

**Guidelines for self-evaluation report of institutional accreditation**

**2022**

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**I. INTRODUCTION / GENERAL PART (up to 10 pages)**

* Introduction of the higher education institution (hereinafter the HEI): self-definition, a brief overview of its history, main strategic objectives, fields of activity, structure, key indicators, and other*.*
* A brief description of the self-evaluation process and producing the report (time frame, who was involved, distribution of work, approval, how it is disseminated and made public).
* Aggregated data about the students by main units[[1]](#footnote-1) and levels of study (bachelor’s, master’s, doctoral); for smaller HEIs a five-year trend of the total number of students, number of international students[[2]](#footnote-2), admissions, dropouts and graduates across the study programmes. Please explain the trend dynamics or refer to the section in the self-evaluation report where it is discussed.

Table 1 (example)

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | 16/17 | 17/18 | 18/19 | 19/20 | 20/21 |
| Academic unit |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Study programme (bachelor’s) | Students |  |  |  |  |  |
| Students enrolled |  |  |  |  |  |
| Early leavers/dropouts |  |  |  |  |  |
| Graduates |  |  |  |  |  |
| Study programme (bachelor’s) |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| ... |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Total bachelor’s level higher education |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Study programme (master’s) |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| ....... |  |  |  |  |  |  |

* Aggregated data about academic and support staff by main units as a 5-year trend: the total number of staff, the share of academic staff with PhD, the share of international (visiting) teaching staff, distribution by sex.

Table 2 (example)

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 16/17 | 17/18 | 18/19 | 19/20 | 20/21 |
| Total number of academic staff (women/men) |  |  |  |  |  |
| Number of academic staff with PhD |  |  |  |  |  |
| Average age or distribution by age group  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Number of international teaching staff |  |  |  |  |  |
| Number of support staff |  |  |  |  |  |

## II. MAIN STANDARD-RELATED CHANGES MADE BASED ON RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE PREVIOUS INSTITUTIONAL ACCREDITATION AND OTHER QUALITY ASSESSMENTS (up to 3 pages)

## III. SELF-EVALUATION OF THE HEI ACROSS STANDARDS (up to 40 pages)

*This chapter includes evidence-based analyses (links to specific documents if needed[[3]](#footnote-3)) of how the HEI and its activities comply with institutional accreditation standard.* ***At the end of each standard, there is a summary of strengths and areas for improvement indicated in the evaluation and an overview of the planned development activities.***

***The guide is advisory****. The guidelines highlight possible examples of best practice of applying the standard, however, not attempting to be all-inclusive or appropriate in the context of a particular HEI. The evaluation may cover other topics that demonstrate that a particular standard is met.*

***All indicators identified in the guide are compulsory****, except RDC activities where the HEI presents indicators according to their specificities. Where possible, please present the indicators as a 3 to 5-year trend by segments of main units and levels of study. It is advisable to submit further relevant data to complement the compulsory indicators.*

### STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT

***Standard*:**

#### Planning of the development of the HEI is purposeful and systematic, and various stakeholders are involved. The HEI regularly evaluates the achievement of its stated objectives and the impact of its activities.

*Guidelines*:

The HEI has formulated objectives and key results for its core activities – learning and teaching; RDC activities, and service to society – taking into account national priorities and the needs of society, focusing on its strengths and reducing unnecessary duplication both within the HEI and throughout higher education in Estonia.

The HEI is managed according to its mission, vision and core values, as well as objectives set out based on said principles. Responsibilities for achieving the development objectives and action plans are well defined. Progress made in achieving the objectives, and the impact of the activities are regularly evaluated.

Sustainable development, creativity and innovation are supported and given value in both core and support activities. The HEI is mindful of the opportunities provided by digital technologies in planning for development activities.

Members of the HEI (including students) and external stakeholders are involved in producing and implementing the development plan and action plans of the HEI. Members of the HEI share the core values that serve as a basis for its development plan.

***Indicators:***

* The rate of achieving the targets set out in the development/action plan (key results)
* Other standard-related indicators chosen by the HEI

***Please include a brief summary of strengths and areas for improvement described in the compliance evaluation and the planned development activities.***

### RESOURCES

***Standard*:**

#### The HEI develops its staff and manages its physical and financial resources in a purposeful, systematic and sustainable manner. Internal and external communications of the HEI (including marketing and PR) are targeted and managed.

*Guidelines*:

The HEI has an efficient staff development system in terms of both academic and support staff. The principles and procedures for employee recruitment and development are based on the objectives of the HEI’s development plan, and are fair and transparent. The principles for employees’ remuneration and motivation are defined, available to all employees, and followed.

