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The Guidelines for the Preparation of the Joint Opinion by the Experts for inclusion of a Licensed Study Programme on the Accreditation Form

The guidelines for the preparation of the joint opinion by the expert group on including a licensed study programme on the accreditation form of a study field (hereinafter - the guidelines) have been developed in accordance with Cabinet Regulation No. 793 of 11th December 2018 “Regulations on Opening and Accreditation of a Study Field” (hereinafter – Cabinet Regulation No. 793) paragraph 2.5. and 13.

The purpose of the guidelines is to provide the experts with a structured framework for the preparation of the joint opinion on the inclusion of a licensed study programme on the accreditation form of a study field. Within the assessment procedure, the expert group shall prepare a joint opinion in English.

The joint opinion by the expert group shall be prepared as follows:

- in accordance with the sequence set forth in the guidelines, justifying the statements made and providing references and examples;
- in accordance with the literary and grammar rules of the English language, legal and academic terminology;
- providing recommendations for the elimination of the deficiencies identified (on a short-term basis) and for improving the relevant study programmes (on a long-term basis).

When preparing the joint opinion by the expert group on the inclusion of a licensed study programme on the accreditation form of a study field, the experts shall agree upon the evaluation of the requirements. If the opinion of the experts regarding any requirement differs, it shall be specified in the joint opinion by the expert group.

The report is divided into five parts, where Part I shall provide a comprehensive summary of the expert evaluation of the study programme to be included on the accreditation form of the study field; Part II shall evaluate the programme indicators, topicality and compliance of the content

with the industry trends and changes made since the study programme licensing, as well as resources and provision, in Part III the assessment should be indicated in accordance with Cabinet Regulation No. 793 paragraph 17; Part IV should set out the experts' recommendations in line with the analysis and conclusions included in the joint opinion.

Part 3 of the joint report includes the requirements specified in Paragraph 16 of Cabinet Regulation No. 793:

- Compliance of the study provision, science provision (if applicable), information provision (including libraries), material and technical provision and financial provision with the conditions for the implementation of the study programme and ensuring the achievement of learning outcomes;
- Compliance of the qualification of the academic staff and visiting professors, visiting associate professors, visiting docents, visiting lecturers and visiting assistants with the conditions for the implementation of the study programme and the requirements of the laws and regulations;
- The study programme for acquisition a master's or doctoral degree is based on the achievements and findings of the respective field of science or artistic creation.
- Compliance of the study programme with the requirements of the Law on Higher Education Institutions and other laws and regulations.

When performing the evaluation, the experts shall analyse the available information by providing specific examples and references to the self-assessment report of the higher education institution/ college and the information obtained during the visit.

In case the study programme is implemented in form of distance learning or in branches, additional analysis shall be performed by considering the specific features of the form of distance learning and/or branches.

The experts' evaluation on compliance is given for each requirement according to the following grading: "fully compliant", "partially compliant" or "non-compliant", by taking into account the analysis and the following explanations of the evaluation given to the relevant requirement:

Evaluation	Explanation of the evaluation
Fully compliant	The study programme complies with the prescribed requirements.
Partially compliant	Whilst assessing the compliance of the study programme with the prescribed requirements, shortcomings and deficiencies have been identified, but they can be eliminated by the meeting of the Study Quality Committee (hereinafter - the SQC) that will review the application on the inclusion of a licensed study programme on the accreditation form of the study field, or within the accreditation term of the study field.

Non-compliant	Whilst assessing the compliance of the study programme with the prescribed requirements, significant deficiencies have been identified, and the identified shortcomings and deficiencies regarding the implementation of the study programme cannot be eliminated within the two-year accreditation term of the study field.
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Whilst preparing the joint opinion by the expert group on the inclusion of a licensed study programme on the accreditation form of the study field, the experts shall agree upon **the evaluation of the study programme in accordance with Paragraph 17 of the Cabinet Regulation No. 793**, by specifying whether the study programme shall be evaluated as excellent, good, average or poor (unsatisfactory).

Evaluation	Explanation of the evaluation
Excellent	The study programme complies with the prescribed requirements.
Good	Whilst assessing the compliance of the study programme with the prescribed requirements, minor (insignificant) deficiencies have been identified.
Average	Whilst assessing the compliance of the study programme with the prescribed requirements, shortcomings and deficiencies have been identified, but they can be eliminated within the accreditation term of the study field.
Poor (unsatisfactory)	Whilst assessing the compliance of the study programme with the prescribed requirements, significant deficiencies have been identified, and the identified shortcomings and deficiencies regarding the implementation of the study programme cannot be eliminated within the two-year accreditation term of the study field.

