

The decision of the Assessment¹ Council of the
Estonian Quality Agency for Education
on the institutional accreditation of University of Tartu

8.07.2022

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

On the basis of Section 38(3) of the Higher Education Act and clause 43.2 of the Guidelines for Institutional Accreditation established on the basis of the authorisation contained in Section 24(5) of the Statutes of the Education and Youth Board, the Higher Education Assessment Council (hereinafter the Council) of the Estonian Quality Agency for Education (HAKA) states the following:

1. The University of Tartu (UT) and EKKA agreed on the period for institutional accreditation on 24 September 2021.
2. On the basis of point 8 of the 'Guidelines for Institutional Accreditation', the following study programmes were also assessed in the context of institutional accreditation:
Law, Bachelor
Entrepreneurship and digital solutions, Professional higher education
Biology and Biodiversity Conservation, Bachelor's studies
Translation and Interpreting Studies, Master's studies
International Relations and Regional Studies, Master's studies
Robotics and Computer Engineering, Master's studies
3. By the decision of 30 December 2021, the Director of EKKA approved the composition of the Assessment Committee for Institutional Accreditation (hereinafter referred to as the Committee) as follows:

Jürgen Kohler (Chair) Professor, Greifswald University (Germany)

¹ Until 11.06.2022 the Estonian Quality Agency for Higher and Vocational Education (EKKA)

Fiona Ruth Crozier (Secretary)	Independent expert (UK)
Engel-Mari Mölder	Student of the Tallinn University of Technology (Estonia)
Liz Bacon	Professor, Abertay University (United Kingdom)
Laurent Counillon	Professor, Université Nice Sophia Antipolis (France)
Markus Dettenhofer	Researcher, Czech University of Life Sciences (Czech Republic)
Anca Greere	Professor, Babeş-Bolyai University (Romania)
Aalt Willem Heringa	Professor, Maastricht University (the Netherlands)
Jonas Hinnfors	Professor, University of Gothenburg (Sweden)
Socratis K. Katsikas	Director, Norwegian Center for Cybersecurity in Critical Sectors (NORCICS) (Norway)
Andres Kütt	a member from outside academia; CTO, Jio EGOV Center of Excellence (Estonia)
Oliver Vettori	Dean, WU Vienna (Austria)

4. The UT submitted the self-analysis report to EKKA on 20.01.2022, the assessment coordinator of EKKA sent the self-analysis report to the Committee on 28.01.2022.
5. The assessment visit took place on 11.-14.04.2022.
6. The Committee sent the draft assessment report to EKKA on 22.05.2022, EKKA forwarded the draft assessment report to the higher education institution for comments on 26.05.2022 and the UT submitted its comments on 16.06.2022.
7. The Committee submitted the final assessment report to HAKA on 5.07.2022. The assessment report is an integral part of the decision. The report is available on the HAKA website.
8. The final assessment report and the self-analysis report were forwarded to the members of the Council by the Secretary of the Council on 5.07.2022.
9. The assessment committee's assessments were as follows:

Standard	Assessment
Strategic management	Conforms to requirements
Resources	Conforms to requirements
Quality culture	Partially conforms to requirements
Academic ethics	Conforms to requirements
Internationalisation	Conforms to requirements

Teaching staff	Conforms to requirements
Study programme	Conforms to requirements
Learning and Teaching	Conforms to requirements
Student assessment	Conforms to requirements
Learning support systems	Conforms to requirements
Research, development and/or other creative activities	Conforms to requirements
Service to society	Conforms to requirements

10. At its meeting on 8 July 2022, the Council discussed the received documents with the participation of 9 members and decided to highlight the following strengths², areas for improvement and recommendations and suggestions for further development³ of the UT from the assessment report⁴.

10.1. STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT

Strengths

1. The UT implements different bottom-up practices in the strategic planning process. The University consults with external partners and its staff and students, ensuring broad participation of the disciplines, staff and students of the University of Tartu. The participatory approach ensures not only a broad intake of ideas, but also a sense of ownership and endorsement of the strategic objectives.
2. The UT Strategic Plan links the objectives of the University with national and European economic, societal and cultural objectives in a multifaceted and cross-disciplinary manner, e.g. emphasizing the importance of applied research, supporting lifelong learning and seeing itself as a guardian of Estonian cultural heritage.