Allocation of the HEI’s financial resources is based on the objectives of its development plan. The management and development of its infrastructure (buildings, laboratories, classrooms, digital infrastructure, etc.) are fit-for-purpose and economically sound. The infrastructure is regularly analysed (including the network, digital equipment, software and services, IT systems, user support, digital security etc.), taking into consideration among others the needs of students, teaching staff and other members of the HEI personnel.

There are sufficient funds available for the updating of the infrastructure for learning, teaching and research; and/or a strategy exists for their acquisition.

The HEI has defined information protection rules (including on data protection and the protection of user privacy) and these are implemented. The development and security of the online learning and teaching environment are ensured. The online learning and teaching environment allows to identify the authorship of student work.

The HEI has a functioning system for internal and external communications, relevant to the target audiences. The information made public about HEI’s activities (including study programmes) and the findings of external evaluations is correct, up to date, easily accessible and understandable. The HEI has a system to popularise its core activities and academic career opportunities. The HEI members are informed of the decisions relevant to them in a timely manner.

Employee satisfaction with management, working conditions, information flow, etc., at the HEI is surveyed regularly and the survey results are used in quality improvement activities.

***Indicators:***

* The distribution of incomes and costs of the HEI
* The trends of the results of staff satisfaction surveys
* Other standard-related indicators chosen by the HEI

***Please include a brief summary of strengths and areas of development described in the compliance evaluation and the planned development activities.***

### QUALITY CULTURE

***Standard:***

#### The HEI has defined the quality of its core and support processes, and the principles of quality assurance. A regular internal evaluation of various levels is used at the HEI that supports strategic management (HEI, units, study programmes). Results of the internal and external evaluation are analysed, and improvement activities are implemented.

*Guidelines:*

Members of the HEI have agreed on definitions for the quality of their core and support processes and follow them in their daily work. The HEI has established principles and procedures for its own internal quality assurance (internal evaluation). Regular internal evaluation at the level of both the HEI and study programmes take into consideration, among other things, the standards of this guideline. Members of the HEI participate in the internal evaluation, including students and stakeholders.

Internal evaluation of study programmes includes feedback from experts from within and/or outside the HEI. Study programmes are reviewed and improved regularly, thus ensuring their relevance and compliance with international trends. In the course of internal evaluation, among other things, peer learning and sharing of best practices takes place, the results achieved by the HEI and means for achieving them are compared with other HEIs.

Internal evaluation is based on the following quality assurance key questions: What do you want to achieve, and why? How do you want to do it? How do you know that the activities are effective and will have the desired impact? Is there an equilibrium between the desired outcomes and the resources used for their achievement (including technological solutions)? How do you manage the improvement activities?

***Indicators:***

* Improvement activities implemented in the core and support processes of the HEI based on analysing the outcomes of internal evaluation (examples from various fields)
* Other standard-related indicators chosen by the HEI

***Please include a brief summary of strengths and areas for improvement described in the compliance evaluation and the planned development activities.***

### ACADEMIC ETHICS

***Standard:***

#### The HEI has defined its principles of academic ethics, there is a system for disseminating them among its members, and has guidelines for handling any cases of misconduct. The HEI has a functioning complaint handling system in place.

*Guidelines:*

The HEI values its members and ensures equal treatment for all employees and students.

Employees and students of the HEI follow the agreed principles of academic ethics in all their activities.

The HEI respects fundamental values and policies of research set out in the joint document [‘Good Scientific Practice’](http://www.etag.ee/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/HEA-TEADUSTAVA.pdf) issued by Estonian research institutions, the Estonian Academy of Sciences, the Estonian Research Council and the Estonian Ministry of Education and Research.

The HEI supports its students and teaching staff in their understanding and responding to ethical issues. Teaching staff and students do not tolerate academic fraud, including cheating and plagiarism, and they will act immediately upon any such occurrence. Attention is paid to the application of principles of academic ethics in the digital environment: avoidance of creative theft, the protection of intellectual property rights etc.

Management of complaints from HEI members (including discrimination cases) is transparent and objective, ensuring fair treatment of all parties.

***Indicators:***

* The share of student papers checked with plagiarism checkers and the share of identified plagiarism
* Other standard-related indicators chosen by the HEI, such as
	+ - Statistics about the filed challenges (total number of challenges, the share of resolutions made in favour of the applicant)

***Please include a brief summary of strengths and areas for improvement described in the compliance evaluation and the planned development activities.***

### INTERNATIONALISATION

***Standard:***

#### The HEI has set objectives for internationalisation and regularly assesses the progress of achieving them. The HEI has created preconditions to encourage international mobility of students and teaching staff, supporting the development of learning, teaching and RDC activities, as well as the cultural openness of its members and Estonian society in general.

*Guidelines:*

The HEI creates opportunities for international student exchanges by offering study programmes and/or modules in English. The learning environment at the HEI supports internationalisation and cultural openness.

