

APPROVED
by Resolution No. AT N – 8
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of the Academic Council of Vilniaus Kolegija

THE DESCRIPTION OF THE PROCEDURE FOR ORGANISING AND CONDUCTING BLENDED AND DISTANCE STUDIES AT VILNIAUS KOLEGIJA/HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION

CHAPTER I GENERAL PROVISIONS

1. The Description for the Procedure for Organising and Conducting Blended and Distance Studies at Vilniaus Kolegija/Higher Education Institution (hereinafter – the Kolegija) (hereinafter – the Description) defines the organisation and conducting of blended and distance studies, the procedure of e-subject (module) preparation and attestation, and the duties and responsibilities of the lecturers and students.

2. Key terms used in the Description:

- 2.1. **Asynchronous teaching (learning)** – student work under the guidance of a lecturer, where teaching and learning take place at different times and different places, and the use of information and communication technologies creates a learning environment and ensures the teaching and learning processes.
- 2.2. **Electronic subject (module)** (hereinafter – the E-subject (module)) – learning materials, learning activities, communication, assessment and monitoring tools for a study subject (module) presented in a virtual learning environment.
- 2.3. **Attestation of the E-subject (module)** – a procedure confirming the suitability of the learning materials of a study subject (module) presented in a virtual learning environment for blended and distance learning.
- 2.4. **Author of the E-subject (module)** – a person who developed the E-subject (module) in accordance with the requirements for the E-subject (module). The E-subject (module) may be developed and taught by several lecturers.
- 2.5. **Digital teaching (learning) tools** – software tools that can automate execution of learning functions (video conferencing software for communication, tools for creation of assignments, tests, etc.).
- 2.6. **Synchronous digital teaching (learning)** – lectures, workshops, assessments carried out with the direct participation of lecturers and students at the time specified in the study timetable, using video conferencing software.
- 2.7. **Hybrid study mode** – a method of organising studies when different teaching approaches are combined simultaneously, where students from the same group or field of study communicate and cooperate in different environments at the same time (some in a physical environment and others in a virtual environment).

- 2.8. **Contact work** – a student’s activity (lectures, practical training, presentations of assignments) under the direct supervision of a lecturer at the time scheduled in the timetable of studies.
- 2.9. **Blended Learning** – studies when contact work is carried out by combining physical and virtual environments, where synchronous digital teaching (learning) and asynchronous teaching (learning) form at least 25% and no more than 75% of the total scope of the study programme, and where the subjects (modules) are prepared and adapted for use in accordance with the procedure of the Description.
- 2.10. **Distance Learning** – learning where contact work is carried out by combining physical and virtual environments, digital synchronous teaching (learning) makes up at least 10% and no more than 30% of the total scope of the full-time learning and the subjects (modules) studied are prepared and adapted for use in accordance with the procedure of the Description.
- 2.11. **Virtual Learning Environment** (hereinafter – the VLE) is an information system of learning content, learning process management, student support, feedback, and communication tools for participants of the learning process.
- 2.12. Other terms used in the Description are defined in the Statute of Vilniaus Kolegija and other legal acts of the Kolegija.

CHAPTER II

ORGANISING AND CONDUCTING BLENDED AND DISTANCE STUDIES

3. Planning and accounting of contact work in classrooms, distance contact and non-contact work hours are regulated by the Description of the procedure for Establishment and Accounting of Full-time Workload of the Teaching Staff of Vilniaus Kolegija.
4. Contact work and examination sessions for blended and distance studies are carried out in accordance with the timetable approved by the Deans of the Faculties at the Kolegija:
 - 4.1. Blended learning classes scheduled in the timetable may be conducted in contact in classrooms, via video conferencing, or in a hybrid way.
 - 4.2. Distance learning classes scheduled in the timetable are conducted via video conferencing. If, due to the technical difficulties, the lecturer is unable to conduct the assessment at the scheduled time, the assessment is conducted at another time agreed upon with the students and the administration of the Faculty.
5. Asynchronous contact work for blended and distance learning shall be carried out in accordance with the activities and deadlines specified by the lecturer of the VLE.
6. When conducting blended and distance learning, the E-subjects (modules) must be attested, except for practical training and final thesis of subjects (modules).
7. Organisation and implementation of assessments:
 - 7.1. When conducting blended learning, in agreement with the administration of the Faculty, assessments may be organised using electronic synchronous teaching (learning) tools.
 - 7.2. When conducting distance learning, assessments are organised in VLE using synchronous digital teaching (learning) tools.
 - 7.3. When conducting video conferencing assessments, students must turn on cameras and microphones. At a lecturer’s request, students must provide their student ID card or any other document confirming their identity.