In the chapter dealing with the recommendations, the experts shall specify the conditions which must be met by the time the decision on the inclusion of a licensed study programme on the accreditation form is made (if applicable), as well as short-term recommendations for the elimination of the minor (insignificant) deficiencies identified and long-term recommendations for further improvement of the relevant study programme. The joint opinion by the expert group shall be typewritten. After the decision on the inclusion of a licensed study programme on the accreditation form is made, joint opinion is published on the E-platform (eplatforma.aika.lv).

The structure of the joint opinion by the expert group

I Summary of the assessment

II Description of the study programme

1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme
2. Topicality of the Study Programme
3. Resources and Provision
4. Implementation of the Recommendations Received During the Licensing of the Study Programme

III Assessment of the study programme
IV Recommendations

JOINT REPORT BY THE EXPERTS ON THE INCLUSION OF A LICENSED STUDY
PROGRAMME ON THE ACCREDITATION FORM

Higher Education Institution/ College

STUDY FIELD

(Name)

STUDY PROGRAMME

(Name of the programme to be included on the accreditation form of the study field)

Experts:

1. Expert, degree/ professional qualification, name, surname _____

2. Expert, degree/ professional qualification, name, surname _____

_____(Date)

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I. Summary of the Assessment

Concise summary of the assessment of the study programme to be included on the accreditation form and its compliance with the requirements set forth, as carried out by the experts. Specify the positive and negative aspects identified.

II. Description of the study programme

1. Indicators describing the Study Programme

1.	Name of the higher education institution/college	
2.	Name of the study field corresponding to the study programme	
3.	Name of the study programme	
4.	Code of the study programme in accordance with the Latvian Education Classification	
5.	Language of study programme implementation	
6.	Amount, duration, form and type of the study programme (also distance-learning)	
7.	Admission requirements	
8.	Address of the study programme implementation, indicating whether the study programme is implemented in the branches of the higher education institution / college	
9.	Degree, professional qualification or degree and professional qualification to be awarded	
10.	Date of study programme licensing	
11.	Date of starting the implementation of the study programme	
12.	Accreditation term of the study field	

Evaluation on:

1. Compliance of the study programme with the study field.
2. Compliance between the title of the study programme, the degree to be awarded and the qualification (if applicable).

3. Compliance of the study programme indicators (study programme code, amount, implementation duration) with the learning outcomes defined for it.

Analysis

Conclusions, strengths and weaknesses

2. Topicality of the study programme

Evaluation on:

1. The topicality of the study programme and the compliance of the content with the tendencies of the industry (area), the changes made since the licensing of the study programme.
2. Dynamics of the student number and prospects of employment for graduates.

Analysis

Conclusions, strengths and weaknesses

3. Resources and provision

Requirement [R1]: Compliance of the study base, science base (if applicable), information base (including library), material and technical base and financial base with the conditions for the implementation of the study programme and for ensuring the achievement of learning outcomes.

Analysis

Conclusions, strengths and weaknesses

Evaluation of the requirement [R1]:

Requirement	Compliance			Justification
	Fully compliant	Partially compliant	Non-compliant	
Compliance of the study provision, science provision (if applicable), information provision (including library), material and technical provision and financial provision with the conditions for the implementation of the study programme and for ensuring the achievement of learning outcomes.				

Requirement [R2]: Compliance of the qualification of the academic staff and visiting professors, visiting associate professors, visiting docents, visiting lecturers and visiting assistants with the conditions for the implementation of the study programme and the requirements of the laws and regulations.

Analysis

Conclusions, strengths and weaknesses

Evaluation of the requirement [R2]:

Requirement	Compliance			Justification
	Fully compliant	Partially compliant	Non-compliant	
Compliance of the qualification of the academic staff and visiting professors, visiting associate professors, visiting docents, visiting lecturers and visiting assistants with the conditions for the implementation of the study programme and the requirements of the laws and regulations.				

Requirement [R3]: The study programme for obtaining a master's or doctoral degree is based on the achievements and findings of the respective field of science or artistic creation (if applicable).

Analysis

Conclusions, strengths and weaknesses

Evaluation of the requirement [R3]:

Requirement	Compliance			Justification
The study programme for obtaining a master's or doctoral degree is based on the achievements and findings of the respective field of science or artistic creation (if applicable).	Fully compliant	Partially compliant	Non-compliant	

Requirement [R4]: Compliance of the study programme with the requirements of the Law on Higher Education Institutions and other laws and regulations.

The table includes points that help to assess the compliance of the study programme with the requirements of the Law on Higher Education Institutions and other laws and regulations. Each requirement shall be evaluated as “fully compliant”, “partially compliant” or “non-compliant” by providing a justification. In addition, it is also possible to refer to the respective part of the expert joint report or the information provided by the higher education institution/ college, which serves as evidence for the full compliance, partial compliance or non-compliance, as indicated herein.