In completing the study programme, studies conducted in a foreign HEI are recognised according to the quality requirements set by the HEI, systemically, in compliance with the learning outcomes, and support international mobility of students.

The organisation of studies at the HEI facilitates student participation in international (including virtual) mobility (e.g., study programmes enable mobility windows). The HEI has agreements with foreign HEIs, and comprehensive support is provided for students to study and undertake practical trainings abroad in the form of international exchange. Members of the teaching staff encourage students to take up international mobility.

International lecturers are involved in the process of teaching, including supervision of doctoral theses.

The HEI supports and recognises the participation of its teaching staff in international teaching, research or creative projects, as well as their teaching, research or creative work and personal development conducted at foreign HEIs.

***Indicators:***

* Teaching staff mobility (in-out)
* Student mobility (in-out)
* Other standard-related indicators chosen by the HEI, such as
	+ - number of English-taught study programmes by main units and levels of study
		- the share of international students (by study programmes, levels of study, total in the HEI)
		- the share of study programmes offering subject courses in English (at least 15 ECTS)
		- the number of credit points gained in international mobility

***Please include a brief summary of strengths and areas for improvement described in the compliance evaluation and the planned development activities.***

### TEACHING STAFF

***Standard:***

#### Teaching is conducted by a sufficient number of professionally competent members of the teaching staff who support the development of learners and value their own continuous development.

*Guidelines:*

Distribution of teaching staff by age and the percentage of young members of the teaching staff ensure the sustainability of studies. The career model of academic staff motivates capable young people to start an academic career and creates opportunities for their advancement.

The HEI supports systematically the development of its teaching staff. Members of the teaching staff engage in development of their professional, teaching and digital competences, improve their supervision competence, and share best practices with one another.

IT and educational technological support (including trainings) are available to teaching staff.

Teaching staff’s participation in research, development and/or creative activities supports the teaching process and ensures competence for the supervision of students’ theses (including doctoral theses).

Members of the teaching staff collaborate in fields of teaching, research and/or creative work within the HEI and with partners outside the HEI, e.g. with field practitioners, public sector organisations, companies, other research and development institutions, and lecturers from other Estonian or foreign higher education institutions. Qualified visiting lecturers and practitioners participate in the teaching process.

When assessing the work of teaching staff (including their periodical evaluations), the effectiveness of their teaching as well as their research, development and creative work is taken into account, including student feedback, the effectiveness of their student supervision, development of their teaching; supervisory and digital competences, their international mobility, and their entrepreneurial experience or other work experience in their fields of speciality outside the HEI.

***Indicators:***

• Competition for elected academic positions

• Number of students per teaching staff member in full-time equivalent

• Percentage of teaching staff holding a PhD degree

• The results of the students’ feedback about the teaching staff

• Teaching staff participating in continuing training or other forms of teaching and digital competences and professional development

• Other indicators depending on the HEI

***Please include a brief summary of strengths and areas for improvement described in the compliance evaluation and the planned development activities.***

### STUDY PROGRAMME

***Standard:***

#### Study programmes are designed and developed, taking into account the expectations of stakeholders, higher education and professional standards, and trends in the relevant fields. The objectives of study programmes, modules and courses and their planned learning outcomes are specific and coherent. The study programmes support creativity, entrepreneurship and development of other general competencies.

*Guidelines:*

In preparing and developing the study programmes (including those in a foreign language), the HEI pursues its objectives and the needs of the labour market and takes into account national strategies and the expectations of society. Study programmes are based on current know-how and research in their field.

Learning outcomes of the study programme comply with the requirements of the national qualifications framework for the corresponding level, and the HEI has, among other things, considered future needs when planning them. When designing their own study programmes, the HEI has conducted a comparative analysis of similar study programmes in the leading HEIs abroad.

Objectives of the study programme and its modules, planned learning outcomes, theoretical and practical learning, the share of independent work and practical training and assessment of attained learning outcomes form a cohesive whole.

The development of general competences (incl. creativity and entrepreneurship) and speciality-related digital competences as well as support for the development of a self-directed learner is a natural part of the study programme, and these are integrated with speciality studies.

The expected study load defined in the study programmes is realistic and consistent with the calculation that 1 ECTS credit equals 26 learning hours. The study programme is sufficiently challenging for students with various levels of knowledge and skills.

***Indicators:***

* Number of students per study programme
* Other standard-related indicators chosen by the HEI

***Please include a brief summary of strengths and areas for improvement described in the compliance evaluation and the planned development activities.***

### LEARNING AND TEACHING

***Standard:***

#### Admission requirements and procedures ensure fair access to higher education and the formation of a motivated student body. The HEI systemically implements a student-centred approach that guides students to take responsibility for their studies and career planning and supports creativity and innovation. Graduates of the HEI have professional knowledge and social skills that make them competitive both nationally and internationally.