- 7.4. An oral assessment conducted by video conferencing must be recorded. At the end of the semester in which the subject (module) was taught, the recordings are stored by the lecturer for a year.
8. Defense of the graduation thesis:
 - 8.1. Students must come to defend their graduation thesis in front of the Defense Committee.
 - 8.2. In exceptional cases, when a student is unable to attend the defense of the final thesis for valid reasons, they have the right to request the Dean of the Faculty that organises the studies to allow the thesis to be defended via a video conference at least 3 working days before the defense of the final thesis.

CHAPTER III

PREPARATION AND ATTESTATION OF THE E-SUBJECT (MODULE)

9. Preparation of the E-subject (module)
 - 9.1. The lecturer plans the preparation and/or updating of the E-subject (module) as well as its submission for attestation in the lecturer's full-time workload accounting card, in accordance with the Vilniaus Kolegija's Procedure for the Establishment and Accounting of Full-time Workload of the Teaching Staff.
 - 9.2. The E-subject (module) is prepared in accordance with the requirements set out in Annex 1 to the Description.
 - 9.3. The E-subject (module) is prepared and implemented using the following technologies: the VLE, video conferences, live broadcasts and recordings of lectures, and other digital teaching (learning) tools.
 - 9.4. The author(s) of the E-subject (module) are responsible for the content of the E-subject (module) in terms of the subject matter, the quality of the E-subject (module), linguistic correctness and compliance with legislation governing copyright.
 - 9.5. The lecturer submits material prepared in a language other than Lithuanian for blended and distance learning at the VLE to the Foreign Language Centre (hereinafter – the FLC), which assesses the linguistic quality of the material. Once the FLC has approved the language (spelling) of the E-subject (module), it is submitted to the Attestation Commission.
10. Subject (module) Attestation Commission
 - 10.1. the prepared E-subjects (modules) are attested by a 5-member E-subject (module) Attestation Commission (hereinafter – the Commission), approved by the Order of the Rector of the Kolegija upon the recommendation of the Deans of the Faculties. The Digital Studies Manager from the Study Council is appointed as the Secretary of the Commission.
 - 10.2. The Commission's meetings shall be convened by the Chair of the Commission within 5 working days of the date of receiving of the E-subject (module) self-assessment form (Annex 2).
 - 10.3. If a member of the Commission is a developer of the E-subject (module), they cannot assess the E-subject (module) that they have developed.
 - 10.4. The Commission meetings are held at least twice per academic year (at the end of the autumn and spring semesters) or as needed. Meetings online may also be held.
 - 10.5. The Commission meeting is considered valid if more than half of all the Commission members are present.

