



VILNIUS | UNIVERSITY OF
KOLEGIJA | APPLIED SCIENCES

VILNIUS UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES QUALITY MANUAL

APPROVED

By 9 February 2022 Resolution No. of
the Academic council

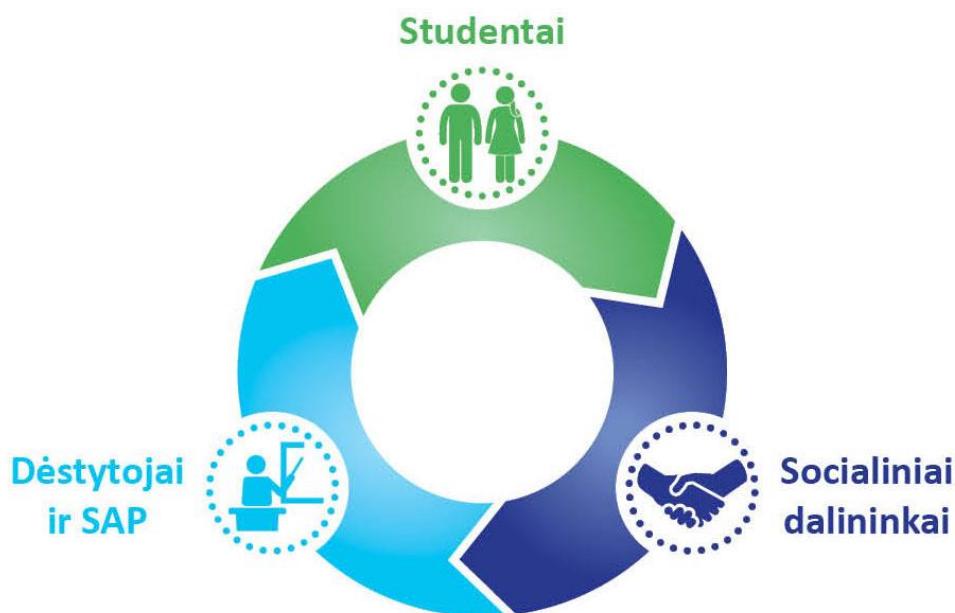
PUBLISHED

Order of the Rector of Vilnius University
of Applied Sciences of February 2022 No.

ABOUT THE University QUALITY MANUAL

The Quality Manual is the main document of Vilnius University of Applied Sciences' internal quality management system. The **purpose of the Quality Manual** is to summaries internal quality assurance processes and procedures.

The Quality Manual provides an opportunity to ensure transparency, to develop community awareness and individual and collective responsibility for the assurance of quality and improvement of the University's studies, applied research, experimental development and professional arts activities and other activities, to allocate roles and responsibilities in the quality assurance and improvement processes, and to gain the trust of internal and external stakeholders. The Quality Manual is relevant to the entire University community - students, lecturers and studies serving staff (SSS), as well as social stakeholders (Figure 1).



Legend (clockwise): Students, Social stakeholders, Lecturers and SAP

Fig. 1 Quality development and implementation teams

Attention to academic quality and consistently implemented measures to improve it are an integral part of the strategic management of Vilnius University of Applied Sciences, contributing to the implementation of its vision for the future and the development of its distinctive culture.

The vision of Vilnius University of Applied Sciences is to be an innovative and international higher education institution, an active participant in the creation of a socially responsible society.

The Quality management system creates preconditions for the effective execution of the multifaceted mission of Vilnius University of Applied Sciences - to provide modern higher education studies, nationally and internationally recognized applied research and professional art in accordance with European standards, through the efforts of a socially responsible academic community, in effective

cooperation with the world of business, in order to achieve a successful professional career of students and the prosperity of the Vilnius region and the Lithuanian state in general.

The main components of the Quality Manual of the Vilnius University of Applied Sciences are: the strategic provisions of quality prepared in accordance with the legislation of the Republic of Lithuania regulating the quality assurance of higher education; the definition of the assessed areas of the University's activities and their essential characteristics related to the Strategy of Vilnius University of Applied Sciences for the years 2021-2025; the set of assessment criteria and quality indicators and the description of the procedures regulating the quality assurance processes.

The basis for this Quality Manual has been developed by formalizing the University's quality assurance, quality policies and procedures. In 2008, following the implementation of the EU and Republic of Lithuania funded project *Development of Vilnius University of Applied Sciences Quality Assurance System* No. BPD2004- ESF- 2.4.0- 03- 05/0074, the Academic Council approved the following Quality system documents: the *Quality Manual*, the *development and management of QMS documents*, and the *set of criteria and indicators for the quality of the University's activities*. In July 2011, the University started to implement the EU Structural Funds-funded project "*Improvement of Vilnius University of Applied Sciences Quality Management System* " No. VP1– 2.1– ŠMM– 04– K– 02– 023. During the implementation of the project, a model of the internal study quality management system was developed together with the improvement of documents regulating the internal study quality assurance processes and procedures - the *Quality Manual* and Annexes (approved by the Resolution of the Academic Council of the University No. ATN- 7.).

CONTENTS

ABBREVIATIONS	5
1. QUALITY POLICY 6	
1.1. Quality in higher education in the context of European higher education	6
1.2. Quality of higher education in the legislation of the Republic of Lithuania	7
1.3. Quality assurance in the Statutes of Vilnius University of Applied Sciences	8
1.4. Vilnius University of Applied Sciences Quality Strategy Provisions	10
2. ASSESSMENT AREAS	19
2.1. Definition of the areas to be assessed	19
2.2. Essential characteristics of the assessment areas	19
3. ASSESSMENT LEVELS, CRITERIA AND INDICATORS	26
3.1 Definition of assessment levels.....	26
3.2. Criteria and qualitative indicators.....	27
3.3. Quantitative indicators	28
3.4. Set of criteria and qualitative indicators	32
4. VILNIUS UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES PROCESS MANAGEMENT	43

ABBREVIATIONS

BP	Bologna process
EAME	European higher education area
EMTE	The European Research Area (<i>ERA</i>)
ENQA	The European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education
EQAR	European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education
EU	European Union
ESG	Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance <i>in the European Higher Education Area</i>
EURASHE	<i>The European Association of Institutions in Higher Education</i>
LR	Republic of Lithuania
LRS	Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania
LRV	Government of the Republic of Lithuania
SKVC	Centre for Quality Assessment of Studies
ŠMSM	Ministry of Education, Science and Sport
TMTEP	Applied research and experimental development

1. QUALITY POLICY

1.1. Quality in higher education in the context of European higher education

The changing higher education environment, driven by the needs and expectations of the state, society, students (related to reducing inequalities, increasing knowledge, skills and competences in society, demographics, etc.), changes in the labor market (driven by a sustainable economy, the growth of knowledge-intensive workplaces that promote the use of scientific knowledge, the needs of social cohesion, the mobility of individuals, etc.), the emergence of new (self)learning opportunities (driven both by the globalization of higher education and the development of educational services, as well as by the increasing competition between higher education institutions, and the need for greater flexibility and openness to society, etc.), have led to the recognition of quality assurance and improvement of studies as a fundamental and priority activity in the creation of the European Higher Education Area.

Following the Sorbonne (1998) and Bologna (1999) declarations, quality assurance has become a European, not just a national, issue. The Salamanca Convention (2001) identified quality, autonomy and accountability of higher education institutions among the other key principles of the European Higher Education Area (public responsibility for higher education, research-based higher education, diversity, trust, attractiveness).

The Berlin Communiqué (2003) stresses the need to develop common criteria and methodologies for quality assurance. In 2005, the ESG was adopted as an annex to the Bergen Communiqué, explicitly regulating common quality assurance and quality requirements for European higher education study programs and degrees awarded.

The priorities for the European Higher Education Area (the Leuven and New Leuven Communiqué "The Bologna Process 2020 - The European Higher Education Area in the New Decade" (2009)) set the following key challenges for higher education in the EU Member States by 2020: broaden participation in higher education to include under-represented social groups; achieving a minimum of 20% of graduates who have spent part of their studies in another country; providing lifelong learning opportunities; maximizing the employability of graduates; and redesigning curricula to create a student-centered learning environment. Among the announced priorities of the reform to modernize higher education is the improvement of the quality of higher education to ensure that study programs meet the needs of students, the labor market and their future career paths, as well as recognizing and promoting teachers who have achieved outstanding excellence in studies and research, and strengthening the links between studies, research and business by fostering innovation and creativity, including entrepreneurship.

The Yerevan Communiqué (2015) stresses the need to improve the quality of teaching and learning by encouraging and supporting higher education institutions and staff to introduce pedagogical innovations in a student-centered learning environment and to make the most of the opportunities offered by digital technologies for learning and teaching. Recognizing and supporting quality teaching and providing opportunities to improve teachers' pedagogical competences is essential. It is important to actively involve

students as full members of the academic community and other social partners in quality assurance.

The Paris Communiqué (2018) calls for an inclusive and innovative approach to teaching and learning, enabling persons from vulnerable and under-represented groups to access and excel in higher education. Quality assurance of studies must be given special attention.

The Rome Communiqué (2020) stresses that quality studies will continue to be the hallmark of EAME. A strong culture of academic and scientific integrity, based on academic honesty, will be upheld in all higher education institutions. Progress in establishing quality assurance systems aligned with ESG is recognized. A commitment is made to ensure that external quality assurance measures cover international higher education in the EAME, using uniform standards. Given the need to increase the flexibility and openness of learning paths and greater synergies between higher education institutions, the development-based use of ESG is being promoted to support innovation and quality assurance in higher education.