If applicable, other requirements specified in the Law on Higher Education Institutions or other regulatory enactments that correspond to the study programme being evaluated may be added to the table.

No.	Requirement	Fully compliant	Partially compliant	Non-compliant	Justification
1.	<p>The study programme complies with the State Academic Education Standard or the Professional Higher Education Standard, including the minimum requirements for the content of the compulsory civil protection course and the content of civil protection training for employees specified for the implementation of the study programme.</p> <p>The study courses of the professional study programmes include a module for the development of professional competence of entrepreneurship in the amount of at least 6 CP, if it has not been acquired in the previous professional study programme or is not included in the theoretical basic courses of the study programme branch (field of professional activity).</p>				
2.	<p>The study programme complies with a valid professional (occupational) standard, or with the requirements of professional qualification (if it is not necessary to develop a professional standard for the profession), if a professional qualification is awarded after acquisition of the study programme</p>				
3.	<p>The code of the study programme complies with the Cabinet regulations on the Latvian Education Classification</p>				

4.	The qualification of the teaching staff ¹ complies with the conditions and requirements set for the implementation of the study programme, which are specified in the regulatory enactments in the field of education including the participation in the implementation of an academic study programme of at least five professors and associate professors together who have been elected to academic positions in the respective higher education institution, except in the cases provided for in Section 55, Part two of the Law on Higher Education Institutions.				
5.	Confirmation of the higher education institution/college that the teaching staff members to be involved in the implementation of the study programme have at least B2-level knowledge of a related foreign language, according to the European Language Proficiency Assessment levels (the division of levels is available on the website www.europass.lv), if the study programme or any part thereof is to be implemented in a foreign language or proficiency of the Latvian language at least on the B2 level, if the study programme or a part thereof is intended to be implemented in the Latvian language and the lecturer has not acquired secondary or higher education in the Latvian language.				

¹ As used in this document, the term “teaching staff” refers to the academic staff and visiting professors, visiting associate professors, visiting lecturers, visiting lecturers, and visiting assistants of the corresponding higher education institution / college.

6.	The study programme, which is intended to be implemented in a foreign language, complies with the requirements of Section 56, Part three of the Law on Higher Education Institutions				
7.	The sample of the study agreement complies with the mandatory provisions to be included in the study agreement (if applicable).				
8.	The sample of the diploma to be issued for the acquisition of the study programme complies with the procedure by which state recognised documents of higher education are issued (if applicable).				
9.	The higher education institution/ college has confirmed that it will provide the students with the options to continue the acquisition of education in another study programme or at another higher education institution/ college (a contract with another accredited higher education institution/ college), in case the implementation of the study programme is discontinued (if applicable).				
10.	The higher education institution/ college has confirmed that it guarantees to the students a compensation for losses if the study programme is not accredited or the licence of the study programme is revoked due to the actions of the higher education institution/ college (actions or omissions) and the student does not wish to continue the studies in another study programme (if applicable).				

11.	<p>At least five teaching staff members with a doctoral degree are among the academic staff of an academic doctoral study programme, at least three of which are experts approved by the Latvian Science Council in the respective field of science.</p> <p>At least five teaching staff members with a doctoral degree are among the academic staff of a professional doctoral study programme in arts (if applicable).</p>				
12.	The scientific and pedagogical qualification of doctors of science complies with the criteria specified in the regulatory enactments regarding the evaluation of the scientific and pedagogical qualification of a candidate for the position of a professor and an associate professor (if applicable).				
13.	The joint study programme complies with the requirements prescribed in Section 55 ¹ , of the Law on the Higher Education Institutions (if applicable).				

Evaluation of the requirement [R4]:

Requirement	Compliance			Justification
	Fully compliant	Partially compliant	Non-compliant	
Compliance of the study programme with the requirements of the Law on Higher Education Institutions and other laws and regulations.				

4. Implementation of the recommendations received during the licensing of the study programme

Assessment of the implementation of the recommendations provided by the licensing experts of the study programme.

Analysis

Conclusions, strengths and weaknesses

III. Assessment of the study programme

Excellent	Good	Average	Poor
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IV. Recommendations

The recommendations shall be provided in two parts:

- *Recommendations for the elimination of the deficiencies identified (on a short-term basis).*
- *Recommendations for the improvement of the study programme (on a long-term basis).*

In the event that the opinions of the experts regarding any of the requirements or criteria differ, please indicate the dissenting opinion.

Name and surname of the expert, the dissenting opinion, a justification of the dissenting opinion.