Areas for improvement and recommendations

1. The action plans for the university and its fields are not sufficiently detailed as regards the implementation of the directions for action. Therefore, the university should review the concept of its action plans, clearly indicating a detailed plan for each strategic strand. Such plans should include specific actions.

² Achievements beyond the standard (not compliance with the standard) have been identified as strengths.

³ The areas for improvement and recommendations point to shortcomings in meeting the requirements of the institutional accreditation standard and affect the final decision of the Council.

⁴ Suggestions for further development are suggestions for improvements which do not contain a reference to non-compliance with the standard and the taking into consideration of which is at the discretion of the higher education institution. Suggestions for further developments do not have an impact on the final decision of the Council.

2. At university level, activities at the level of the field, which should be aimed at achieving university-wide strategic objectives, are not monitored with sufficient attention. The university should take more proactive care to ensure that the action plans of the faculties and other units are in place and of sufficiently high quality, for example by establishing a system of regular reporting or other ways of monitoring action plans and their implementation.

10.2. RESOURCES

Strengths

1. The UT employs academic staff on the basis of the principles of the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers.
2. A spatial development strategy until 2025 has been adopted, which provides, among other things, that the university will ensure the preservation and increase in value of its historic buildings in the centre of Tartu.
3. Large-scale digitalisation has been carried out and will continue. In 2020, around 97 % of all official documents were completed electronically, compared to 75 % in 2017.

Suggestions for further development

1. In order to raise awareness of the principles of human resource management at the university among employees, review and improvement of existing practices could be considered.
2. The principles for the allocation of funds within the university would require a more systematic approach to ensure that the allocation of funds can be guided by the university's strategic development plans.
3. The University may wish to consider the possibility of covering the costs of open access publications to all its staff.
4. In the field of IT: the IT strategy should be completed; the complexity of IT services should be reduced and the integration of IT systems improved; the IT responsibilities of the University and institutes should be clearly defined; the central investments as well as investments at unit level into cybersecurity should be increased to ensure the reliability and security of all systems; work should be continued towards the planned ISO27001 standard.
5. The University may wish to consider developing a business continuity plan to ensure the smooth and continuous operation of all processes in the event of failures or disruptions of critical services (e.g. IT).
6. The University could consider developing a method for assessing the effectiveness of the implementation of communication plans, both internal and external.

10.3. QUALITY CULTURE

Strengths

1. The University has clearly and systematically documented the components of its quality management system across different strands of activities and made this information available to the wider public.

Areas for improvement and recommendations

1. A quality assurance system based on trust and personal ethos needs to be balanced with additional monitoring and intervention processes. All elements of the PDCA (Plan-Do-Check-Act) cycle must be logically and causally linked. Quality should be delineated in all relevant documents (starting from the strategic plan) as assessed categories, defining minimum standards and institutional/national/international benchmarks to help monitor and assess achievement.
2. It is necessary to clearly define the individual roles and responsibilities of university members in quality assurance and to monitor and guide the implementation of the agreements. This would also help prevent the absence of some elements of the PDCA cycle or their low implementation.
3. It is necessary to raise awareness of quality assurance processes among all university staff members. Awareness among the University community of the components of the quality system, their interrelationships and bottlenecks would allow for a more consistent implementation of the PDCA cycle.

Suggestions for further development

1. Quality assurance processes in the area of service to society could be much more clearly defined, as the current documentation is mainly a set of guidelines and reports with little relevance for quality assurance.
2. In addition to the questionnaires, other approaches to collecting feedback could be used, such as systematic and documented interviews with students and external stakeholders, which would provide an additional dimension to quality assessment.

10.4. ACADEMIC ETHICS

Strengths

1. New positions of Research Integrity Counsellors have been created, demonstrating the systematic and proactive activities of the university in disseminating the principles of good research practice among the membership of the University of Tartu.
2. The regulations on academic ethics at the University of Tartu are outstandingly good because they contain principles and guidelines with concrete examples. An important element in achieving good practice is clear, precise, and understandable formulation of principles and guidelines, and the University of Tartu has done excellent work in this regard.