The European Higher Education Area operates on the basis of national responsibility for quality in higher education, which makes national and institutional levels crucial for quality assurance in higher education. At national level, the quality of studies must be maintained, improved, refined and developed in line with international trends. However, the primary responsibility for ensuring the quality of studies lies with the higher education institution itself.

1.2. Quality of higher education in the legislation of the Republic of Lithuania

This subsection describes the main provisions of quality assurance in higher education, which are regulated by the Law on Science and Studies of the Republic of Lithuania and by the sub-legislative acts of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania, the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, and the Centre for Quality Assessment of Studies.

The Law on Science and Studies (2009) stipulates that the University is obliged to inform the founders, social stakeholders, social partners and the public about the measures to ensure the quality of studies and scientific activities, the use of state funds, to provide information about its financial, economic and scientific activities; the results of the external quality assessment and accreditation of its study programs and the results of the quality assurance of its internal activities.

The University is responsible for the quality of its scientific and artistic activities, studies and other activities, publishes its quality indicators, and promotes a culture of quality together with the assessment bodies. The quality of scientific and artistic activities and studies is ensured through the conditions of admission to the University, the University's internal quality assurance system, the external evaluation and accreditation of study programs, and the University's external evaluation and/or accreditation. The University's quality assurance is based on the European Quality Assurance Framework and Guidelines for Higher Education in the European Higher Education Area (ESG, 2015) (Table 17). Quality assurance is based on the provisions of the European Research Area.

The Law on Science and Studies (2009) also regulates the internal quality assurance of the

University's activities: it is mandatory to have an internal quality assurance system approved by the University and to provide for ways and means of ensuring the quality of the education and research it provides. The University shall, at least once a year, communicate to the academic community and make publicly available on its website the accurate quantitative and qualitative information on its scientific/artistic activities and the results of their evaluation. The University shall publish accurate quantitative and qualitative information on study programs, awarded higher education qualifications, the opinion of students, graduates and other stakeholders on the quality of studies, the results of the University's activities, the results of the evaluation of study programs, the career indicators of graduates, and may also publish other data necessary to inform the public about studies.

The University's performance is continuously improved through periodic self-assessments and external evaluations. External accreditation of higher education institutions is carried out by the Centre for Study Quality Assessment. The quality assurance of higher education institutions is further regulated by the Methodology for Evaluating the Real Resources of higher education institutions (2011); the Methodology for Evaluating the Performance of higher education institutions (2020); the Methodology for the External Evaluation of Directions (2019); the Methodology for the Evaluation of Degree Programs to be Implemented in the future (2019).

The **key terms** in this Quality Manual are the same as those used in the State Education and Science Monitoring Procedure (2019):

- **Data** - a quantitative statistical or qualitative descriptive expression of fact(s);
- **Data processing** - performing systematic operations on data: organizing, editing, classifying, sorting, creating databases and otherwise dealing with it;
- **Input** - the effort and/or resources required to operate the system and achieve its objectives;
- **Indicator** - a quantitative size or qualitative attribute that provides information for planning, management and control that can improve management effectiveness;
- **Indicator description** - a description of the purpose of the indicator, the methodology and the frequency of its calculation, prepared in the context of defining the indicator;
- **Context** - the external conditions and needs that influence processes;
- **Process** - a sequence of causally linked changes in a system;
- **Result** - the state of being at the end of a process stage or having a product created.

Other terms used in this description correspond to the terms defined in the Law on Science and Studies of the Republic of Lithuania and its implementing legal acts

1.3. Quality assurance in the Statutes of Vilnius University of Applied Sciences

Chapter IV of the Statute of Vilnius University of Applied Sciences, Quality Assurance of Studies, Science and Arts, formulates the essential provisions of quality assurance of Vilnius University of Applied

Sciences (hereinafter - the University):

"54. The University is responsible for the quality of its studies, scientific and artistic activities and other activities performed in the University, publishes its quality indicators, and promotes a culture of quality together with the assessment bodies.

55. The University shall publish an annual activity report on its website each year.

56. The quality of scientific and professional artistic activities and studies at the University shall be ensured by applying the internal quality assurance system approved by the Academic Council of the University, by external evaluation and accreditation of studies and by external evaluation and accreditation of the University, as well as by the development of internationalization, interinstitutional cooperation and the integrity of science and studies.

57. The University's internal quality assurance shall be based on the quality assurance provisions and guidelines of the European Higher Education Area. Quality assurance is based on the provisions of the European Research Area.

58. The University's performance is continuously improved through periodic self-assessments and University external evaluations.

59. The University shall publish on its public website and otherwise (at least once a year) provide the academic community with accurate and unbiased quantitative and qualitative information on scientific and artistic activities, the results of external evaluation and accreditation of fields of study, the higher education qualifications awarded, the opinions of students, graduates and other stakeholders on the quality of studies, the results of the University's external evaluation of its activities and studies, the graduates' career indicators, and any other data necessary to provide the public with information on studies.

60. External evaluation of the University's field of study shall include an analysis of the quality of all study programs and their delivery in a given field of study on the basis of self-assessment and monitoring data, with the involvement of external experts. The results of the external evaluation of studies are published on the University's website. Following the external evaluation, the University shall implement the recommendations of the external evaluation."

1.4. Vilnius University of Applied Sciences Quality Strategy Provisions

1.4.1. General provisions

1. The Quality Strategy Provisions of Vilnius University of Applied Sciences (hereinafter referred to as the "Provisions") provide the basis for the internal quality management system.

2. These Regulations have been prepared in accordance with the Statute of the University and are in compliance with the Law on Science and Studies of the Republic of Lithuania, other legal acts regulating the quality assurance of science and studies, as well as with the European Higher Education Area Quality Assurance Provisions and Guidelines.

3. For the purposes of these Provisions:

3.1. **Quality** - the effectiveness of the University in achieving its mission and objectives, meeting the development needs of individuals and society;

3.2. **Quality culture** - a component of the University's overall culture that motivates the University to improve the quality of implementing its strategic goals and objectives;

3.3. **Quality management** - a set of continuous quality assessment (monitoring, analysis, evaluation, improvement) processes designed to improve quality;

3.4. **Internal quality management system** - the quality strategic provisions, responsible actors and procedures to improve strategic management and develop a quality culture;

3.5. other terms correspond to the terms defined in the Law on Science and Studies of the Republic of Lithuania and its sub-legislative legal acts.

1.4.2. Objectives

4. The internal quality management system ensures adequate quality in the implementation of the University's mission and the objectives of the Vilnius University of Applied Sciences Strategy for 2021-2025:

4.1. to provide vocational higher education studies and lifelong learning that meet the needs of the Lithuanian and international labor market;

4.2. to develop applied research, experimental development and impactful professional art relevant to the world of work ;

4.3. Strengthening the effectiveness of country and regional impact;

4.4. develop an organizational culture focused on community mobilization and socially responsible community spirit.

1.4.3. Principles and areas for assessment

5. The internal quality management system is based on the following interrelated principles:

5.1. **autonomy and accountability** - taking into account the University's values and the balance

between autonomy and social responsibility;

5.2. **contextualism**- taking into account the specificities of the University's mission, strategy and the specifics of international and national operating environment;

5.3. **systematicity** - taking into account the interaction and coherence between: the field of study, program components; the University's fields of activity; and the systemic, institutional, and individual (study, field of study, program, subject/module) levels of implementation of higher education policy;

5.4. **insights for the future** - taking into account the results of the evaluation of the University's performance and anticipating the future;

5.5. **partnership** - taking into account the involvement of the academic community, administration and other stakeholders in the formulation and implementation of the University's strategic goals and objectives.

6. The internal evaluation of the University's performance (Annex) is carried out in the following evaluation areas:

6.1. management;

6.2. studies and lifelong learning

6.3. TMTEP and professional art;

6.4. impact on the region and the country as a whole;

6.5. socially responsible and creative community.

7. The internal quality management system shall regulate the following procedures:

7.1. Internal quality assessment of the University's performance;

7.2. internal quality assurance for study fields;

7.3. the quality of informing the public.

1.4.4. Subjects

8. Subject to competence, the quality management is the responsibility of:

8.1. academic self-government bodies;

8.2. academic units;

8.3. administrative units.

9. Each member of the University community is accountable for his/her own performance in accordance with his/her duties/responsibilities and contributes to the development of a quality culture (Figure 2).



Legend (clockwise, top to bottom): Students, Social stakeholders, Lecturers and SAP
 Vilnius University of Applied Sciences values: Openness, Communalism, Innovation, Professionalism

Fig. 2 Developing a culture of quality

1.4.5. Improving the quality management system

10. The criteria for evaluating a quality management system are its effectiveness and efficiency.

11. In order to assess the performance of the quality management system, the following is analysed:

11.1. the quality management system is in line with the mission of the University and is oriented towards the achievement of its strategic objectives;

11.2. compliance of the study and lifelong learning component with the quality assurance provisions and guidelines of the European Higher Education Area;

11.3. Alignment between the University's quality management, strategic management and external quality assessment (of study fields and higher education institution activities).

12. In order to assess the performance of the quality management system, the following is analysed:

12.1. the clarity and rationality of the quality management procedures and the responsibilities/obligations assigned to quality management entities;

12.2. the regularity and priority of quality assurance processes;

12.3. the adequacy and accessibility of information on quality management procedures and assessment results to the University community, social stakeholders, social partners and the public;

12.4. Involvement of the University community and social stakeholders in quality assurance processes;

12.5. Using the recommendations substantiated by the quality assessment to improve the quality of the University's performance and strategic management;

13. The Academic Council of the University is responsible for evaluating the University's quality management system and making recommendations for improvement.

