



Estonian Quality Agency for Higher Education and VET

STATUTES

Approved by the Supervisory Body of Archimedes Foundation on 02.04.2015

Amended on 28.09.2016

1. General Provisions

- 1.1. The mission of the Estonian Quality Agency for Higher Education and VET is, in cooperation with its partners, to promote quality in the field of education and thereby increase the competitiveness of the Estonian society.
- 1.2. The Estonian Quality Agency for Higher Education and VET is a structural unit of the Archimedes Foundation (hereinafter referred to as 'the Foundation') performing independent functions.
- 1.3. The Estonian Quality Agency for Higher Education and VET shall operate under the authority of the Management Board of the Foundation.
- 1.4. The Estonian Quality Agency for Higher Education and VET is autonomous and independent with regard to its quality assessment decisions.
- 1.5. The Agency's name in English is the 'Estonian Quality Agency for Higher Education and VET'. The abbreviation of the Agency's name in both Estonian and English is 'EKKA'.
- 1.6. The Estonian Quality Agency for Higher Education and VET shall operate in accordance with the Acts of the Republic of Estonia and international legislation, including the standards and guidelines for quality assurance in European higher education and VET areas, the Republic of Estonia standards of education, the Statutes of the Foundation, this document, and other legislation and normative documents regulating the field of education.
- 1.7. The Estonian Quality Agency for Higher Education and VET shall continue the work of the Estonian Higher Education Accreditation Centre and the Higher Education Quality Assessment Council that operated from 1997 to 2008.
- 1.8. With the approval of and in cooperation with the other structural units of the Foundation, the activities of the Estonian Quality Agency for Higher Education and VET shall be performed according to its own work schedules and operating objectives as well as tasks assigned by the Supervisory Body and the Management Board of the Foundation.

2. Main Functions of the Estonian Quality Agency for Higher Education and VET

- 2.1. The Estonian Quality Agency for Higher Education and VET (hereinafter also referred to as 'EKKA' or 'the Agency') shall promote and evaluate the quality of Estonian higher education and VET.
- 2.2. The main functions of EKKA shall be as follows:
 - 2.2.1. to develop and establish the principles of quality assessment for higher education and VET and the procedures for conducting the assessments, based upon the common concepts of quality on higher education and VET in Europe;
 - 2.2.2. to promote the quality of VET and higher education, and to value and disseminate the best quality assurance practices, in cooperation with establishments who provide VET or higher education (hereinafter referred to as 'educational institutions') and with other partners;
 - 2.2.3. to carry out institutional accreditation of higher education institutions and assessment of the quality of their study programme groups;
 - 2.2.4. to accredit curriculum groups in vocational training;
 - 2.2.5. to conduct expert analyses, evaluating the right of educational institutions to provide instruction;
 - 2.2.6. to review the requests submitted by educational institutions to use services of other quality assessment authorities, and to evaluate the quality assessments by those other quality assessment authorities conducted at Estonian educational institutions;
 - 2.2.7. to maintain databases concerning accreditations and quality assessments, and make them available for public use;
 - 2.2.8. to provide training and counselling concerning evaluations in the field of education and the quality of education;
 - 2.2.9. to publicise the principles, regulatory documents, results, international standards, experiences and other relevant information related to evaluations in the field of education;
 - 2.2.10. to analyse evaluation results and to make recommendations for improvement to the educational institutions and the Ministry of Education and Research;
 - 2.2.11. to participate in international cooperation related to the quality of education, including representing Estonia on issues concerning the quality of higher education;

2.2.12. to perform other functions specified by resolutions of the Ministry of Education and Research, the Supervisory Body of the Archimedes Foundation and the Quality Assessment Councils for Higher Education and VET.

3. Structure and Management of Estonian Quality Agency for Higher Education and VET

3.1. The Estonian Quality Agency for Higher Education and VET comprises:

3.1.1. the Bureau;

3.1.2. the Quality Assessment Council for Higher Education;

3.1.3. the Quality Assessment Council for VET.

3.1¹ At EKKA, an Appeals Committee operates as an independent body. The task of the Appeals Committee is to provide the Assessment Council for Higher Education with an unbiased opinion regarding the validity of the challenge filed upon the administrative acts or measures taken by the Council.

3.2. The work of EKKA shall be managed by the Director of EKKA who coordinates and organises implementation of EKKA's objectives and functions in accordance with these Statutes, the Quality Management System of the Foundation and other legislation.

3.3. The Director of EKKA shall be appointed by the Management Board of the Foundation by means of public competition and on the basis of a decision by the Council of the Foundation. Conditions of and procedures for the competition shall be established by the Council of the Foundation.

3.4. The Director of EKKA shall report directly to the Management Board of the Foundation.

3.5. The members of the Quality Assessment Council for Higher Education and the Appeals Committee shall be appointed by the Supervisory Body of the Foundation in compliance with the Procedure for the Formation of the Quality Assessment Council for Higher Education and the Appeals Committee.

3.6. The Quality Assessment Council for VET shall be formed by a directive from the Minister of Education and Research.

3.7. The Quality Assessment Council for Higher Education shall:

3.7.1. approve regulations regarding the principles of and procedures for quality assessments of higher education;

3.7.2. approve the principles for forming assessment committees and the requirements for qualification of committee members;

- 3.7.3. make decisions on institutional accreditations of higher education institutions and on quality assessments of their study programme groups;
 - 3.7.4. within the framework of transitional evaluations and re-assessments of study programme groups, make proposals to the Minister of Education and Research to grant educational institutions the right to provide instruction; and, upon launch of instruction in a new study programme group, give expert opinions on the quality of instruction;
 - 3.7.5. coordinate the development plans and annual action plans of EKKA.
- 3.8. The Quality Assessment Council for VET shall:
- 3.8.1. establish assessment criteria for accreditations;
 - 3.8.2. approve accreditation decisions and, based on those decisions, make proposals to the Minister of Education and Research to extend the right of educational institutions to provide instruction;
 - 3.8.3. coordinate the development plans and annual action plans of EKKA.

Duties of the Director of EKKA and the employees of the EKKA Bureau shall be specified in job descriptions.