Suggestions for further development

1. The system for dealing with misconduct and the procedures for handling complaints are clear, but these procedures involve rather high-ranking university staff (Academic Secretary, Director of the Institute) and a formal committee is set up as soon as a complaint is lodged. This may lead to the avoidance of discussions in borderline cases. At the level of institutes, there are no persons with whom to discuss borderline cases and who would have an advisory role. This could potentially mean that incidents will not be reported, especially if the boundary between the prohibited and inappropriate

is blurred. The UT could consider the appointment of one support person for academic ethics at each institute. This could be particularly useful for students. The sample of study programmes revealed the need for more information on academic ethics for students on the Biology and Biodiversity Conservation study programme.

2. The UT relies on cases that have occurred in determining the extent of both harassment and mental health problems. The university could consider introducing regular surveys to get a better overview of the issues.
3. Plagiarism detection software "Ouriginal" is often used, but it could be mandatory for all written works.

10.5. INTERNATIONALISATION

Areas for improvement and recommendations

1. The University of Tartu defines itself as a national and international university. Unfortunately, the university lacks a common and shared understanding of what it means to be both a national university and an international university at the same time. It should be more clearly defined and communicated to the university family so that the unique role of the university is equally well understood both inside and outside the university.
2. There is no common understanding of the structure and functioning of the mobility window at the university. The approach to the mobility window and the different options for its implementation must be clearly defined and the dissemination of relevant information among the university community ensured.

It should be better explained to the students on the Computer Engineering and Robotics study programme how the mobility window works so that they do not have to extend their studies due to their participation in mobility. The international mobility of students in the Biology and Biodiversity Conservation study programme could also be increased by better informing students about mobility and funding opportunities and the transfer of credits acquired abroad.

The Law study programme should significantly increase both the physical and virtual international mobility of students.

10.6. TEACHING STAFF

Strengths

1. The general qualification of teaching staff and the level of research are high (more than 70 % of the teaching staff have a doctorate). Since, according to the new career model, all lecturers must have a doctorate, it is ensured that this excellent level is maintained.
2. The faculty members are very closely involved in research, the institutes operate in accordance with high international scientific standards. The level and volume of publications are very good.

3. The University has made a very strong contribution to supporting the development of teaching staff through the recruitment of and, seminars, training as well as sharing of best practices by pedagogical engineers, which many staff consider to be interesting and enjoyable and in which they take pride.
4. The career model of academic staff has been reorganised and is now in line with the international four-grade standard. Efforts have been made to introduce a five-year appraisal cycle, which has been well elaborated and introduced a year ago.

Areas for improvement and recommendations

1. While the new career model and the attestation system are important progress, there is concern that there are very few opportunities for promotion as a result of successful attestation (only 6 academic staff out of more than 1,600 in 2021-2022). The situation of academic staff depends to a large extent on existing research grants and on the situation of institutes, both in terms of pay and promotion opportunities. If the satisfaction of academic staff is high in the first years of employment, then after five years it will fall. The time between obtaining a doctorate and becoming a co-professor is likewise too long. The University must provide resources for merit-based promotions of a sufficient number of academic staff each year and clearly communicate promotion opportunities to ensure staff motivation. More frequent assessments of younger academic staff could also be considered, for example by using performance interviews to support development in addition to formal attestations every 5 years.
2. The quality of the teaching carried out by the lecturer should be taken into account in the attestation of academic staff. An independent assessment of the teaching skills of the teaching staff could be applied in the attestation process, the attestation should not rely solely on student feedback, as this may not adequately reflect the quality of the teaching and learning experience.
3. From the sample of study programmes, the teaching staff of the Entrepreneurship and Digital Solutions curriculum should meet more regularly to discuss inter-subject links, coherence between teaching and assessment and problems related to drop-outs. This would make it possible to strengthen cooperation between research-oriented and practice-oriented teaching staff.

Suggestions for further development

1. The proportion of teaching and research burden varies widely among academic staff. The student-teacher ratio is very good (> 8:1), but if the total hours of teaching is divided by the total number of students, the result may be different. This indicator could be refined taking into account the teaching burden of academic staff.