1.4.6. Quality improvement provisions

14. The University's quality management system is an integral and inseparable part of the University's operational strategy (Figure 3).



STRATEGIJA 2021–2025

Legend (clockwise, top to bottom, left to right):

Reflection on activity results, Activity planning, Activity implementation, Lecturers and SAP

Students, Social stakeholders, Lecturers and SAP

QUALITY CULTURE

VILNIUS UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES VALUES: Openness, Communalism, Innovation, Professionalism

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS:

International level studies; Needs-based applied scientific research, experimental development and professional art; Active influence on the country and region; Socially responsible and creative community

STRATEGIC HORIZONTAL PRIORITIES:

Figure 3. Links between Quality Assurance and Vilnius University of Applied Sciences Strategy 2021-2025

1.4.7. Principles of the University's Study Quality Management System

15. Studies based on applied research and experimentation, professional arts and learning paradigms:

15.1. In order to position itself in the European and national space of science and studies, the University is developing a flexible system of studies based on scientific and artistic achievements and knowledge, as well as on the application of the results of applied scientific research. The University engages students in its activities and studies, and implements study programs that ensure the unity of science and studies.

15.2. The University maintains and fosters a motivating learning environment that systematically and consistently promotes learning and provides the student with the incentives and necessary skills to become an active participant in the study process, who is responsible for the learning. It develops a culture of reasoning and creativity, critical thinking, social responsibility, problem-solving, continuous renewal, understanding, acceptance and tolerance of the diversity of the world and society. A motivating learning environment is also a factor in the activity of the lecturer and in the change of the traditional hierarchical relationship with students: not only does the lecturer create a learning environment that enables change in the student's way of thinking and acting, and encourages responsibility, but he or she also learns, in collaboration with the students, how to continuously improve such an environment. One of the quality assurance factors in the design and updating of study programs and the organization of learning-based study processes is to take into account the needs of the student. This requires a change in community attitudes, a change in approaches to studies and teaching methods, and a revision of the concept of student workload. To ensure this change, it is necessary to develop the didactic competence of lecturers, to create appropriate support structures for students and lecturers, to keep records of lecturers' pedagogical work, and to create the necessary conditions for a learning environment (lecture halls, laboratories, equipment, information resources etc.).

16. Openness and internationalization:

16.1. One of the most important factors in the quality of University studies is the competence, knowledge and skills of the University's academic staff. The University is open to the best professionals in their field: researchers, lecturers and administrators who are able to create and foster a motivating study environment and effective study support. In order to ensure that lecturers are able to meet the challenges of the knowledge society and actively participate in the lifelong learning process, and to motivate their students to do the same, it is necessary to create a supportive and attractive working environment for academic staff, to ensure the continuous development of lecturers' competences, and to ensure the recognition and promotion of excellence in scientific and pedagogical work.

16.2. While the number of applicants is important for every University, the characteristics of applicants, such as motivation, preparation and ability to study, become critical success factors in the process of achieving international education and training.

16.3. The University also aims to provide opportunities for those who already have a higher education qualification to develop their competences by developing and delivering study programs.

16.4. Quality assurance is closely linked to the internationalization of the study process. The University aims to ensure a level of research and study that enables it to participate on an equal footing in international scientific cooperation and to be an active and responsible member of the international academic community. Therefore, the University develops a flexible study system, focusing resources on the implementation of study programs and on the teaching of individual subjects (modules) in foreign languages. The internationality of studies, based on the unity of studies and science, not only enables the purposeful formation of students' creativity, innovativeness and critical thinking, but also promotes the cooperation between students, various national and international scientific, educational and business organizations, the dissemination of good scientific and pedagogical practices, and ensures the timely application of advanced teaching methods and technologies in the study process.

17. Responsibility and trust:

17.1. The systematic and constant improvement of the quality of the University's studies and the activities that affect them, as well as the promotion of a quality culture, requires the awareness, commitment and concentrated efforts of all members of the University community. The University therefore seeks and maintains an effective, benevolent and efficient dialogue between the University's managers, staff, students, lecturers and other stakeholders, cherishing an environment of discussion, cooperation and trust. Trust in the University community and its responsibility for ensuring the quality of studies and continuous improvement of the quality of studies is based not only on the articulation and publicizing of values, commitments, openness, transparency and publicity of information on the quality of studies, but also on the ability to provide evidence of the realization of its declared aspirations, as well as on the implementation of specific quality assurance measures and procedures, and the formation of University structures responsible for coordinating the activities of study quality improvement.

17.2. In order to build confidence in its activities and results, the University publishes objective information to the community and other stakeholders on the measures and procedures for improving the quality of studies, the availability of studies, the study programs offered, the results of external evaluation and accreditation of fields of study, the results of surveys of students' satisfaction with their studies and the satisfaction of the academic staff with their work etc. The University's implemented study quality management information system contributes to timely, accurate and accessible information, ensuring the validity of study quality management decisions.

17.3. The responsibility of the University community for the continuous quality assurance and improvement of the quality of studies and activities affecting them is realized through systematic

monitoring, self-assessment and improvement of the quality of its own activities in order to obtain effective feedback, e.g. by using the results of students' and lecturers' opinion and satisfaction surveys for self-assessment of the study fields, the content of the courses (modules), teaching or learning methods, provision of resources, etc.

18. Continuous improvement and change:

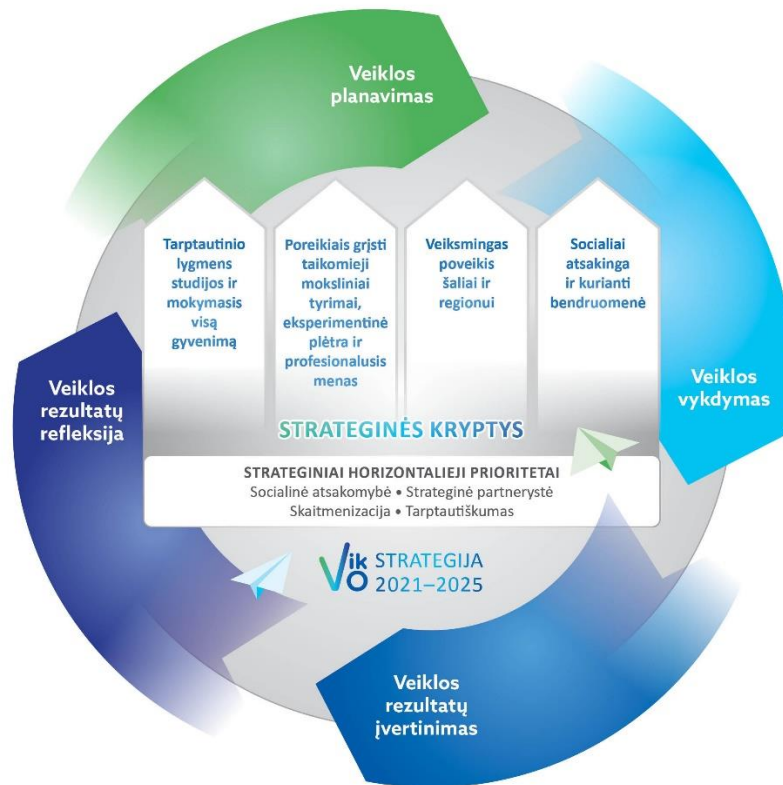
18.1. Meeting the changing needs and aspirations of society and the state, scientific progress, changes in the labor market, and the needs and expectations of students is one of the primary reasons for the University's commitment to innovation in its studies, applied research, experimental development and professional arts activities, and to improving the quality of its studies and the quality of its activities. Continuous improvement of the quality of studies also creates a favorable environment for international higher education, and encourages diverse cooperation.

18.2. For a University that fosters a learning environment based on applied research, experimental development and artistic activities, the results of these activities and the learning paradigm, it is important to create an environment that is conducive to, and that encourages and ensures, change in the attitudes of the academic community and the daily practices that underpin them. The success of student-centered learning is directly linked to the ability of the institution as a system to impose change on itself and change the perceptions and capacities of both internal and external stakeholders. The system approach shapes the concept of quality as change and the institutional framework for quality assurance in higher education that reflects this concept.

18.3. Successful change requires the following internal features of the internal studies quality assurance system: links to strategic planning, a conscious commitment and sharing of responsibility by the whole community, stakeholder involvement, recognition and dissemination of good practice, promotion of reflection and evaluation of performance and its use for quality improvement, a well-organized system of collection, storage and analysis of reliable data, reliance on evidence and the allocation of responsibility for making and implementing decisions on quality improvement, and oversight of the implementation of quality improvement decisions.

18.4. Continuous improvement of the quality of studies takes place in structured processes aligned with the University's strategy, ensuring evidence-based decision-making and the achievement of planned results. The quality improvement of the University's studies is implemented by collecting and analyzing data on studies and related and impacting processes, their results, conducting self-assessment/evaluation of activities, and using the collected data, facts and the results of the analysis for the purpose of performance improvement (development of action plans and their implementation).

18.5. The quality assurance of the University's activities is based on the performance management cycle, which explains the stages of any activity: 1) planning; 2) implementing; 3) evaluating; 4) reflecting on results of performance (Figure 4).



