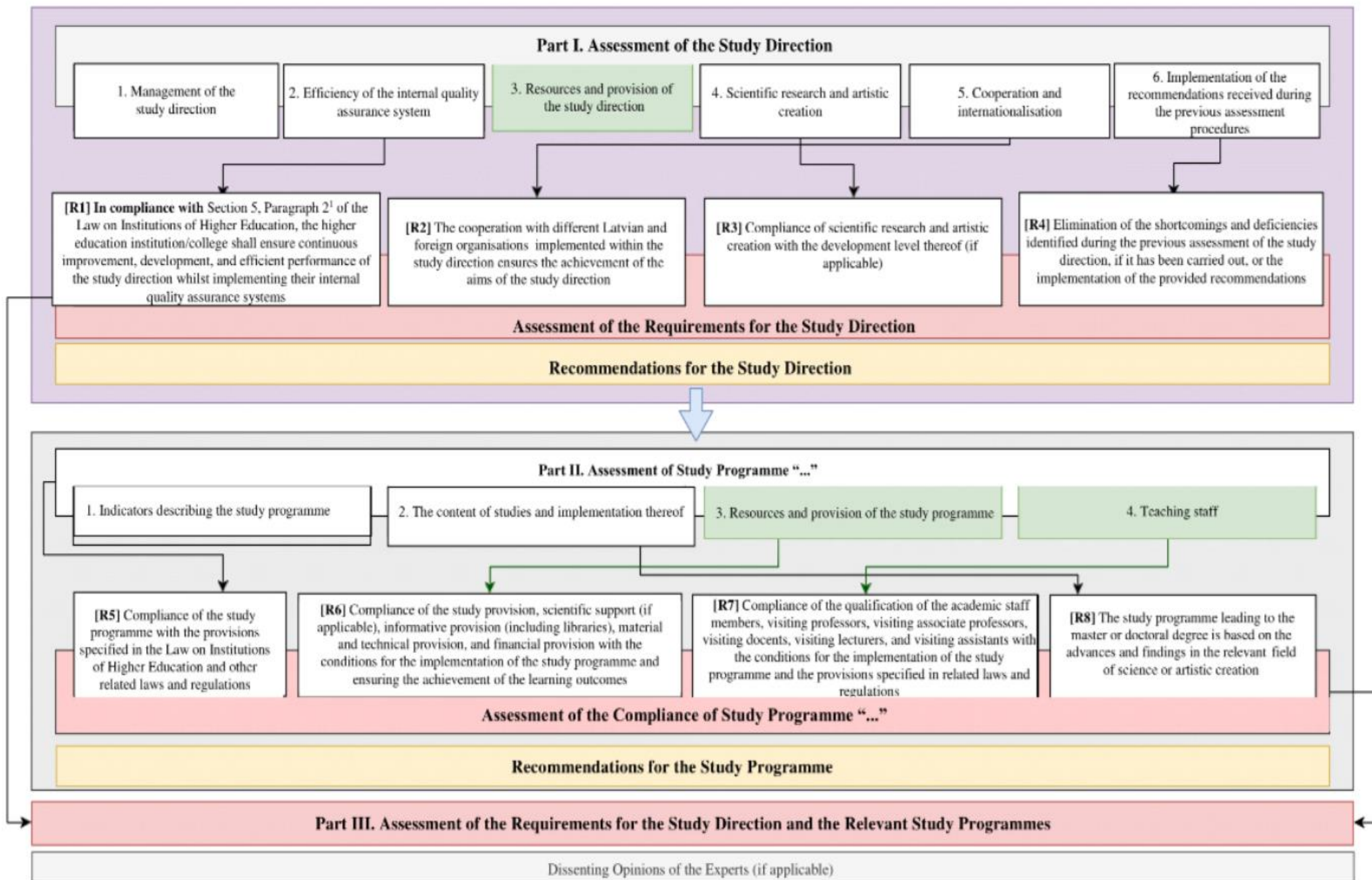
- 2.1. The descriptions of the study courses/ modules, the traineeship, and the final thesis are of high quality and comply with the provisions set forth in the regulatory enactments. The content is relevant and complementary, and it complies with the aims of the study programme, ensures the achievement of the learning outcomes, and meets the needs of the relevant industry and the scientific trends.
- 2.2. The study implementation methods, including the evaluation methods, contribute to the achievement of the aims and learning outcomes of the study courses and the study programme. Student-centred learning and teaching principles are taken into account.
- 2.3. The outcomes of the surveys conducted among the students, employers, and graduates are used to improve the quality of studies.