2. Thanks to its international visibility, the University is involved in a number of international networks, and this supports mobility and cooperation. However, networks could be used much more widely for staff development purposes.
3. Attestations could become more open and collegial. Gender balance should be ensured in the evaluation panels and the number of international experts could be increased.
4. So-called open competitions for the recruitment of teaching staff are generally internal competitions due to a number of constraints. The university could consider how to increase out-of-university recruitment.
5. Research cooperation with private sector companies and various public authorities (e.g. Ministry of the Environment) is rightly considered a priority and employees have the freedom and motivation to do so. Efforts to involve private sector actors in teaching should continue.
6. Given the global competition and the relative small size of Estonian universities in the global context, close cooperation is necessary. The UT should rethink its rather reluctant position with regard to cooperation within Estonia and contribute more to it for Estonian higher education to be better prepared in the face of the global competition.
7. From the sample of study programmes, the Computer Engineering and Robotics programme should increase the number of high-level publications of lecturers to the average level of the university/field. It is also necessary to pay more attention to human resource development in order to ensure that all staff constantly update their teaching methodologies, are up to date with innovations in research and other areas such as ethics.
8. The Translation and Interpreting Studies programme should monitor more closely the risks associated with the workload of lecturers and try to coordinate activities between different units in order to avoid overburdening of staff.

10.7. STUDY PROGRAMME

Strengths

1. A university-wide study programme review is currently underway with the aim of raising the quality requirements in terms of curriculum design. Such an undertaking is welcome if it takes place on a regular basis and is accompanied by a clear target setting to ensure a coherent approach and format within the university for describing learning objectives, the learning and teaching process and methods of assessment.
2. From the sample of study programmes, the Bachelor of Law program stands out with an emphasis on traditional academic quality, attaching great importance to the contextualisation of law in a cultural, philosophical, historical, political, and economic environment, and seeking to develop the critical thinking skills of students.
3. The Biology and Biodiversity Conservation curriculum has a unique niche as it combines very well the molecular aspects with biodiversity and ecology. The uniqueness of Estonian biodiversity, including the use of local speciality

terminology, is important in the curriculum. The study programme has an excellent graduate employment rate, as it is prepared in line with the OSKA report and takes into account both current and future needs. The study programme has also successfully achieved its objectives in ensuring a sufficient number of students.

4. The Entrepreneurship and Digital Solutions study programme at Narva College is well connected to the local community and students and external stakeholders value the study programme highly. The learning environment is exemplary and the way the building is open to the whole community deserves special recognition.
5. The main strengths of the Computer Engineering and Robotics study programme are meeting the needs of the labour market, close links with companies (including internships), and the orientation of the study programme towards guiding students to solve practical problems.
6. Meaningful cooperation with different stakeholders to ensure that the UT Translation and Interpreting study programme is aligned with the quality requirements of the European Master's in Translation (EMT) network is acknowledged for the Translation and Interpreting study programme.
7. The International Relations and Regional Studies programme is academically attractive and also meets the main expectations of Estonian society. Despite the demographic challenges, the entry competition is high and there are also many foreign students. The completion rate is high. The focus on both qualitative and quantitative research methods (a total of 18 ECTS) is commendable.

Areas for improvement and recommendations

1. The format of design and development of curricula at the university is not uniform. When developing or reviewing curricula, a clear and coherent form based on quality criteria must be introduced, based on which to formulate learning objectives and expected learning outcomes at curriculum and module level. This template should provide clear guidance on the elements to be included in the description of each study programme.
2. While the Bachelor of Law degree programme is the first step towards Master's degree and regulated law jobs for most students, the concept of undergraduate programmes in the Bologna Process still requires that the Bachelor's programme also functions as a stand-alone scheme for employability. The Bachelor of Law curriculum of the University of Tartu does not sufficiently serve the interests of students who do not wish to go on to Master's studies. The Faculty of Law should look beyond traditional legal professions and explore the employment opportunities for graduates with a Bachelor's degree in both the public and private sectors and what additional competences (including soft skills) are needed for this purpose.

The wording of the learning outcomes of the curriculum is uneven. The learning outcomes of modules must be harmonised in terms of their style, length, and level (go beyond the mere list of expected knowledge) and ensure their coherence with the learning outcomes of the curriculum as a whole. The description of the study programme should indicate the overall

structure of the curriculum, the sequence of courses, coherent learning outcomes, teaching methods and their relationship with the learning outcomes, mobility, and credit transfer possibilities, etc.

The study programme has problems with the options for selecting the courses listed in the curriculum, their sequence, and the correspondence of the credits to the actual workload of the student. The study programme must be reviewed in this respect to ensure the availability of electives prescribed in the curriculum, to ensure that the volumes of courses correspond to the workload of the student and ensure an appropriate place of the courses in the curriculum. For example, the appropriateness of the broad set of requirements in the basic courses, the balance between public and criminal law should be reviewed and a solution should be found for using problem-based learning on topics across different areas of law.