Legend (clockwise, top to bottom, left to right):

Activity planning, Activity implementation, Lecturers and SAP, Reflection on activity results

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS:

International level studies; Needs-based applied scientific research, experimental development and professional art; Active influence on the country and region; Socially responsible and creative community

STRATEGIC HORIZONTAL PRIORITIES:

Social responsibility; Strategic partnership; Digitalization; Internationality

Fig. 4 University performance management cycle

1.4.8. The University's commitment to quality

19. The University commits to:

19.1. Ensure and provide evidence of the achievement of the strategic objectives for improving the quality of studies and the activities leading to them;

19.2. Continuously explore and analyze the needs and expectations of the academic community and other stakeholders;

19.3. Create conditions for the effectiveness of the work of academic and non-academic staff;

19.4. Define and promote the responsibility of University staff for the quality of their performance in accordance with their duties and competences;

19.5. Ensure student participation in achieving quality of studies;

19.6. Maintain openness and synergies for the effectiveness of teaching/learning activities;

19.7. Recognize the merits and creative initiative of the academic community and encourage them to improve the quality of their work and provide the necessary conditions for professional development;

19.8. Publish objective information on measures and procedures for improving the quality of

studies, the results of external evaluation and accreditation of fields of study, the improvement of study programs, and the results of surveys on student satisfaction and academic staff job satisfaction;

19.9. Respond flexibly to changes in the external study environment;

19.10. Ensure the efficient and effective functioning of the Quality Management system for Studies by providing it with all the necessary resources.

2. ASSESSMENT AREAS

2.1. Definition of the areas to be assessed

The University's quality management model covers all the areas of activity regulated by external legislation: governance; quality assurance; study and research/arts activities; and impact on regional and national development. The evaluation of these areas is provided for in the Higher Education Institution Performance Evaluation Methodology (SKVC, 2020), which is used for the internal monitoring and analysis of the University's performance. The specific goals and objectives of the Strategy for 2021-2025 have been taken into account in the development of the Model (Table 1).

Table 1. Compliance with external legislation in the University's internal assessment areas

Areas for evaluation in the internal monitoring and analysis of the University's performance	Methodology for assessing the performance of higher education institutions - assessment areas (SKVC, 2020)
Management	Management, quality assurance
Study and lifelong learning	Study and research (arts) activities; quality assurance
TMTEP and professional art;	Study and research (arts) activities; quality assurance
Impact on the development of region and the country as a whole;	Impact on the development of region and the country as a whole; quality assurance
A socially responsible and creative community	Management, quality assurance

2.2. Essential characteristics of the assessment areas

The key characteristics of the University's areas of assessment are formulated on the basis of trends and strategic provisions identified in EAME and European Union documents. The set of key characteristics of the assessment areas is presented in Tables 2 to 6 below, linking them to the relevant goals and objectives of the University strategy for 2021-2025.

Table 2. Characteristics of the "Governance" area

MANAGEMENT	
Essential characteristics	Strategy 2021-2025
Strategic management 1. Academic autonomy - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the ability to choose and define the academic profile of the institution and the thematic areas of study and research, as well as the content and structure of degree programs; 	Objective <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop an organizational culture focused on community mobilization and socially responsible community spirit. Tasks

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • define the role and take responsibility for the quality of performance of the higher education institution; • the right to make public the results of research and studies carried out at the higher education institution; • to express the views of institutions and economic power centers on issues of public interest that is independent from the authorities. <p>2. Stakeholder involvement The involvement of all stakeholders - students, teachers, employers and other social stakeholders - is important in the development and implementation of strategic plans, while taking into account their interests and responsibilities/responsibilities. This, in turn, requires effective internal and external communication within the higher education institution and comprehensive information, necessary to justify the decisions under consideration.</p> <p>3. The role of a quality management system A quality management system is an essential component of strategic management, ensuring the quality of strategic planning and implementation.</p> <p>Administration</p> <p>4. Organizational autonomy - the ability to determine the structure of the University's units and establish governing bodies, Identify and promote/appoint academic leaders and administrators to leadership positions.</p> <p>5. Human resources (staff) autonomy - the right to freely and autonomously form academic staff and select students by setting qualification and academic progress criteria relevant to the particular higher education institution, including the ability to determine staff remuneration and motivation arrangements independently.</p> <p>6. Financial autonomy - the ability to independently dispose of financial resources for the operation of the higher education institution, to accumulate surpluses, to acquire and distribute funds, to control its budget, to borrow and to increase its finances.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen the effectiveness of the University's self-governance. • Develop an internal quality assurance system for studies. • Improving the competences of community members. • Creating an environment for community members to express themselves. <p>Tasks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the sustainability of the University's staff. • Improve the incentive system for community members. • Ensure sustainability of student numbers. • Strengthen strategic partnerships focused on social responsibility and innovation in TMTEP, professional arts and project activities. • Strengthen internal and external communication.
---	--

Table 3. Characteristics of the "Study and lifelong learning" assessed area

STUDY AND LIFELONG LEARNING	
Essential characteristics	Strategy 2021-2025
<p>1. Attention to learning outcomes The conceptual basis of the new study paradigm is a study didactics focused on the student's individual learning achievements, oriented on learning outcomes. The academic community</p>	<p>Objective Provide vocational higher education studies and lifelong learning that meet the needs of the Lithuanian and international labor market.</p>

<p>should be involved in discussing and defining learning outcomes the community (students, teachers) and representatives of the social partners or experts delegated by them.</p> <p>2. Study didactics The introduction of modern teaching/learning methods should be a continuous, long-term process. Innovative study didactics focuses on encouraging student initiative, independent learning, creative practical activities and teacher-student partnerships.</p> <p>3. Personalization of studies The concept of learning outcomes and the focus on the needs and interests of the individual require the development and provision of greater flexibility for the student to choose the content, form and methods of his or her studies in order to achieve the intended learning outcomes.</p> <p>Availability of studies</p> <p>4. Entry to higher education institution The range of study choices and entry options can be influenced by the social status (origin), age, special needs and material conditions of individual applicants. The social composition of accepted candidates, should reflect the social diversity of society.</p> <p>5. Studies Successful study depends on the availability of a study environment that suits the student's needs, the necessary learning tools and the availability of academic support and guidance. In order to create favorable study conditions, it is necessary to address quality of life factors, financial support and special needs of students.</p> <p>6. Higher education completion The development of career design and counselling in higher education institutions, combining the expectations of the student with the needs of the world of work, is important for the completion of studies and the successful integration of graduates into the world of work.</p> <p>Lifelong learning</p> <p>7. Orienting learning towards dynamic socio-economic conditions Providing opportunities to adapt to changing socio-economic conditions and to participate in the labor market requires close cooperation between public institutions, higher education institutions, students, employers and employees.</p> <p>8. Diversity of learning opportunities Lifelong learning means acquiring relevant qualifications in flexible ways learning pathways, including distance learning, as well as professional experience. Important</p>	<p>Tasks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the student-centered study process. • Developing and improving competitive, social responsibility-oriented professional higher education study programs. • Creating modern study environments. • Develop lifelong learning activities. • Expanding lifelong learning services • Developing the assessment and recognition of non-formal and informal learning achievements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating modern study environments. • Creating an environment for community members to express themselves • Involve students in TMTEP, professional arts and project activities
--	--

<p>facilitating transitions between education and training sectors, promoting more open attitudes towards non-formal and informal education.</p> <p>9. Recognition of prior learning Procedures for the recognition of prior learning should be developed and implemented as part of lifelong learning. Procedures for the recognition of learning outcomes should apply irrespective of whether the knowledge, skills and competences have been acquired through formal, non-formal or self-learning ways.</p> <p>Internationality 10. International openness of studies The expression of international openness in the content of studies includes themes and/or subjects/modules of relevance in a regional/group of countries and global context, and may be manifested in the implementation of special programs for students from third countries, focusing on the specific problems of developing countries. Encouraging the study of foreign languages: languages Skills that contribute to the development of mobility, the attractiveness of studying abroad and international career opportunities.</p> <p>11. Mobility of the academic community Joint programs and joint degrees, as well as various exchange programs, are the main tools for academic mobility. Adequate preparation - foreign language skills, recognition of learning outcomes, comprehensive information on mobility issues and transparent selection of candidates to ensure socially equivalent mobility - are important for achieving mobility objectives. participation of students from vulnerable groups Academic community mobility (including virtual mobility) improves the quality of studies and the international relevance of research, encourages higher education institutions to cooperate, and develops an individual's intercultural communication skills.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The development of internationalization as a horizontal priority of the University's activities is detailed in the University's internationalization strategy. <p>Tasks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring the internationalization of studies • Enhancing the internationalization of applied research, experimental development and artistic activities; • Developing a multicultural environment in the University.
---	---

Table 4. Characteristics of the evaluation area "TMTEP and professional arts"

TMTEP AND PROFESSIONAL ART;	
Essential characteristics	Strategy 2021-2025
<p>1. Building innovation and partnerships Higher education institutions should engage with the world of activities not only in the natural and technological sciences, but also in other fields (e.g. humanities or social sciences). In doing so, they would contribute not only to economic development, but also to the social role of higher education - the continuous improvement of the knowledge society.</p> <p>2. Interaction between research and studies</p>	<p>Objective</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing applied scientific research, experimental development and impactful professional art relevant to the world of work; <p>Tasks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen strategic partnerships focused on social responsibility and innovation in TMTEP, professional arts and project activities. • Improving teachers' research competences

Study programs should reflect changing research priorities and the emergence of new disciplines and develop students' research competences. It is important to develop the links between education, research and business (the "knowledge triangle") and Integrate research results and innovative practices into study programs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective dissemination of the results of TMTEP, professional arts and project activities • Ensure resources for TMTEP and professional arts activities
---	--