11. All documents required for the attestation of the E-subject (module) must be submitted by email blended@viko.lt:
 - 11.1. The established form for self-assessment of the E-subject (module) is Annex 2;
 - 11.2. The description of the study subject (module) is approved by the Study Programme or Study Field Committee.
12. The attestation of the E-subject (module)
 - 12.1. If the E-subject (module) is taught in the spring semester, it must be submitted for certification no later than the first week of December. If the E-subject (module) is taught in the autumn semester, it must be submitted for certification no later than the first week of May. A new E-subject (module) may be prepared for the attestation while the subject (module) is being taught and must be certified by the end of the semester;
 - 12.2. During attestation, the E-subject (module) is assessed according to all the requirements for the preparation of e-subjects (modules) set out in Annex 1 to the Description;
 - 12.3. The Commission evaluates the submitted material in terms of the preparation of the E-subject (module) for VLE and its compliance with the requirements for blended and distance learning and has the right to ask the lecturer to demonstrate this material. The Commission may call upon specialists in the relevant field if additional assessment of the quality of the content of the E-subject (module) is required.
 - 12.4. The assessment must be carried out no later than one month from the date of receipt of the E-subject (module) self-assessment form (Annex 2).
 - 12.5. Having assessed the submitted material, the final decision shall be taken by a simple majority vote at the meeting of the Commission. The Commission shall take one of the following decisions:
 - 12.5.1. to attest – recognise the E-subject (module) as suitable for blended and distance learning when it meets all the requirements set out in Annex 1 to the Description;
 - 12.5.2. not to attest – to recognise the E-subject (module) as unsuitable for blended and distance learning if at least one of the requirements set out in Annex 1 to the Description is not met.
 - 12.6. The Commission shall provide the author(s) of the E-subject (module) with an excerpt from the minutes of the Commission meeting by e-mail within 5 working days after the Commission meeting.
 - 12.7. The attested E-subject (module) shall be included in the electronic catalogue of attested E-subjects (modules) and shall be marked accordingly.
 - 12.8. If the E-subject (module) is not attested, the author of the E-subject (module) may, within two months of the date of the Commission's decision, correct the deficiencies indicated by the Commission by completing the form prepared by the Commission and sending it by e-mail to blended@viko.lt. The re-assessment must be carried out no later than one month from the date of submission of the E-subject (module) for re-assessment.
 - 12.9. The attested E-subject (module) must be re-attested after the Study Programme Committee has approved the updated subject (module) description, when more than 5% of the subject (module) content changes in the newly approved subject (module) description.
13. If the department determines that the study material of the attested E-subject (module) does not meet the requirements of the subject (module) description, it may apply to the Commission for the attestation of the E-subject (module) to be revoked.

CHAPTER IV**DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF LECTURERS AND STUDENTS**

14. Duties and responsibilities of lecturers:
 - 14.1. to comply with the planned allocation of lecturer's workload and the approved study timetable;
 - 14.2. to prepare subject (module) materials for blended and distance learning in the VLE in accordance with the requirements set out in Annex 1 to the Description and submit them for attestation;
 - 14.3. when starting to teach a subject, to provide students with all the necessary information regarding logging into the VLE of the E-subject (module) by e-mail;
 - 14.4. when starting to teach a subject, to familiarise students with the subject (module) description: to present the subject (module) goal, expected study outcomes as well as the procedure and criteria for assessing the study outcomes;
 - 14.5. to warn students before recording;
 - 14.6. to use video conferencing equipment when teaching classes online in a synchronous way. The lecturer's video camera may be turned off during the demonstration of the video material;
 - 14.7. to encourage active learning among students and help them use independent study tools;
 - 14.8. to provide assignment deadlines no later than one week before the scheduled deadline;
 - 14.9. to check and evaluate the tasks completed by students, prepare comments, and, in accordance with personal data protection requirements, publish evaluations no later than within five working days, excluding the day of submission;
 - 14.10. to comply with the provisions of the Kolegija's Code of Academic Ethics.
15. Duties and responsibilities of students:
 - 15.1. to ensure compliance with the technological, technical and software requirements necessary for studies;
 - 15.2. to use the provided E-subject (module) learning material (text, video and audio material, broadcasts of the classes and their recordings) for studying purposes only. These materials may not be published, reproduced or otherwise transferred to the third parties without the author's consent;
 - 15.3. to attend the classes and assessments specified in the study timetable and complete other tasks assigned by the lecturer on time;
 - 15.4. during video conferencing classes, to turn on the video camera and microphone at the request of the lecturer;
 - 15.5. to keep the individual login details provided for all Kolegija's information systems safe;
 - 15.6. to comply with the provisions of the Kolegija's Code of Academic Ethics.

CHAPTER V**FINAL PROVISIONS**

16. The study materials of the subjects (modules) submitted to the Kolegija's VLE may only be used for the purposes of the studies at the Kolegija.
 17. The attested E-subjects (modules) are the property of the Kolegija.
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