3. The Computer Engineering and Robotics study programme must review the learning outcomes and ensure that they correspond to Master's level. In order to ensure the quality of these supervision, the teaching staff shortage must be solved and all the courses included in the curriculum must be offered more regularly. Students should be given clear information about which courses are conducted each year and which are not, so that they can better plan their studies.

The content of the core modules of the curriculum should be reviewed to ensure that it presents sufficient challenges for all students, regardless of their background. It might be helpful to review the content of the entrance test.

4. The Translation and Interpreting study programme must take a decision on the direction of interpretation. This direction is currently represented in the curriculum, but there has been no admission for years. This decision is also very important from the perspective of international cooperation and its perspectives.

The learning outcomes of the traineeship must be changed in the curriculum to ensure that they correspond to the specifics of the curriculum and make it possible to assess the success of the traineeship and the suitability of the employer.

5. The learning outcomes of the International Relations and Regional Studies study programme are clearly formulated, but for some courses they are more of a beginner than an advanced level. Mandatory literature, on the other hand, is mostly based on scientific journals, which is good and provides graduates with good research and analytical skills. The learning outcomes of the curriculum could be reviewed in this light.

Suggestions for further development

1. Experts from outside the university and, where appropriate, international experts should be involved throughout the development and evaluation of study programmes.
2. The Biology and Biodiversity conservation study programme has great potential as it extends from molecular mechanisms to ecosystems. However, the division of students between the two disciplines takes place too quickly.

If the curriculum evolved towards greater integration, it would bring significant added value to the study programme and to students.

3. The Translation and Interpreting study programme could more effectively take into account new trends in professional career profiles to ensure that students are more responsive to changing market requirements.
4. Due to the low number of students in the International Relations and Regional Studies study programme, some courses are offered every third or even fifth semester. Although students did not see this as a problem, a reduction in the number of electives could still be considered.
5. The management of the Narva College and the leaders of the Entrepreneurship and Digital Solutions study programme could think about how to better take into consideration the needs of adult learners with work experience, considering cooperation with other educational institutions, further modularisation of the curriculum and exploiting the potential of micro-credentials. Longer-term indicators, such as the number of start-ups created, changes in the salary of graduates, etc., could also be used to assess the effectiveness of the study programme.

10.8. LEARNING AND TEACHING

Strengths

1. The Biology and Biodiversity Conservation study programme has a practice at a high level, high quality of teaching and assessment methods, and the employment of graduates is very good. All of this leads to high student satisfaction rates.
2. The Entrepreneurship and Digital Solutions study programme merits recognition for a supportive quality culture and an emphasis on a student-centred approach.
3. A clear strength in the Computer Engineering and Robotics study programme is the ratio of students to lab supervisors – 6:1.
4. The International Relations and Regional Studies study programme uses a wide range of teaching and assessment methods. Teaching is highly interactive.

Students have a wealth of opportunities to study abroad (Erasmus, internships; an opportunity to actually go to a country dedicated to the final thesis). The analytical skills of graduates are very strong and finding a job is not a problem, especially for Estonian-speaking students.

5. In the Translation and Interpreting study programme, many lecturers work as interpreters and translators and can therefore share relevant professional knowledge with students.

Areas for improvement and recommendations

1. The understanding of learner-centred learning and teaching and its implementation in university study programmes is uneven. It must be ensured that a clear approach to student-centredness is included in the

curriculum design and internal evaluation, allowing for the consistent application of this principle.

Suggestions for further development

1. The UT could consider improving the admission process by offering earlier or longer admission time, proactively recommending alternative study places to student candidates and/or, if necessary, carrying out a mapping of educational gaps before admission.
2. To ensure a more consistent and integrated use of digital technologies in teaching, rules could be developed at university level.
3. UT could consider intensifying practical learning in curricula where it is not sufficiently rooted.
4. The University could consider supplementing the Code of Good Practice in Teaching with a section on teaching and learning in English.
5. The university could review the organisation of the traineeship to ensure that the traineeship and its assessment are consistent with the learning outcomes of the curriculum.
6. The Computer Engineering and Robotics study programme should ensure that the previous knowledge required from students is clearly defined and evaluated in order to reduce the number of failures and provide preparatory support where necessary. The new approach used in the admission test should be monitored as to whether it allows for a reduction in drop-out and failure rates.
The curriculum assigns a corporate mentor to all students. In order to ensure continuity, the university's academic staff should always be involved in the assessment of students.
The curriculum should set a minimum amount of time that the supervisor must devote to the supervision of the thesis.
7. Stronger integration of the *Computer Aided Translation Tool* (CAT) into practice-based courses is recommended in the Translation and Interpreting study programme.
8. Students from different educational backgrounds will be admitted to the International Relations and Regional Studies study programme. In some cases, in order to avoid lagging behind, it would be necessary to provide levelling courses.
While the curriculum has defined deadlines within which lecturers are required to provide feedback on grades and scores to students, they are not always respected. Students did not see this as a problem, but study programme managers should ensure that deadlines are met.