Table 5. Characteristics of the "Impact on regional and national development" assessed area

IMPACT ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF REGION AND THE COUNTRY AS A WHOLE	
Essential characteristics	Strategy 2021-2025
<p>1. College's impact on the development of society - social, cultural, economic and environmental development. These influences can take many forms (not limited to those listed below):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • communicating research results and science popularization - to the public, stakeholders, policy makers and implementers in related sectors/fields; • ordered applied scientific research and/or transfer of research results to businesses, non-governmental organizations, public authorities; • communication of modern culture and cultural heritage, participation in cultural life at local, national and international level; • activities targeting socially excluded groups, both inside and outside the institution, and the provision of special services (advice) and support outside the institution; • protecting the environment and conserving natural resources, etc. <p>2. Implementation of sustainable development strategic provisions in the University's activities - based on, but not limited to, the Practical Guide to the United Nations Global Compact for Higher Education Institutions: Human rights, Workers' rights, Environment, Anti-corruption</p>	<p>Objective</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthening the effectiveness of country and regional impact <p>Objectives (Study and Science/Arts)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen strategic partnerships focused on social responsibility and innovation to address national and regional challenges • Carrying out national and regional needs analysis and socially responsible TMTEP, professional arts and project activities • Encourage volunteering activities by community members • Participation in activities to reduce exclusion and increase inclusion of vulnerable social groups

Table 6. Characteristics of the "Impact on regional and national development" assessed area

A SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE AND CREATIVE COMMUNITY	
Essential characteristics	Strategy 2021-2025
<p>1. Human resources (staff) autonomy - the right to freely and autonomously form academic staff by setting qualification and academic progress criteria relevant to the particular higher education institution, including the ability to determine staff remuneration and motivation arrangements independently.</p> <p>2. Mobility of the academic community Academic community mobility (including virtual mobility) improves the quality of studies and the</p>	<p>Objective</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an organizational culture focused on community mobilization and socially responsible community spirit. <p>Tasks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the sustainability of the University's staff. • Strengthen the effectiveness of the University's self-governance.

international relevance of research, encourages higher education institutions to cooperate, and develops an individual's intercultural communication skills.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the competences of community members. • Develop a multicultural environment in the University. • Create an environment conducive to self-expression for community members • Improve the incentive system for community members. • Strengthen internal and external communication
--	--

Additional characteristics of the assessment areas

The "Policy and Strategy" component of the International Standard for Quality Management (EFQM) is additionally applied to assess the University's strategic management by addressing the following aspects: the extent to which the strategic objectives reflect the University's mission and goals; whether the objectives are precisely formulated in consultation with social stakeholders and are well known to all; the extent to which the higher education institution's planning and decision-making procedures are based on the strategic objectives; whether the University regularly reviews the objectives and tasks; the extent to which the objectives are supported by tasks, whose implementation can be assessed; and whether a specific action plan for the implementation of objectives and tasks has been developed.

The supportive processes of academic activities are represented in the strategy by 3 objectives: to improve the competences of the community members; to create modern study environments; and to provide resources for the development of TMTEP and professional arts activities. These objectives are linked to the "Processes" component of the International Standard for Quality Management (EFQM), which covers: human resources management (recruitment, development, certification, motivation); financial resources management; and management of the infrastructure, including information systems and technology. In order to fully assess the quality of the implementation of these supportive processes, an assessment area on Administration has been developed.

The distinctive interpretation of the impact on region and national development is worth noting. Based on the "Impact on Society" component of the International Standard for Quality Management (EFQM), the following aspects are addressed: the University's impact on the economy; the appropriateness of relations with social partners; active participation in the life of the community in which the University's activities take place; and support for socially vulnerable groups.

The area of regional and national development impact assessment not only monitors and analyses the University's "third mission" - to develop intellectual potential, to create innovations that promote progress in society, and to contribute to the development of democracy. The University's Strategy for 2021-2025 is based on the values reflected in its multidimensional activities and its strategic objective "To develop an organizational culture focused on community members' cohesion and socially responsible communality". The University's culture change is guided by the Sustainable Development Goals *Global Compact*, the United Nations' network for socially responsible practices, adapted for higher education

institutions.

The Global Compact for Sustainable Development focuses on 4 areas: human rights, workers' rights, the environment and anti-corruption. During the 2012 Rio+20 convention the Practical Guide to the United Nations Global Compact for Higher Education Institutions has been presented.

In the area of human rights, the University is committed to respecting inherent human rights (such as freedom of education, freedom of expression, gender equality) not only within the institution, but also in its entire sphere of influence, regardless of race, nationality, gender, beliefs, social origin or status. The promotion of human rights can be expressed through: student admission conditions; working/studying conditions of the University community; non-discrimination; self-expression, participation in governance; respect for local culture and intercultural communication.

Employee rights at the University are understood as the rights of the academic community - staff and students. These can be expressed through: freedom to form associations and other organizations; resolution of academic disputes; study regulations; rules on work/study, working and rest/living conditions for people with disabilities; and working environment, health and safety issues.

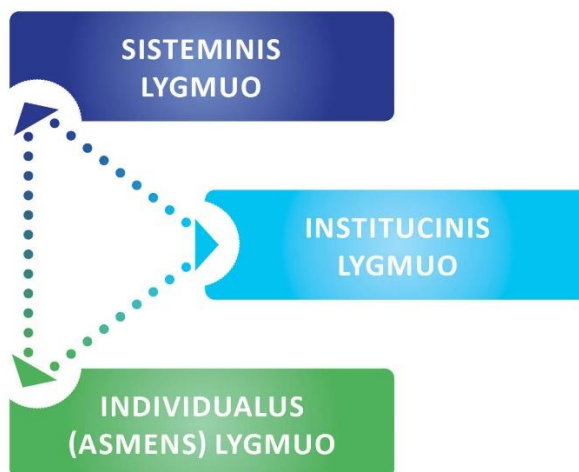
In the field of environmental protection, the University is committed to ensuring that its activities do not endanger people and the environment. Environmentally friendly practices can be expressed through: resource consumption patterns; transport, recycling, food service strategies and programs; green procurement practices; resource (water, energy, etc.) conservation and pollution and waste reduction programs; climate change mitigation and biodiversity conservation measures.

The fight against corruption is ensured through: financial transparency and accountability (e.g. on student fees or the use of charity); public procurement; clear rules on the selection and promotion of students and staff; objective examination assessments; and measures to prevent copying, plagiarism and the falsification of scientific results.

3. ASSESSMENT LEVELS, CRITERIA AND INDICATORS

3.1 Definition of assessment levels

Higher education policy measures (decisions) can be designed to initiate change at the systemic (national), institutional (higher education institution or other relevant institution) or individual (personal) level.



Legend (top to bottom): SYSTEM LEVEL; INSTITUTIONAL LEVEL, INDIVIDUAL (PERSONAL) LEVEL

Figure 5. System of assessed levels

Systemic level - the national policy on higher education (strategies, development programs) and the legislation governing its implementation, which shapes the legal environment for the activities of higher education institutions and individuals, and defines the relationships between institutions and/or stakeholders in the system of studies.

Institutional level - the responsibilities and functions assigned to the higher education institution that are essential for the implementation and adaptation of the study policy in a changing environment; procedures; human resources, human resource management and qualification development processes; physical resources; internal and external communication.

Individual (personal) level - target groups motivation and competences (knowledge, skills, abilities, attitudes) acquired through formal, non-formal or self-learning; professional activity of a person, participation in society.

College performance is assessed at institutional and individual/field of study level. At national level, legislation can affect the individual level directly or through changes at institutional level.

Improving the performance of the University means:

- at institutional level, the proper implementation of the University's goals and objectives and

the delivery of results in a changing environment, based on effective management of human resources, infrastructure, finances and communication;

- at the individual level, the development of the skills and competences of higher education participants (students, lecturers, administrators) relevant for professional, social and self-expression activities, by providing appropriate conditions for study and/or professional development.

3.2. Criteria and qualitative indicators

Criteria - is a characteristic of the requirements and conditions on which the qualitative and/or quantitative assessment of the achievement of an objective and/or a provision is based. The criteria indicates which characteristics of the phenomenon need to be taken into account when assessing the changes resulting from the implementation of the strategic objectives. The criteria is future-oriented, i.e. it reflects not so much the current state of affairs as the prospects for the development of the study system (the expected outcome). The quality criteria should be agreed by all stakeholders: in this sense, the criteria link the conceptual, strategic and practical aspects of the evaluation.

The qualitative indicators explain the characteristics of the criteria and elaborate on them.

Qualitative indicator - description or ranking - describes the characteristics of a phenomenon (trend).

Quantitative indicator - a number and/or ratio - indicates the extent of a phenomenon/trend; a quantitative indicator should be distinguished from a *standard* - a numerical requirement (an acceptable outcome).

The criteria for the evaluation of the University's performance and the evaluation of study programs and fields of study are aligned with the University's strategic objectives and the relevant external evaluation (accreditation) criteria.



Legend (clockwise, top to bottom): Strategic management, external assessment, quality management;
QUALITY CRITERIA

Figure 6. Interaction between strategic management, quality management and external evaluation

Four categories of qualitative indicators are used to describe the performance of the University:

Contextual indicators - describe the specific environment (social, economic, political, geographical, etc.) in which higher education policy is formulated and implemented, and in which higher education institutions operate, study programs and courses of study are conducted.