*Guidelines:*

Terms and conditions for admission and its organisation is transparent and objective. During admission, it is assessed whether the student can successfully complete the chosen study programme.

Academic qualifications received abroad are recognised in compliance with international conventions, bilateral agreements between countries and Estonian legislation.

The teaching process takes into account students’ individual abilities and needs and supports their development. Learning offers enough challenges for students of various levels. Students take part in planning and conducting the study process. The organisation of independent work and classroom teaching motivates students to take responsibility for their studies.

Teaching methods and learning aids used in the learning and teaching process are modern, appropriate and effective and support the development of digital culture, contributing – among other things – towards the development of a self- directed learner, creativity, innovation and the development of digital and other general competencies. The HEI has a Code of Good Learning and Teaching (including online) and it is applied in practice.

Practical training is integrated with speciality studies, requirements for practical training are defined, and supervision of the student is ensured.

Students are motivated to learn and contribute to improving the quality of their studies by providing meaningful feedback on both the learning process and the organisation of studies.

Doctoral students plan their studies as well as their R&D activities in collaboration with their supervisor(s), setting specific objectives for each year and assuming responsibility for achieving those objectives.

***Indicators:***

* Student satisfaction with the content and organisation of studies
* Alumni satisfaction with the quality of studies
* Employer satisfaction with the preparation of the graduates
* Other standard-related indicators chosen by the HEI

***Please include a brief summary of strengths and areas for improvement described in the compliance evaluation and the planned development activities.***

### STUDENT ASSESSMENT

***Standard:***

#### Assessments of students, including recognition of their prior learning and work experiences, support the process of learning and are consistent with expected learning outcomes. Objective and reliable assessment is ensured.

*Guidelines:*

Students understand the assessment criteria and are informed about them promptly. Members of the teaching staff cooperate in defining assessment criteria and apply similar approaches.

Assessment methods are diverse and relevant, assess the attainment of learning outcomes (including general competencies) and support the formation of an independent learner.

If possible, more than one member of staff is involved in the development of assessment tasks and student assessments. During an assessment, students receive feedback that supports their development.

The HEI develops the teachers’ assessment competence and supports the solid application of digital technologies in assessment.

Evaluation of doctoral students is transparent and objective. Its purpose is to support the development of doctoral students, to assess the effectiveness of their current work and to evaluate their ability to complete doctoral studies on time and successfully defend their doctoral theses.

When recognising prior learning and work experience towards the completion of the study programme, results obtained through the studies and work experiences (the achieved learning outcomes) are assessed. Students are aware of their rights and obligations, including the procedures for challenges regarding assessments.

***Indicators:***

* The number of credit points applied for and granted under the accreditation of prior and experiential learning (APEL)
* Other standard-related indicators chosen by the HEI

***Please include a brief summary of strengths and areas for improvement described in the compliance evaluation and the planned development activities.***

### LEARNING SUPPORT SYSTEMS

***Standard:***

#### The HEI ensures that all students have access to academic, career and psychological counselling. Individual development and progress of students are monitored and supported.

*Guidelines:*

The HEI assists its students in developing an individual study programme based on the student’s special needs as well as educational abilities and preferences.

The HEI advises its students (including students with special needs and international students) on finding practical training places as well as jobs. Students are aware of where to get support in case of psychological problems.

The HEI has a functioning system in place to support and advise international students (including psychological and career counselling) which among other things helps them integrate smoothly into the membership of the HEI and Estonian society. The HEI analyses the reasons students withdraw from studies or drop out, and takes steps to increase the effectiveness of the studies.

It is ensured that up-to-date study and research literature and other learning materials and aids are available for conducting learning and RDC activities, including independent work; there is access to research databases. Study literature, materials and other aids are of equally high quality.

To support study activities, timely and relevant information and communication technology solutions have been planned, including the study information system, document management, online learning environments, analytical tools for teaching and learning. Support for online learning and IT is available to students.

The HEI supports student participation in extra-curricular activities and civil society initiatives.

The HEI monitors student satisfaction with the counselling services, the online learning and IT support provided and makes changes as needed.

***Indicators:***

* The average duration of the study by levels of study
* The share of students who discontinue their studies (the first year and for the entire period of study)
* Student satisfaction with support services
* Other standard-related indicators chosen by the HEI

***Please include a brief summary of strengths and areas for improvement described in the compliance evaluation and the planned development activities.***

### RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT AND/OR OTHER CREATIVE ACTIVITY (RDC)[[4]](#footnote-4)

***Standard:***

#### The HEI has defined its RDC objectives and focus based on its mission, as well as on the expectations and future needs of society, and assesses their implementation and the societal impact of its RDC activities. RDC supports the process of teaching and learning at the HEI. Support services for RDC are purposeful and foster the implementation of the objectives of the core process.