10.9. STUDENT ASSESSMENT

Strengths

1. Consideration of previous studies and work experience is appropriate and organised systematically throughout the university.

2. The Computer Engineering and Robotics study programme often uses oral or written defence to help students explain their solution. Oral defence as a method merits recognition, as it develops critical skills in students, demonstrates their ability to think spontaneously when answering questions, and also confirms the authorship of the work.

Areas for improvement and recommendations

1. The learning outcomes and assessment methods of the Entrepreneurship and Digital Solutions study programme need to be better aligned, as well as coordination and harmonisation of assessment practices across the curriculum. Assessment practices should be more diverse and less dependent on teaching staff preferences.

Suggestions for further development

1. Students are aware of the possibilities of contesting grades, but in order to monitor the situation, the rules for documenting appeal cases could be clarified.
2. In order to implement a common approach to the assessment of students, it would be desirable to agree on a good practice of moderation of assessments at the university, which would help to ensure the objectivity of the assessment and the equal treatment of students.

10.10. LEARNING SUPPORT SYSTEMS

Strengths

1. The library is well-equipped and recently renovated. The distribution of budgetary resources between disciplines will be based on negotiations with the deans. The library also has the opportunity to earn its own income through training and digitalisation.

Suggestions for further development

1. Work with students and employers should continue to improve progress and graduation rates.
2. It should be ensured that independent counsellors are available to students in all campuses. It is advisable not to combine the role of lecturer and counsellor.
3. In case of mental health problems, there are long waiting times for receiving professional help. The university could find a solution to this problem.
4. Where possible, a special fund should be set up to support students with special needs.
5. The possibilities of the libraries of the Narva College and the Tallinn Department of the Faculty of Law of the University of Tartu are not sufficient, although students can use other libraries.

10.11. RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT AND/OR OTHER CREATIVE ACTIVITIES

Strengths

1. The University of Tartu has a recognised role in shaping the whole Estonian scientific landscape, both historically and at the moment.
2. Research support services, in particular the Grant Centre, are of a high level, in line with European Union standards, and will bring in competitive funding.
3. The Entrepreneurship and Innovation Centre and other university-related institutions have developed a very good system to support new innovative companies.
4. The library service and access to the digital databases of scientific journals are very well ensured.
5. The university's interest in dealing with important and potentially effective societal issues is worthy of recognition. There are a number of very good examples of interdisciplinary cooperation in unique setups that are important for Estonian society.

Areas for improvement and recommendations

1. Promotion opportunities for academic staff are very limited and may also lead to future challenges for the sustainability of R & D. Attestation, with clear guidance on promotion options along with specific objectives, should increase staff satisfaction.

Suggestions for further development

1. The evaluation of research is mainly internal and quantitative. It would also be advisable to use qualitative external assessments. A vision for the future could be developed to support young researchers who do not yet have a high level of research performance but clearly have good potential.
2. The evaluation of research could also be extended from individual researchers to research groups or units. Currently, the evaluation is carried out only at individual or institutional level, while research is predominantly carried out in teams.
3. In order to increase the societal impact of university research, it would be necessary to address societal challenges in a systematic and interdisciplinary manner. This could be done by setting up a separate unit to better link the competences of different faculties for joint research in order to provide solutions to societal challenges.
4. In supporting new businesses, the focus on patents and licenses is one of the business dimensions. More emphasis should be put on developing services to encourage the emergence of profit-oriented companies as well as NGOs.
5. The use of university networks to promote different activities is very commendable. However, networking activities could be further intensified to support mobility and joint research.

6. The mobility of academic staff plays an important role in ensuring the influx of new ideas and continuously improving research. Mobility needs to be supported at all levels of RDC.