Contribution (input) indicators - describing the legislation, human resources, organizational structure, infrastructure, funding available for higher education policy and/or higher education institution activities and for the delivery of study programs and courses.

Process indicators - describing the decision-making, specific features of higher education institution activities and study programs, as well as fields of studies implementation, and/or administrative activities.

Outcome indicators - describe actual achievements and/or results, at institutional and individual level.

Qualitative indicators should be formulated taking into account the development perspective of the University and should not be limited to routine and/or readily available data. On the other hand, indicators can only be used effectively if they form a set of coherent input, process and outcome indicators; contextual indicators help to interpret them.

When evaluating the performance of a higher education institution, it is common to analyse:

- **Effectiveness** - the adequacy of the contribution and/or result of the activity being evaluated to achieve its intended objectives;
- **Efficiency** - the implementation of an evaluated activity/process in the right way, according to a set procedure.

The **methods** used for qualitative evaluation are the same as those used in conventional social research - document analysis, analysis of secondary sources (reports), survey/sociological research, analysis of data (including statistics), interviews, comparative analysis, strengths-weaknesses analysis and others.

Unlike quantitative indicators, qualitative (expert) assessment depends on the specificities of the area being assessed. It may assess compliance with the objectives set and/or chosen, the adequacy of the implementation of the delegated and/or chosen responsibilities, and the sufficiency to achieve the objectives and targets under certain defined conditions. It is recommended to identify weaknesses and strengths when assessing process indicators.

A detailed list of criteria and indicators to be used for the evaluation of the University's performance, by evaluation area, is presented in Section 3.4. When interpreting specific indicators, it is important to pay attention to the key characteristics of the area being assessed and the University's respective objectives (Section 2.2).

3.3. Quantitative indicators

Qualitative evaluations are usually complemented by quantitative data that illustrate the scale of the processes and results implemented, and give qualitative evaluations objectively identifiable, measurable attributes.

The University's Strategy for 2021-2025 sets out the **strategic indicators and their targets** (Table 8):

Table 7. The University's Strategy for 2021-2025 sets out the strategic indicators and their targets:

Strategic direction	Strategic indicators	Value of indicator
I Strategic direction - International studies and lifelong learning	1. Percentage of study programs accredited for the maximum period of time out of the total number of study programs at the University	80 percent.
	2. Percentage of University students out of the total number of students studying in Lithuanian state Universitys	20 percent.
	3. Percentage of students completing their field of study and level of study on time	65 percent.
	4. Percentage of foreign students studying the full study program out of the total number of students at the University	2.5 percent.
	5. Percentage of international exchange students from the total number of students at the University	3.0 percent.
	6. Percentage of outgoing exchange students out of the total number of students at the University	5.0 percent.
	7. Percentage of total University expenditure spent on the provision of resources for the study process	at least 80 % of total expenditure.
	8. Percentage of revenue from the implementation of non-formal education programs for children and adults as a percentage of revenue from TMTEP and arts activities	20 percent.
II Strategic direction. Need-based applied research, experimental development and professional arts	9. Revenue from commission of TMTEP and arts activities by corporate/organizational orders as a percentage of the University's total budget	6 percent.
	10. Percentage of expenditure on TMTEP and artistic activities as a percentage of total University expenditure	6 percent.

	11. Revenue from strategic partnerships for TMTEP and arts activities as a percentage of total revenue for TMTEP and arts activities	50 percent.
III Strategic directions. Effective national and regional impact	12. Percentage of University graduates employed in the main groups (0-3) of the Lithuanian occupational classification during 12 months after graduation	80 percent.
	13. Percentage of revenue from consultancy services to companies, organizations, associations, etc. of total revenue from TMTEP and arts activities	5 percent.
	14. Number of voluntary services	At least 3 services per academic year per department
IV Strategic direction. A mature community	<i>Strategic indicators:</i> 15. Percentage of academic staff with a degree out of total academic staff	20 percent.
	16. Percentage of faculty and staff who have participated in international programs as a percentage of total University staff	6 percent of lecturers. 15 percent other staff
	17. Percentage of funds allocated to staff development as a percentage of the University's operating income	1.9 percent.
	18. Percentage of funds allocated to students' academic, financial, social, psychological and personal support as a percentage of the University's state budget appropriations	7 percent.
	19. Ratio of the average monthly salary (VMA) of a University lecturer to the VMA in Lithuania	140 percent.
	20. Ratio of the average monthly salary (VMA) of a University staff member to the VMA in Lithuania	110 percent.

3.4. Set of criteria and qualitative indicators

Table 8. Management (strategic management)

Indicator category	STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT	
	Criteria: Substantiating strategic management with academic quality indicators	
	Level	
	Institution	Individual (personal)
Context	1.1. EAME and EU higher education strategy documents. 1.2. Strategic documents of the Republic of Lithuania on science and studies.	5. Competences for Sustainable development education*
Contribution	2.1. The Strategic action plan's consistency with the University's mission, the country's science and study policy strategic documents, the European Higher Education Area and the provisions of the European research area. 2.2. The substantiation and coherence of the components of the Strategic Development Plan. 2.3. The validity and completeness of the quantitative and qualitative indicators of implementation of the Strategic development plan. 2.4. Procedures for public information on quality issues.	6. Plan of measures to improve/motivate the skills of academic staff in strategic management.
Process	3.1. Adequacy of the monitoring arrangements for the Strategic development plan. 3.2. Adequacy of information provision on the implementation of the Strategic development plan. 3.3. Social and business partners inclusion in the strategic objectives and implementation measures formation and implementation monitoring.	7. Developing the skills of academic staff in strategic management.
Result	4. Using recommendations based on monitoring and self-assessment to improve the quality of the University and improving strategic management.	8. Change management: active and effective participation of academic staff in strategic management activities.

Competences for Sustainable development education*

Complex thinking and practice:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> linking different learning contexts and disciplines; encompassing different cultures and perspectives; insight into different aspects of complex phenomena and situations.
Foresight of perspective:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> critical reflection and learning from the past; understanding the current situation; insight into different future options and how to realize them.
Implementing change:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the role of the educator; teaching/learning methods and organization; the education system in general.

Table 9. Management (administration)

Indicator category	ADMINISTRATION	
	Criteria: effectiveness of the University's management processes (administration)	
	Level	
	Institution	Individual (personal)
Context	1. the Law on Science and Studies of the Republic of Lithuania and/or its implementing legislation-determined University management regulation and governance.	5. University Strategy for 2021-2025
Contribution	2.1. The distribution of responsibility and accountability for decision-making in the development of the University is defined in the Statutes, the regulations of the units and the academic self-government bodies. 2.2. Academic ethics provisions and enforcement procedures.	6.1. Naming responsibility and accountability in the administration staff job descriptions appropriate to their role in the University's management processes. 6.2. Plan of measures to develop/motivate administrative staff.
Process	3.1. Efficiency of human resources management. 3.2. Efficiency of management of physical resources.	7. Developing and motivating administrative staff.
Result	4.1. The compliance of changes in the structure with the University's strategic objectives for studies, applied research and experimental development, professional artistic activities and participation in society. 4.2. The rationality (efficiency) of the use of funds, taking into account the priorities of the University.	8. The adequacy of the skills of the administrative staff to their area of responsibility.

Table 10. Studies and lifelong learning (Studies)

Indicator category	STUDIES	
	Criteria: studies that meet the student's needs and career expectations	
	Level	
	Institution	Individual (personal)
Context	1. EAME and EU strategic provisions on studies compiling with the needs of the student (student-centered) studies.	5.1. Description of the Professional Bachelor's degree learning outcomes. 5.2. Descriptions of fields of study.
Contribution	2. Compliance of the University's strategic documents in the field of studies and lifelong learning with EAME and EU documents related to higher education.	6.1. The compliance of the qualifications offered by study programs (including joint programs) with the University's mission and strategic documents, as well as with the descriptions of study outcomes and fields of study. 6.2. A plan of measures to improve the pedagogical qualifications of teachers and to motivate them.
Process	3. Graduate employability and career monitoring system and its use for study improvement.	7. Study program implementation characteristics: Teaching qualifications for teachers Adequacy for the achievement of the learning outcomes; organization of the study process appropriate for the implementation of the programs and the achievement of the learning outcomes; a clear, public system for the assessment of student achievements; cooperation with academic, social and business partners in implementing study programs.
Result	4. Effectiveness in updating and creating new study programs and the qualifications offered.	8. The relevance of graduates' professional activities to the purpose of the study program and study results

Table 11. Study and learning during one's life (Lifelong learning)

Indicator category	LIFELONG LEARNING	
	Criteria: Diversity of programs, formats and choices of study model/pathway	
	Level	
	Institution	Individual (personal)
Context	1.1. EAME and the EU's strategic framework for lifelong learning. 1.2. Higher education legislation and financial instruments of the Republic of Lithuania regulating the implementation of lifelong learning provisions	5. Lithuania's development strategy documents (e.g. Lithuania 2050, sector strategies, etc.)
Contribution	2. Compliance of the University's strategic documents in the field of studies and lifelong learning with EAME and EU documents.	6. The compliance of provided lifelong learning qualifications to the University's mission and strategic documents and to the needs of the state's economic, social and cultural development.
Process	3.1. Arrangements for recognizing prior learning achievements (its flexibility, clarity of criteria and procedures). 3.2. Developing the diversity of forms and conditions for lifelong learning.	7.1. Academic support and careers advice. 7.2. Collaboration with social and business partners to update learning outcomes. 7.3. Crediting of informal and non-formal competences.
Result	4. A variety of learning formats and study model (pathway) options.	8. The relevance of the graduates' professional activities to the objectives and learning outcomes of the learning program.