*Guidelines:*

The HEI places a high value on the role and responsibilities of the field of RDC in society and evaluates the results of its RDC activities, their international visibility and impact on society.

In its research, the HEI responds flexibly to the current needs of society and the labour market and plans it in collaboration with enterprises, public sector institutions and third sector organisations.

Members of teaching staff introduce their research results as well as the latest scientific achievements in their areas of specialisation to students and involve students in their R&D projects where possible.

RDC activities are organised and managed in a way that takes into consideration the specificities of the field and the mission of the HEI (its profile).

The HEI applies digital tools for the administration and re-use of research data.

***Indicators by choice of the HEI:***

* Numerical data: (1) scientific publications by classifiers; (2) public presentations of creative work; recognition from international competitions; reviews in professional publications, and other; (3) patent applications, patents; (4) textbooks, study aids of various formats, and other; (5) system development solutions; product development solutions; environmental applications solutions; (6) contracts concluded with enterprises; (7) spin-off companies, and other, in line with the profile and priorities of the HEI; and other
* Number of scientific publications / creative works per member of academic staff and per employee with the requirement to do research (FTE, by areas)
* Number and volume of externally funded projects of RDC activities
* The share of projects that received funding out of all project applications
* Other standard-related indicators chosen by the HEI

***Please include a brief summary of strengths and areas for improvement described in the compliance evaluation and the planned development activities.***

### SERVICE TO SOCIETY

***Standard:***

#### The higher education institution initiates and implements development activities, which enhance prosperity in the community and disseminate recent know-how in the areas of the HEI’s competence. The HEI, as a learning-oriented organisation, promotes lifelong learning in society and creates high-quality opportunities for that.

*Guidelines:*

The HEI contributes to the development of the community’s well-being by sharing its resources (library, museums, sports facilities, and other), by providing consulting and advisory services, being involved in developing the non-profit sector and charities, and by organising concerts, exhibitions, shows, conferences, fairs and other events. The HEI involves alumni in activities aimed at the development of the HEI and the knowledge society.

Employees of the HEI participate in the work of professional associations and other community councils and decision-making bodies as experts, directing society’s development processes as opinion leaders. The impact academic employees have on society is taken into account when evaluating their work.

The HEI has defined the objectives related to in-service training, measures the progress of their achievement, and plans improvements. The HEI plans in-service training based on the current and future needs of labour market target groups. Evidence-based learning supports adult learning and self-development.

The HEI takes advantage of digital means in order to provide trainings and services to the public at large.

***Indicators:***

* The number of people in in-service training (and other forms of open study for a tuition fee; by areas of responsibility or main units)
* Other standard-related indicators chosen by the HEI

***Please include a brief summary of strengths and areas for improvement described in the compliance evaluation and the planned development activities.***

## IV. SELF-EVALUATION(S) OF THE CHOSEN STUDY PROGRAMME(S)

*Estonian Quality Agency for Higher and Vocational Education (EKKA) also evaluates samples of study programmes during institutional accreditation process to evaluate the implementation of principles and regulations for studies valid at the level of HEI and the functioning of the internal evaluation system of study programmes at the HEI. In defining the sample, EKKA takes into consideration the number of study programmes and groups of programmes at the HEI, previous evaluation results of groups of programmes and justified suggestions made by the HEI. The sample contains one to ten study programmes depending on the number of groups of programmes and study programmes at the HEI.*

*The structure of self-evaluation combines the requirements of several institutional accreditation standards that are relevant to the study programme level and concentrated on three evaluation areas. The volume of self-evaluation is up to 10 pages per study programme.*

*Below is an example structure of self-evaluation of a study programme by three areas and by criteria related to them. There are questions under each criterion to facilitate self-evaluation. All questions might not be relevant in the context of any given study programme, nor might they cover all the information the HEI wishes to provide. Since the criteria are interrelated, certain matters within a single area can be covered under another criterion. Excessive duplication shall be avoided.*

***The self-evaluation ends with a summary of strengths and areas for improvement introduced in the evaluation, together with the planned development activities.***

Table 3 (example)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Name(s) of the study programme(s), studies** |  |
| **The structural unit responsible for conducting the study programme** |  *faculty, institute, department, chair; for departments/chairs always specify the faculty/institute at which they operate, if appropriate* |
| **The principal compiler of the self-evaluation of the study programme, study programme manager/programme manager**  | *name, position, contact information* |
| **A brief description of the process of self-evaluation of the study programme and producing the report (time frame, who was involved, distribution of work, approval)** |  |

### PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT OF STUDIES

#### In designing and developing the study programme, expectations of students and other stakeholders, development trends in the field, labour market needs and good international practice have been taken into account. The study programme is based on current know-how and research in its field.

