

# Institutional Accreditation Decision

## Tallinn University

09/06/2014

**The Quality Assessment Council of the Estonian Higher Education Quality Agency has decided to accredit Tallinn University for seven years.**

### Assessment Committee

Malcolm Cook - Chairman	Professor emeritus, University of Exeter (United Kingdom)
Carmen Fenoll	Professor, Universidad de Castilla-la Mancha (Spain)
Andrew Goodspeed	Academic professor, South East European University (Macedonia)
Richard Osborn	Vice-President, WASC Senior College and University Commission (USA)
Helka Urponen	Docent, University of Lapland (Finland)
Karina Ufert	Student, Vilnius University (Lithuania)

### Component assessment

Organisational management and performance	Conforms with requirements
Teaching and learning	Conforms with requirements
Research, development and/or other creative activity	Conforms with requirements
Service to society	Conforms with requirements

## **Strengths and areas of improvement**

### Strengths

- *In a short time, a reliable university with its own clear identity has been developed as the result of a variety of mergers.*
- *Highly qualified and capable employees are in key positions in central services.*
- *Despite decentralisation, the university has a spirit of cooperation, based on which solutions can be found to even the most complicated problems.*
- *An efficient and multi-faceted performance pay system functions in the university.*
- *The significant proportion of foreign lecturers supports the internationalisation priorities of the university. The high level of internationalisation at the university is also demonstrated by the exceptional English skills of its staff and students.*
- *The study centre information booth, known as Touch the Exchange, is a unique and innovative interactive application designed to introduce the most important international opportunities of mobility to students, lecturers and support staff at the university.*
- *The representative organisation of students provides effective support to local and foreign students alike.*
- *In certain areas (e.g. teacher training) there is excellent cooperation at the state level with the support of the university.*
- *Several areas of activity of the university are at a high level in international comparison. The specialties of Asian culture studies and film, educational innovation, cooperative development of study programmes in third countries (Georgia and Afghanistan), and the multi-faceted study and career counselling system for students can be highlighted here.*
- *The university has an excellent study environment and appropriate and high-quality teaching resources at its disposal.*

### Areas for improvement and recommendations

- *The university must focus on structural updates in the short term so as to promote interdisciplinary methods and balance its budget.*
- *The university must establish long-term directions for research which arise from its current strengths in specialties and consider the development priorities of the state.*

- *The university must conduct risk evaluation and develop potential plans to minimise them based on the results obtained.*
- *The general goals and directions of the university must be better explained to the members of the university, as their awareness of these goals and the activities designed to achieve them has decreased of late.*
- *The possibility of optimising the number of non-academic employees at the university should be considered. At present, the proportion of non-academic employees among staff is unusually high.*
- *As a prerequisite to opening a study programme, the institution of higher education must establish a minimum number of student places.*
- *Systems must be developed which ensure a uniformly high level of studies and enable shortcomings in activities to be detected in a timely manner and the necessary measures to be implemented in order to rectify these shortcomings.*
- *The university has a problem in the shape of the high rate of drop-outs, and the time by which completion of studies is extended has also increased.*
- *The foreign mobility of doctoral students is very low and does not meet the goal set in the development plan. The reasons for this should be analysed and the measures necessary to eliminate them adopted.*
- *Creating one or several doctoral schools must be considered, which would concentrate all doctoral students and provide them with opportunities for joint activities (debate clubs, seminars, summer schools, social activities, etc.).*
- *Funds must be procured to support doctoral students so as to enable them to focus on their doctoral work full-time and ensure a grant/scholarship for each doctoral student for at least one short-term international assignment.*
- *Academic staff must be provided with better conditions in terms of time to focus on research activities.*
- *The university must promote team work, launch a mentor programme, allocate or obtain more external funds to promote the external mobility of scientists and promote research-related cooperation between academic staff and doctoral students.*
- *A strategy must be planned to support and recognise the distribution of good practice in the university.*

- *The institution of higher education should develop a broad network of alumni and create an online environment and database for this purpose.*

**Self-assessment Report**

**Assessment Report**