Table 12. Study and lifelong learning (Studies accessibility)

Indicator category	AVAILABILITY OF STUDIES	
	Criteria: access to study for socially vulnerable groups	
	Level	
	Institution	Individual (personal)
Context	1.1 The concept of the social dimension of higher education policy in EAME documents. 1.2 Concept of socially vulnerable/underrepresented groups in higher education In the higher education documents of the Republic of Lithuania. 1.3 Strategic provisions and/or measures for social support in higher education and social policy documents of the Republic of Lithuania.	5. The situation of socially vulnerable groups in the University.
Contribution	2. Social support measures in the University's documents governing studies and lifelong learning.	6. Specific learning programs for socially vulnerable groups and/or under-represented populations in higher education.
Process	3. Monitoring the academic and socio-economic conditions of studies.	7. The adequacy of social support measures to meet students' needs.
Result	4. Effectiveness of social support measures.	8. Withdrawal from studies due to academic failure and/or social-economic reasons.

Table 13. Studies and lifelong learning (Internationalization)

Indicator category	INTERNATIONALITY	
	Criteria: developing the University's international openness	
	Level	
	Institution	Individual (personal)
Context	1. EAME and EU strategic positions on international openness.	5. National/international exchange and other programs promoting academic society and student mobility; national and international funding instruments.
Contribution	2. Compliance of the University's strategic documents with EAME and EU international openness provisions.	6.1. Study programs in a foreign language. 6.2. Study subjects (modules) taught in foreign languages.
Process	3. Regulation of mobility of lecturers and students in University documents.	7.1. Coverage of participation of lecturers in foreign placements, conferences, projects, etc. 7.2. Student participation in exchanges and other mobility-enhancing programs.
Result	4. The impact of international mobility of lecturers/artists and students - outgoing and incoming - on the University's studies and research activities.	8.1. Increase in the ratio of incoming to outgoing lecturers and in the diversity of study fields. 8.2. Increase in the ratio of incoming to outgoing students and the diversity of study fields.

Table 14. TMTEP and professional art;

Indicator category	TMTEP AND PROFESSIONAL ART;	
	Criteria: applied research on societal sustainable development at the University	
	Level	
	Institution	Individual (personal)
Context	1. European Research Area strategic documents (Horizon 2020, EURASHE, ERA documents).	5. Lithuanian qualifications frameworks 6 level description.
Contribution	2. Compliance with the University's strategic documents (research programs) European Research Area priorities.	6. University procedures for teaching staff TMTEP and artistic activities: conditions (workload, leave, financial instruments) and requirements (certification).
Process	3.1. Cooperation with academic, social and business partners in shaping the University's research programs. 3.2. Participating in international science/art projects.	7. Development of teachers' competences (subject and research): participation in TMTEP and artistic activities, research projects, internships, conferences, exhibitions; doctoral studies.
Result	4. Impact of academic, social and business partners on the University's scientific (artistic) activities.	8. Lecturers' scientific publications and participation in professional art events.

Table 15. Impact on the development of region and the country as a whole

Indicator category	IMPACT ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF REGION AND THE COUNTRY AS A WHOLE	
	Criteria: the University's contribution to the sustainable development of the region and the country	
	Level	
	Institution	Individual (personal)
Context	1. Sustainable development strategic provisions in the UN Global Compact, EU and national strategy documents (e.g., Lithuania 2030, National Sustainable Development Strategy, etc.).	5.1. List of competences for sustainable development*. 5.2. Recommended sustainable development topics list**.
Contribution	2.1. The alignment of the University's mission and strategic provisions with the economic, cultural and social development priorities of the state and/or region. 2.2. The University's sustainable development provisions in strategic and specific activities governing documents.	7. Incorporating sustainable development competences into learning outcomes in study programs.
Process	3. Implementing the Global Compact Principles at the University	8. Sustainable development themes relevant to regional and national development, Inclusion in study subjects/modules, student internships and final theses.
Result	4.1. Effectiveness of implementation of specific measures to influence the sustainable development of society 4.2. Public activity and recognition of academic and administration staff.	9. Diversity and relevance of the social/cultural, economic, technological and environmental innovations proposed by students to the needs of the community, region, state.

* **COMPETENCES FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

Methodological competences ("learning to act" and "learning to learn"):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning in different contexts of reality • Decision-making, including under conditions of uncertainty • Crisis and risk management • Responsible activities • Self-esteem in activities • Activities subject to restrictions • Decisive actions
---	--

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formulating analytical questions/ critical thinking • Understanding complexity/systematic thinking • Overcoming obstacles/problem solving • Change management/problem formulation • Creative thinking/future-oriented thinking • Understanding the interrelationships between subjects/modules / holistic approach
Social competences ("learning to live and work together"):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsible action (locally and globally) • Acting with respect for others • Identification of interested groups (stakeholders) and their interests • Collaboration/teamwork • Participation in democratic decision-making • Negotiation and consensus • Division of responsibilities (subsidiarity)
Personal competences ("learning to be"):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-confidence • Self-expression and communication • Overcoming stress • Ability to recognize and explain values

****RECOMMENDED SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT TOPICS**

- Peace and conflict (international relations, security and conflict resolution, cooperation)
- Ethical principles and their philosophical underpinnings
- Citizenship, democracy and government/governance
- Human rights (equality between genders, ethnic groups, age groups)
- Poverty reduction
- Cultural diversity
- Biodiversity and landscape diversity
- Environmental protection (environmental quality, waste management)
- Ecological principles, ecosystem approach
- Natural resource management/caretaking (water, soil, minerals, forest and other natural resources)
- Climate change
- Personal and family health (healthy lifestyles, AIDS, drug prevention)
- Health aspects related to environmental quality (safe food and drinking water, air quality)
- Socially responsible business
- Production and consumption patterns
- Economic development
- Urban/rural development

UN (2009) Learning from each other: the UNECE Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development, United Nations, New York and Geneva, 2009 - available at: www.unece.org

Table 15. A socially responsible and creative community

Indicator category	A SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE AND CREATIVE COMMUNITY	
	Criteria: effectiveness of the University community	
	Level	
	Institution	Individual (personal)
Context	1. the Law on Science and Studies of the Republic of Lithuania and/or its implementing legislation-determined University management regulation and governance.	5. University Strategy for 2021-2025
Contribution	2.1. The distribution of responsibilities and accountability according to the delegated functions is defined in the Statutes and the statutes of the academic self-government bodies and units. 2.2. Academic ethics provisions and enforcement procedures.	6.3. Identification of responsibilities and accountabilities in staff job descriptions, appropriate to their role in the University's management processes. Plan of measures to develop/motivate staff competences.
Process	3.3. Staff activity efficiency. 3.4. Community participation in socially responsible activities	7. Developing and motivating staff competences.
Result	4.3. The compliance of changes in the structure with the University's strategic objectives for studies, applied research and experimental development, professional artistic activities and participation in society. The rationality (efficiency) of the use of funds, taking into account the priorities of the University.	7.8. The adequacy of the skills of the administrative staff to their area of responsibility. 8. A socially responsible and creative community

4. VILNIUS UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES PROCESS MANAGEMENT

The aim of the University's quality management system is to manage the quality of studies and the processes that affect them, and to create the preconditions for the implementation of the quality assurance policy and the formation of a quality culture at the University.

The University's quality management system is developed based on the values enshrined in the University's mission statement, ESG, best practices of quality management of studies in educational institutions of the European Union countries, the principles of the European Foundation for Quality Management's Model of Excellence, and their adaptation to the needs of the University (satisfaction of students' and staff members' needs, management of the study process' quality, enhancement of the potential of the University's staff members, reliance on facts in decision-making regarding the assurance and improvement of the quality of studies, etc.).

The University's quality management system is managed through a systematic approach. The management of the University, in designing, implementing and improving the quality management system, aims to emphasize its importance to the University, its commitment to understanding and meeting requirements, setting performance indicators and continuous process improvement. The University has identified and assigned responsibilities for the management of all processes. This means that the people in charge of the processes organize the processes to achieve the intended results and make the best use of the available resources.

The University shall develop, implement, improve and promote the performance of the quality management system through a systematic approach and shall aim to maximize the satisfaction of users by meeting their requirements for the services provided. The advantage of a systematic approach to quality management is the continuous improvement in management that this approach provides by applying it to the relationships between the individual processes in the system, as well as to the alignment and interaction of these processes.

Table 17 shows the main internal documents of the University that ensure the implementation of ESG provisions.