What objectives has the HEI or the structural unit set concerning the quality of study programmes? How have you pursued these objectives within the study programme?

How would you evaluate the process of study programme development? How is the study programme reviewed? Who is involved, what is taken into consideration? What significant amendments have been made in the study programme over the past three years, and on what grounds?

Based on what can you argue that the study programme is still relevant and in line with the developments in the society (labour market, and other)? To what extent and how does the study programme take into consideration the future needs of the labour market and society?

To what end has the study programme been compared to other similar study programmes, including internationally? What were the conclusions of the comparison and how have the results been used?

How do the teaching staff’s R&D activities support the launching, developing and implementation of the study programme? Give examples of results of concrete research projects, applied research, scientific work that prove that RDC activities related to the study programme are undertaken at the HEI.

What is the basis for choosing external partners for collaboration in study programme development? What does the cooperation entail and what is its objective or expected result (e.g. joint module(s) with (foreign) HEIs, summer and winter schools, supervision, practical training facilities)? What is the basis for involving international teaching staff?

#### Objectives of the study programme and its modules, planned learning outcomes, theoretical and practical learning, the share of independent work and practical training and assessment of attained learning outcomes form a cohesive whole. The organisation of practical work and practical training supports students in achieving the learning outcomes. Development of general competencies, including creativity and entrepreneurship and speciality-related digital competences as well as support for the development of a self-directed learner, are a natural part of the study programme and integrated with speciality studies. Opportunities have been created and used for mobility within Estonia and internationally.

How do you ensure that a study programme is coherent – that the study programme objectives, learning outcomes, teaching content and methods and assessment criteria and methods are consistent? Do learning outcomes describe specific knowledge and skills in a way that enables to assess whether they have been achieved? Do assessment criteria and methods allow to assess whether the learning outcomes have been achieved?

What objectives have been set within the study programme concerning developing general competencies? How does the study programme support the development of creativity and entrepreneurship and other general competencies? If and how is the development of general competencies integrated with speciality studies?

 What is the role of practical training in achieving the objectives of the study programme?

How is the finding of practical training places organised? How is the training and counselling of practical training supervisors provided by the employers organised? What feedback do students give to the content and organisation of practical training?

How do you ensure that the study programme is sufficiently challenging for students with various levels of knowledge and skills? Has it been considered throughout the study programme that the presumed study load of students shall be such that 1 ECTS equals 26 hours?

How is the students’ national and international mobility supported? Analyse the results of international mobility.

Which opportunities have been created for international (visiting) students to participate in the study programme?

Which stakeholders do you ask feedback from about the content of the study programme and its modules, including the coherence of courses, and why? How has the feedback been taken into consideration? Identify specific activities in the development of the study programme that you have initiated, implemented or completed based on the feedback from students, alumni and/or employers.

#### Sufficient physical and financial resources exist for implementing the study programme. Availability of up-to-date learning and research literature and access to research databases is ensured. The learning environment, including materials, tools and digital technology support the students in achieving their learning outcomes.

How would you evaluate the sufficiency of physical and financial resources? Which shortcomings in implementing the study programme are attributable to insufficient funding? How would you evaluate the sustainability of the study programme in the long term? How do you hedge potential risks (changes in the number of students, reduced financing, salary expectations of the teaching staff, and other)?

Please evaluate how effective is the use of physical and financial resources. What development opportunities do you see, what changes do you plan to make?

What kind of shortcomings exist in terms of study and research literature relating to the study programme? To which research databases relating to the study programme do the students and teaching staff have unlimited access? Are you satisfied with how frequently students use research databases? How?

How are the principles of environmental protection and sustainable development observed in implementing the study programme?

Please describe the students’ independent learning opportunities and conditions.

How is the social learning environment valued? How is the learning environment, including the social learning environment reviewed? Who can give feedback about the learning environment? Give examples of improvement activities in developing the learning environment.

**Indicate the strengths of the planning and management of studies and areas for improvement as well as planned improvement activities.**

### LEARNING, TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT

#### 2.1. Terms and conditions for admission and its organisation is transparent and objective. During admission, it is assessed whether the student can successfully complete the chosen study programme.

How are the potential students, including international students, and other stakeholders informed about the opportunities to enrol in the study programme?

How is the enrolment process organised and who is involved? How would you evaluate the preparation / previous education of the students (including international students)? How do you ensure a student body that is motivated and has a sufficient level of preparation? During the admission process, how do you assess whether a candidate can complete the studies successfully, and how do you identify their need for support during studies?

If you enrol international students on the study programme, then how is the academic recognition of qualifications acquired abroad organised?

What activities further facilitate the choice of specialisation before and after starting the studies?