10.12. SERVICE TO SOCIETY

Strengths

1. The University has a geographically wide network of colleges and representations used to promote and deliver lifelong learning, to disseminate newer know-how in its fields of expertise and to provide other services to local communities.
2. The University's activities to expand and promote lifelong learning are well developed, market-driven and linked to a range of youth-oriented activities.

Suggestions for further development

1. The UT could consider establishing a coordination mechanism at university level between different entities (colleges, institutes, museums, etc.) in order to ensure maximum utilisation of available resources in the provision of services to society.
2. Similarly to the Strategic Plan of the University of Tartu, specific aspects of the provision of services to society (promotion of scientific thinking, lifelong learning, rental of university premises, etc.) could be included in the action plans at the level of institutes.

11. If one to four sub-assessments are 'partially conforms to requirements' and the remaining sub-assessments are 'conforms to requirements', the Assessment Council shall analyse the strengths and areas for improvement of the institution and assess that the management, organisation, teaching and research activities and the teaching and research environment of the higher education institution meet the requirements and decide to accredit the higher education institution for a period of seven years; or that there are shortcomings in the management, organisation, teaching and research or in the teaching and research environment of the higher education institution, provide guidance on their elimination and decide to accredit the higher education institution for a period of three years.

12. The Assessment Council considered the strengths and areas for improvement of the University of Tartu and found that despite some bottlenecks in the fields of quality culture and curriculum design, the University of Tartu has a number of outstanding strengths, which, among other things, confirm a continuous improvement-oriented organisational culture:

- 1) The University of Tartu has a recognised role in shaping the whole Estonian scientific landscape, both historically and at the moment. The university's interest in dealing with important and potentially influential societal issues is worthy of recognition.

- 2) The broad participation of the UT's disciplines, staff, and students in the planning of the university's development is ensured. The participatory approach ensures not only a broad collection of ideas, but also a sense of ownership and support in terms of strategic goals.
- 3) The UT Strategic Plan links the objectives of the University with national and European economic, social and cultural objectives in a diverse manner and across disciplines, e.g. emphasising the importance of applied research, supporting lifelong learning and seeing itself as a guardian of Estonian cultural heritage.
- 4) The regulations on academic ethics at the University of Tartu are outstandingly good because they contain principles and guidelines with concrete examples. An important element in achieving good practice is clear, precise, and understandable formulation of the principles and guidelines, and the University of Tartu has done excellent work in this regard. New positions of Research Integrity Counsellor have been created, demonstrating the systematic and proactive activities of the university in disseminating the principles of good research practice among the membership of the University of Tartu.
- 5) The University has made a very strong contribution into supporting the development of teaching staff through the recruitment of and seminars, training and sharing of best practices by pedagogical engineers, which many staff consider to be interesting and enjoyable and in which they take pride. The teaching staff is very closely involved in research, the institutes operate in accordance with high international scientific standards. The level and volume of publications are very good.

13. Based on the above, the Council

DECIDED TO

Accredit the University of Tartu for seven years.

The decision was adopted with 9 votes in favour. Against 0.

14. The accreditation is valid until 08.07.2029. The next period of institutional accreditation will be coordinated with the University of Tartu by HAKA no later than 08.07.2028.
15. The University of Tartu shall submit to the Council no later than 31.08.2023 an overview of progress on the areas for improvement and recommendations set out in point 10 of this Decision, paying particular attention to the following areas of improvement: quality culture, study programme design, attestation, and promotion of academic staff.
16. A person who considers that his or her rights or freedoms have been infringed by the decision, can lodge a challenge with the HAKA's Assessment Council within 30 days of the date on which the objector became aware or should have become aware of the contested act. The Assessment Council shall send the challenge to the HAKA Appeals committee, which shall, within five days of receipt of the challenge, submit a written impartial opinion to the Assessment Council on the merits of the challenge. The Council shall resolve the appeal within 10 days of its receipt, taking into account the

reasoned opinion of the Appeals Committee. If further examination of the challenge is necessary, the Assessment Council may extend the deadline for examining the challenge by up to 30 days. Judicial contestation of a decision is possible within 30 days from the date of service of the judgment by filing an appeal with the Tallinn Administrative Court pursuant to the procedure provided for in the Administrative Court Procedure Act.

Hillar Bauman
Secretary of the Council