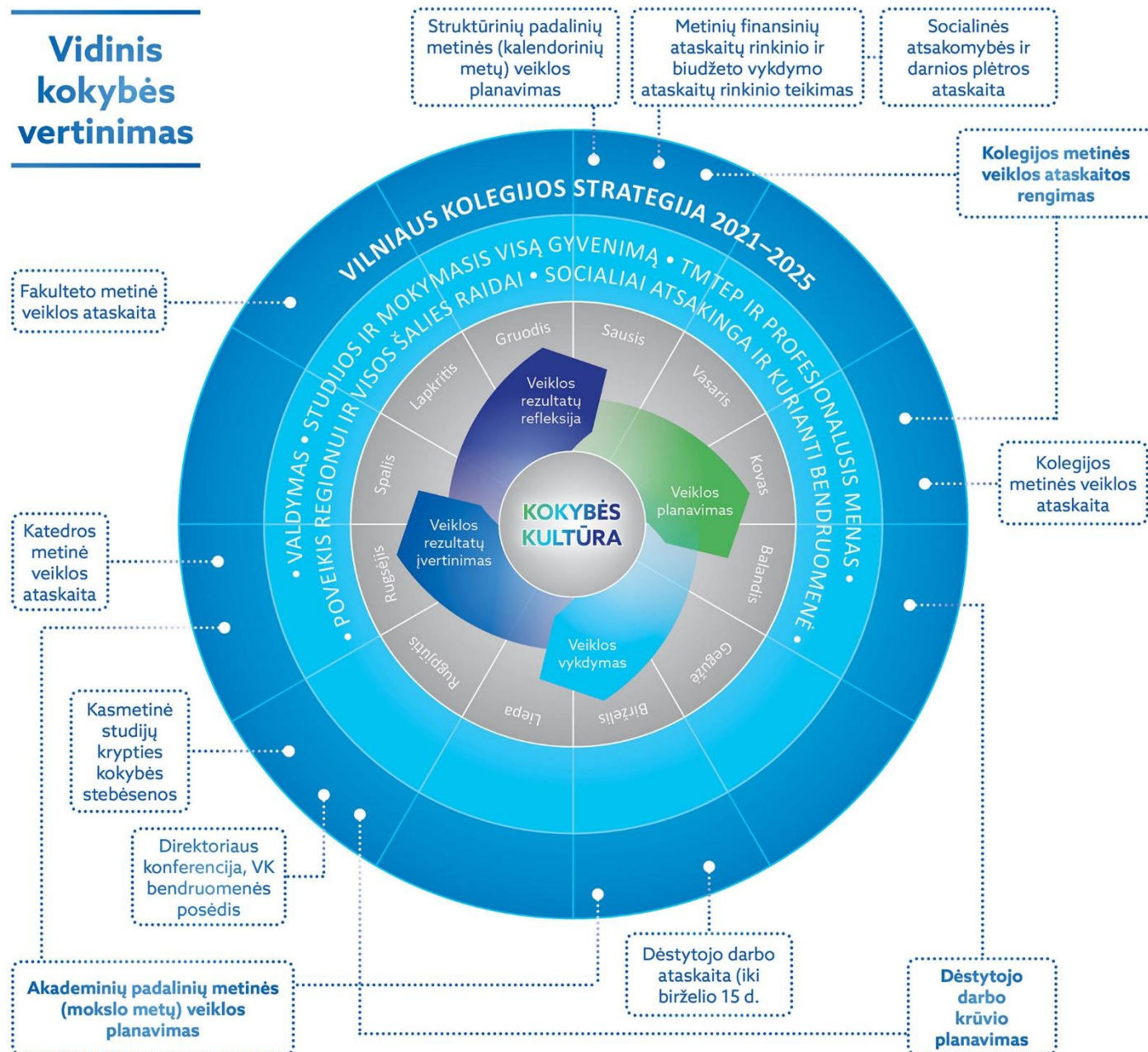
Table 17. Internal University documents to ensure ESG implementation

ESG 2015 provisions	Key internal documents regulating the responsibilities of the participants in the quality management system
1.1. Quality assurance policy Provision: Research and higher education institutions must have a quality assurance policy that is publicly available and forms part of the institution's strategic management.	Statutes; Quality manual; Description of the internal quality assurance procedures for study fields; Description of procedures for internal quality assessment of performance; Procedures for informing the public on quality issues.

<p>The internal stakeholders of the higher education institution should develop and implement this policy through appropriate structures and processes, involving external stakeholders.</p>	<p>Description of the feedback procedure for improving the quality of studies; Regulations of the Study committees</p>
<p>1.2. Development and approval of study programs Provision: Research and higher education institutions should have processes for developing and approving curricula. Study programs must be designed to meet the objectives set, including the intended learning outcomes. The qualification awarded on successful completion of a study program must be clearly defined and communicated, and linked to the appropriate level of the National framework of qualifications for higher education and the European qualifications framework for higher education.</p>	<p>Study programs manual; Description of the internal quality assurance procedures for study fields.</p>
<p>1.3. Student-centered learning, teaching and assessment Provision: Research and higher education institutions should ensure that study programs are implemented in a way that encourages students to take an active role in the study process, and that student assessment reflects this approach</p>	<p>Study arrangements; Description of the procedure for the assessment of learning outcomes; Description of the procedure for organizing student placements; Description of the Procedure for the preparation and defense of final theses (projects); Description of the procedures for organizing Erasmus+ student mobility. Code of Academic ethics</p>
<p>1.4. Student admissions, progress, recognition and diplomas Provision: Research and higher education institutions should consistently apply pre-defined and publicly available rules covering the whole cycle of studies, such as admissions, progression, recognition and awarding of diplomas.</p>	<p>Rules for admission of students to Vilnius University of Applied Sciences; Rules for academic recognition of education and qualifications related to higher education and acquired under educational programs of foreign countries and international organizations for applicants to Vilnius University of Applied Sciences; Description of the procedure for changing the study program and the form of study while maintaining state funding; Description of the procedure for crediting partial study results; Description of the procedure for studying according to an individual study timetable; Description of procedures for the recognition of competences acquired through formal education; Description of the procedure for the assessment and recognition at Vilnius University of Applied Sciences of learning achievements acquired through non-formal self-learning. Mixed and distance learning at Vilnius University of Applied Sciences Vilnius University of Applied Sciences appeals regulations</p>
<p>1.5. Lecturers Research and higher education institutions need to be confident in the competence of their lecturers. They should use fair and transparent processes for recruiting and developing teachers.</p>	<p>Rules of Procedure; Description of the procedure for employment and termination of employment; Job descriptions; Description of the procedure for competitions for teaching posts and certification of teaching staff; Description of the procedure for establishing and accounting for the full-time workload of lecturers at Vilnius University of Applied Sciences; Description of the procedures for the preparation and evaluation of the lecturer's performance report; Description of the procedure for the development of staff competences Description of the procedures for organizing Erasmus+ program staff mobility for teaching;</p>

	<p>Description of the procedures for organizing Erasmus+ student mobility.</p> <p>Code of Academic ethics</p> <p>Description of the terms and conditions of bonuses and incentives for lecturers, administrative and other staff of Vilnius University of Applied Sciences</p>
<p>1.6. Study resources and student support</p> <p>Provision:</p> <p>Research and higher education institutions must have adequate funding for teaching and learning activities and ensure the provision of adequate and easily accessible learning resources and student support.</p>	<p>Regulations of Vilnius University of Applied Sciences scholarships and grants;</p> <p>Description of the procedure for setting and paying student fees;</p> <p>Description of the procedure for the administration of reimbursement of tuition fees;</p> <p>Description of the procedure for changing the nature of funding for studies;</p> <p>Description of the procedure for the repayment of funds to the state budget</p> <p>Regulations for dormitories</p>
<p>1.7. Information management</p> <p>Provision:</p> <p>Research and higher education institutions need to ensure that they collect, analyses and use relevant information to support the effective management of study programs and other activities.</p>	<p>The Vilnius University of Applied Sciences collects, organizes and analyses information for the effective management of study and operational processes in DVS, AIS, DDB, Teams, Moodle, etc.</p> <p>Description of the procedure for processing personal data at Vilnius University of Applied Sciences</p>
<p>1.8. Public information</p> <p>Provision:</p> <p>Research and higher education institutions must publish clear, accurate, impartial, up-to-date and easily accessible information on their activities, including their study programs.</p>	<p>Description of procedure for informing the public on quality issues</p> <p>Description of procedures for the email service</p> <p>Rules for the submission of news to the website of the Vilnius University</p> <p>Description of procedures for communicating with and providing information to the media</p>
<p>1.9. Continuous monitoring and periodic evaluation of study programs</p> <p>Provision:</p> <p>Research and higher education institutions need to monitor and regularly evaluate their study programs to ensure that the objectives are being met and that the needs of students and society are being met. These evaluations should contribute to the continuous improvement of study programs. Any action planned or already taken following the assessment should be communicated to all stakeholders.</p>	<p>Description of the internal quality assurance procedures for study fields.</p> <p>Description of procedure for internal quality assessment of performance;</p>
<p>1.10. Periodic external quality assurance</p> <p>Provision:</p> <p>The higher education institutions are required to participate periodically in external quality assurance procedures in line with ESG.</p>	<p>Use of evaluation results to improve the functioning of the Vilnius University- plans are drawn up for the implementation of recommendations</p> <p>Description of the internal quality assurance procedures for study fields;</p> <p>Description of procedures for internal quality assessment of performance.</p>

Vidinis kokybės vertinimas



Legend (clockwise, top to bottom)

Internal quality assessment

Structural unit annual (calendar year) activity planning; Annual financial accountancy and budget implementation accountancy set submission; Social responsibility and sustainable development accountancy; University **annual activity report preparation**; University annual activity report; **Lecturer's workload planning**; Lecturer's work report (up to 15 June); **Academic unit annual (study year) activity planning**; Director's conference, University community meeting; Annual study direction quality monitoring; Department's annual activity report; Faculty annual activity report.

VILNIUS UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES STRATEGY FOR 2021-2025

MANAGEMENT; LIFE-LONG STUDIES AND LEARNING; TMTEP AND PROFESSIONAL ART; EFFECT ON THE DEVELOPEMTN OF THE REGION AND WHOLE COUNTRY; SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE AND CREATIVE COMMUNITY.

January, February, March, April, May, June, July, August, September, October, November, December

Activity implementation, Lecturers and SAP, Reflection on activity results, Activity planning,
QUALITY CULTURE