#### A student-centred approach is used in the studies, aiming at the students to assume responsibility for planning their studies and career and supporting the development of key competencies and achieving the learning outcomes of the study programme.

How are the individual capabilities and needs of students considered in the study process, and how is their development supported?

How do you take special needs of students into account (varying capability, level of preparation, special physical needs, and other) and ensure that learning offers enough challenges for students of various level?

How can students influence the content and organisation of their studies and assume responsibility for their studies? How do you involve students in the planning of the study process? What choices are available for the students within and outside the study programme?

What kind of teaching methods do the teaching staff use for the studies? How is it ensured that the teaching methods used are targeted and effective?

How are digital means integrated into the study process, and how do they support the implementation of a modern concept of learning? How would you evaluate the teaching staff’s skills to use digital tools effectively? What have you planned to do in order to develop said skills?

How do the teaching staff supervise students’ independent learning and give feedback? How is the supervision of written work (seminar papers, application projects, final thesis, and other) and independent learning organised? What kind of feedback do students give about supervision? What are the main problems related to supervision, and how are they solved?

To what extent do the teaching staff involve students in RDC activities? How would you rate students’ readiness to participate in RDC activities? Give examples of initiatives where students were involved in RDC activities?

How do you ensure the balance between credit points and the actual workload for students (1 ECTS equals 26 student working hours)? How do you analyse compliance, what are the results of the analysis, and what have you changed based on said results?

How do the students contribute to improving the quality of their studies? How do you rate the students’ skill to analyse and give meaningful feedback about their studies themselves? How do you support developing said skills?

#### Assessments of students, including recognition of their prior learning and work experiences, support the process of learning and are consistent with learning outcomes. Objective and reliable assessment is ensured.

How do you ensure that the used assessment methods are relevant (the method is used to evaluate achieving the learning outcomes, including acquiring general competencies)?

What are the main assessment methods used by the teaching staff of the study programme? To what extent is the teaching staff familiar with various assessment methods and whether/how do they collaborate to define the assessment methods? If and how do you monitor whether the teaching staff is guided by the objectives/requirements of the study programme and courses when selecting the teaching and assessment methods? Give examples of good practice.

How have you interpreted the role of formative assessment in the study process? How much do the teaching staff use it? What are the limitations and bottlenecks in implementing formative assessment?

How do you inform students about assessment criteria? To what extent have the students an opportunity to contribute to objective-setting for the study process, selecting the teaching methods and assessment criteria?

How is the objectivity and transparency of assessment ensured (one or more members of the staff involved in assessing, who prepares the assessment tasks, and other)? Is anyone from outside the HEI involved in the assessment of learning outcomes (including defending the thesis)?

How does evaluation support completing doctoral studies within the standard period of study and successfully defending the doctoral thesis?

How are prior and experiential learning and work experience of students taken into account in completing the study programme? Give examples of failures to take it into account and the reasons for it.

#### Student support services are in place and available for students. Individual development and progress of students are monitored and supported. Graduates of the study programme are competitive in terms of their knowledge and social skills both nationally and internationally

How does the organisation of studies support students in achieving their learning outcomes?

How are students supported to complete their studies and graduate within the standard period of study? (counselling, the flexibility of the study programme, and other?)

How is the students’ need for support services determined (including career service, remedial teaching, special educational, social and psychological support) and how are the support services delivered?

How and whom can a student inform in case of problems (unfair treatment, harassment, bullying or other)?

Give examples of the trends in the dropout rate. What are the reasons for dropping out, and what has been done to eliminate these reasons?

What are the reasons for discontinuing studies at the HEI (incl. voluntary withdrawal)? What has been done to reduce the share of early leavers and dropouts (dismissal initiated by the HEI)?

How would you evaluate the success of your alumni in the labour market?

To what end do you collect and how do you use feedback about the employment rate and further education of the graduates of the study programme? Give examples of taking feedback into consideration.

What changes have been made in the studies based on the feedback received from the alumni?

**Indicate the strengths of the areas of learning, teaching and assessment and areas for improvement as well as planned improvement activities.**

### DEVELOPMENT, COOPERATION AND INTERNATIONALISATION OF TEACHING STAFF

#### The study programme is delivered by a sufficient number of competent members of teaching staff who are focused on supporting the development of the student, peer learning and systematically involved in developing their professional and teaching skills.

What objectives have you set regarding the qualifications, teaching, supervisory and other skills of the teaching staff? How successful have you been in achieving those objectives? What are the main bottlenecks, and what do you plan to do about them?

Please evaluate (preferably with international benchmarking) whether the number and qualification of the teaching staff, their workload and age structure satisfy the needs of the study programme.

How do you interpret a student-centred and a learning-oriented approach? What changes have been made in relation to that? How do you assess the impact of changes on the study process?

