

Rules of Procedure of Quality Assessment Council of Estonian Higher Education Quality Agency



Approved by EKKKA Quality Assessment Council on 06.01.2012

Amended on 27.09.2012

1. Organisation of Work of Quality Assessment Council

- 1.1 The Quality Assessment Council of the Estonian Higher Education Quality Agency (hereinafter 'Estonian Higher Education Quality Agency' will be referred to as 'EKKKA') has been formed according to the OD 401-01 normative document of the Archimedes Foundation entitled *Procedure for Formation of Quality Assessment Council of Estonian Higher Education Quality Agency*.
- 1.2 The EKKKA Quality Assessment Council (hereinafter referred to as 'Quality Assessment Council') shall operate in accordance with legislation of the Republic of Estonia and international legislation, including the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area, the Republic of Estonia Standard of Higher Education, the Statutes of the Archimedes Foundation, the Statutes of EKKKA, the documents by the EKKKA Quality Assessment Council regulating specific evaluation activities, as well as other legislation and normative documents regulating quality assurance of higher education (see also OR 401 entitled *Register of Normative Documents of Estonian Higher Education Quality Agency*).
- 1.3 The Quality Assessment Council shall work in accordance with work plans they have prepared themselves. These plans shall be based on suggestions by educational institutions for accreditation and quality assessment, relevant requests by the Ministry of Education and Research for quality reviews and the volume of EKKKA budgetary resources.
- 1.4 The work of the Quality Assessment Council shall be organised by the EKKKA Bureau (hereinafter referred to as 'Bureau').
- 1.5 The Director of EKKKA shall enter into service contracts with members of the Quality Assessment Council; the work of the members shall be compensated based on the number of sessions attended during a calendar year.

2. Management of Work of Quality Assessment Council

- 2.1 The work of the Quality Assessment Council is led by the chairperson or, in his or her absence, by the deputy chairperson.
- 2.2 The chairperson and the deputy chairperson shall be elected by the Council from among its members at the first session of the new membership of the Quality Assessment Council, convened by the Director of EKKKA.

3. Secretary of Quality Assessment Council

- 3.1 The Director of EKKKA shall appoint the secretary of the Quality Assessment Council. The chairperson of the Quality Assessment Council shall specify the functions of the secretary.

4 Sessions of Quality Assessment Council

- 4.1** The work format of the Quality Assessment Council shall be a 'session'. Sessions of the Quality Assessment Council (hereinafter referred to as 'session') shall be held at least twice a year.
- 4.2** A session shall be convened by the chairperson of the Quality Assessment Council or, in his or her absence, by the deputy chairperson. If required, the Quality Assessment Council shall be convened at the request of at least four of its members. The secretary of the Council shall notify the Council members of sessions, in writing, no later than one week before the session.
- 4.3** The secretary of the Quality Assessment Council shall send the agenda of a session, and other relevant materials, to the members of the Quality Assessment Council no later than one week before the session.
- 4.4** Sessions of the Quality Assessment Council shall be chaired by the chairperson or, in his or her absence, by the deputy chairperson.
- 4.5** The chairperson or, in his or her absence, the deputy chairperson shall have the right to invite persons outside the membership of the Quality Assessment Council to participate in sessions of the Quality Assessment Council to discuss agenda issues.
- 4.6** A member of the Quality Assessment Council who belongs to the membership of the educational institution under evaluation shall leave the room during the time of discussion of the assessment decision.

5 Minutes of Session

- 5.1** Sessions of the Quality Assessment Council shall be recorded in the minutes. Minutes shall be prepared by the secretary of the Quality Assessment Council and shall be signed by the chairperson of the Quality Assessment Council or, in his or her absence, by the deputy chairperson, and the secretary of the Quality Assessment Council.
- 5.2** The secretary of the Quality Assessment Council shall electronically communicate copies of the session minutes to all members of the Quality Assessment Council within one week after the session.

6 Quorum of Quality Assessment Council

- 6.1** A session of the Quality Assessment Council has attained a quorum if at least eight members of the Quality Assessment Council are present including the chairperson or, in his or her absence, the deputy chairperson. Remote participation through videoconferencing, or other technological solutions that enable remote attendance, shall be considered the same as being present at the session.
- 6.2** Sessions of the Quality Assessment Council in which the agenda does not include an adoption of an assessment decision may, with the chairperson's consent, be held in an electronic format, in the case of which attendance will be determined on the basis of the number of emailed opinions received within the period of time defined as a session.
- 6.3** If a quorum cannot be attained, the chairperson or, in his or her absence, the deputy chairperson, shall convene another session within two weeks.

7 Decisions by Quality Assessment Council

- 7.1** The Quality Assessment Council shall adopt its decisions by open vote by a simple majority of the members with voting rights who are present at a session (including the case referred to in point 6.2 regarding e-voting within the period of time defined as a session). In the case of an equal division of votes, the vote of the chairperson or, in his or her absence, the vote of the deputy chairperson, shall be decisive. Members of the Quality Assessment Council must not remain undecided.
- 7.2** Members of the Quality Assessment Council, except a representative of Federation of Estonian Student Unions, shall not vote if the decision is related to the educational institution in which they hold membership.
- 7.3** Members of the Quality Assessment Council not present at a session may present their decisions in writing to the secretary of the Quality Assessment Council at least by the beginning of the session. The secretary shall inform the Quality Assessment Council about the opinion of its absent members at the relevant agenda item. The vote of an absent member shall not be counted when adopting a decision.
- 7.4** If an assessment decision adopted by the Quality Assessment Council differs from the decision made by the assessment committee, relevant reasons in writing shall be presented along with such decision.
- 7.5** The specific powers and functions of the Quality Assessment Council regarding its final approvals of the results of institutional accreditation, as well as quality assessment, re-evaluation and initial assessment of study programme groups, are defined by documents regulating the relevant evaluation activities.

8 Contesting Decisions by the Quality Assessment Council and Assessment Procedures

- 8.1** Decisions and procedures regarding institutional accreditation as well as quality assessment and re-evaluation of study programme groups may be contested in accordance with the procedures provided for in documents regulating the relevant evaluation activities.

9 Documentation

- 9.1** EKKA employees shall maintain documentation regarding the work of the EKKA Quality Assessment Council in accordance with procedures provided for in the following documents: *Control of Records* (OP 302), *Document List* (OD 302-01) and *Procedure for Record Management* (OD 303) of the Archimedes Foundation.