Basic principles

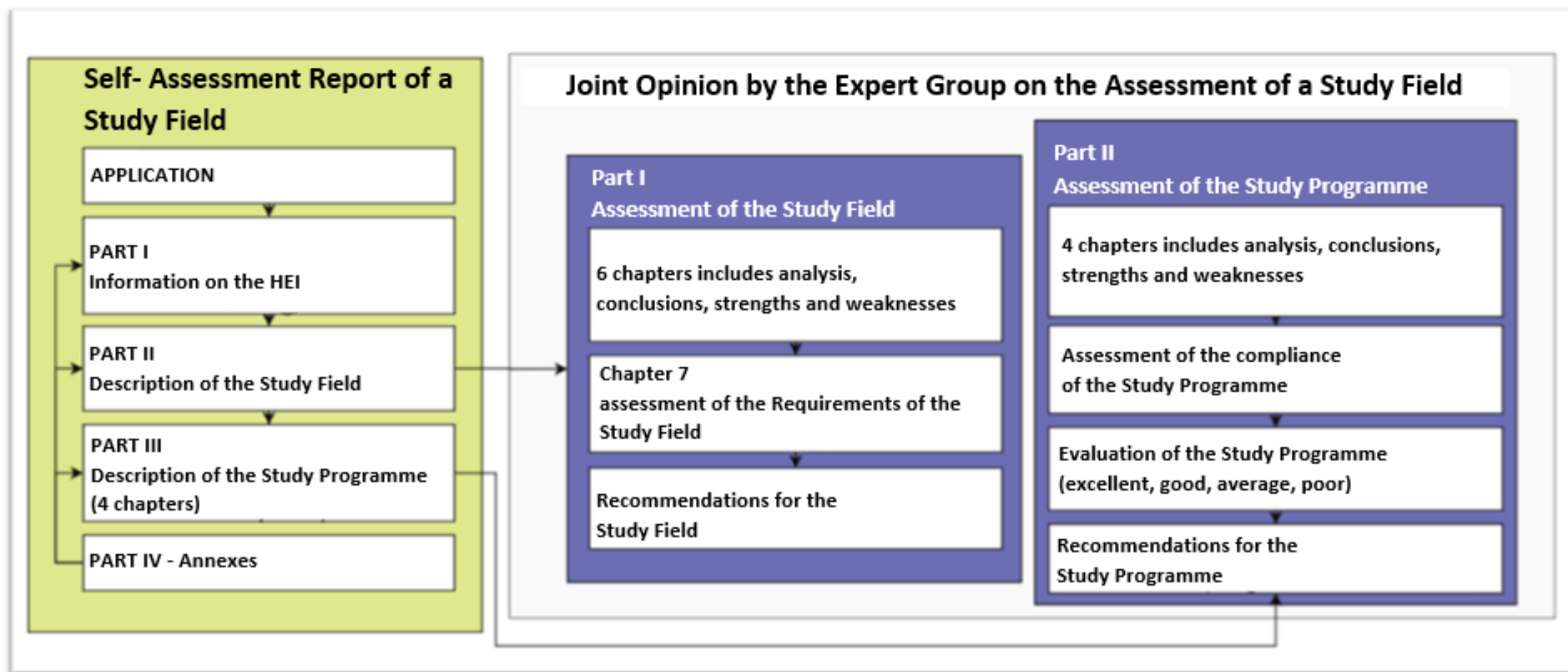


- Opinion based on facts, data and evidence
- Compatibility of the analysis within different chapters

GUIDELINES FOR THE PREPARATION OF THE JOINT REPORT BY THE EXPERTS GROUP FOR THE ASSESSMENT OF A STUDY DIRECTION



LINK BETWEEN THE SELF-ASSESSMENT REPORT AND THE EXPERT JOINT OPINION





Augstākās izglītības
kvalitātes aģentūra

Accreditation procedure of study field (4 months)

Accreditation procedure

HEIs submit to the AIC an application for accreditation of the study field and a report on the implementation of recommendations

The AIC evaluates the application and asks for clarification if necessary

The Study Quality Committee evaluates the HEI application, documents and the **joint opinion of the expert group**

The issue of accreditation of the study field is considered at the meeting of the Study Quality Committee, a decision on accreditation is made

Recommendations for the work of experts during assessment procedures

- Before the first ZOOM meeting, get acquainted with the methodology of the assessment procedure and the guidelines for drafting an expert opinion
- Divide responsibilities at the first ZOOM meeting
- Before assessment visit prepare questions, see them in the context of the criteria included in the expert opinion
- Identify problem areas before the assessment visit (discuss them with AIKA coordinator and the expert group)
- **Don't be afraid to ask for support and clarify unclear issues**
- **Follow deadlines**

Useful information for experts:

- Information on YOUTUBE:
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCnZ5E6qxi2kMZ_L9TZYaN6A
- Guidelines for the assessment procedure:
<https://www.aika.lv/en/laws-and-regulations-publications/internal-rules-and-regulations/>
- Detailed information about the assessment and accreditation of the study field:
<https://www.aika.lv/en/for-experts/accreditation-of-study-direction/>



Augstākās izglītības
kvalitātes aģentūra

Dzirnavu iela 16, Rīga, Latvija, LV – 1010

www.aika.lv