How have you defined and meet the obligation of the teaching staff to develop their professional and pedagogic skills continuously? How is it ensured that newly learned skills are applied?

How is a cooperation between teaching staff (including those on hourly wage) encouraged, for example, in sharing best practices and peer learning? Give examples of skills and knowledge acquired during training and shared with colleagues.

How are beginner members of staff and teacher-practitioners supported in terms of developing teaching and assessment skills?

How is the in-service training of teaching staff planned and supported? How is its effectiveness analysed?

Please evaluate the students’ feedback from the past three academic years to the staff of the study programme. How have the feedback results been analysed and taken into consideration (while planning refresher courses for training staff, and other)? Give examples of improvement activities.

#### Teaching staff follows the principles of academic ethics and the codes of conduct in case of non-compliance.

Which principles of academic ethics need the most attention in your opinion? How do you ensure that the teaching staff follows the agreed principles of academic ethics?

How does the HEI support students and teaching staff in understanding matters of ethics and responding to them? How do you ensure that the teaching staff uses a uniform intervention for comparable cases of academic fraud?

How is academic fraud, including cheating and plagiarism, prevented?

On what grounds can the HEI claim that neither teaching staff nor students tolerate fraud?

What is the HEI’s approach to challenges and appeals, and how do you ensure fair treatment of all parties?

#### Teaching staff participates in international mobility and it supports their teaching and RDC activities. Visiting and international teaching staff, as well as practitioners of the field, participate in conducting the studies.

What targets has the HEI set for international mobility of the teaching staff? How would you evaluate achieving those objectives?

To what degree and how did international members of teaching staff participate in delivering the study programme over the past three years (such as delivering the courses, supervising practical training, being a member of the final exam and defence committee or a reviewer)?

How would you evaluate cooperation with the practitioners of the field (including your alumni)? To what extent and why are they involved in conducting the studies (such as delivering courses, supervising practical training, being a member of the final exam and defence committee or a reviewer)? How do you support practitioners in conducting their teaching?

#### The effectiveness of both studies and RDC activities, students’ feedback, the effectiveness of supervision, development of their teaching, supervisory and digital competences, international mobility and entrepreneurial or work experience in the specific field outside the HEI is taken into consideration in evaluating the work of the member of the staff.

How does a member of the teaching staff receive feedback to their work and its effectiveness?

What role do evaluations and development interviews play in the career model of teaching staff?

Which elements of the work of a member of teaching staff are considered in evaluating their work; what weight is attributed to those elements? How is the professional development of members of the teaching staff and their skills to lead the study process evaluated and taken into consideration? How do they receive feedback?

How do you ensure that evaluation is carried out in an objective, fair and uniform way, and would establish prerequisites for making qualitative changes?

Which principles are followed in determining the workload of teaching staff and how do you ensure that a member of the teaching staff has sufficient time for research, teaching and supervising tasks? What opportunities exist for flexibility in the roles of academic staff (research, studies, development)? How do you give feedback for the work of academic staff?

How do the teaching staff disseminate know-how in society in general? To what end do teaching staff participate in professional networks and work with various organisations outside the HEI; what results does it give?

**Indicate the strengths of the activities of the teaching staff in terms of development, cooperation and internationalisation and areas for improvement as well as planned improvement activities.**

## V. ANNEXES TO SELF-EVALUATIONS OF STUDY PROGRAMMES[[5]](#footnote-5)

* The evaluated study programmes with their objectives and learning outcomes on both the programme and module level. If the study programme does not include content modules, it is advisable to submit the descriptions of the objectives and learning outcomes for each course of the study programme.
* For each study programme that is being evaluated, detailed descriptions of at least five key courses (as the HEI decides; syllabi/programmes) including the objectives and learning outcomes of the courses, the description of independent learning and its assessment, teaching methods, assessment methods and criteria, the list of required reading.
* A chart illustrating the interconnections between study programme modules/courses.
* A table with information about the teaching staff of all courses of each study programme (name, year of birth, position, the workload at HEI, qualification, the course taught and its volume, link to the CV of the member of staff in English that also includes information about the results of their R&D activities).
1. Depending on the structure of the HEI and the size of main units either by the level of faculty, institute, department or another academic structural unit [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. International students are students enrolled in a study programme, who are not Estonian citizens and whose permanent place of residence is outside Estonia [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. The list of key documents referred to in the self-evaluation shall be added as a separate chapter at the end of the self-evaluation report [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Research, development and/or other creative activity (hereinafter RDC) means research and development activities (including basic and applied research) within the meaning of the Organisation of Research and Development Act and creative and development activities in the field of arts [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. The annexes are not made public along with the self-evaluation report [↑](#footnote-ref-5)