



## **WORKING PROPOSAL OF THE METHODOLOGY FOR STANDARD EVALUATION**

Submitted for the second round of consultations before the preparation of the final document.

The text is not approved by the Agency's Executive Board.

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## **Part I. Introduction**

### **Article 1 Introductory provisions**

1. The Slovak Accreditation Agency for Higher Education (hereinafter referred to as the Agency) issues the Methodology for the Standard Evaluation following Sec. 4, para. 2 letter e) of Act no. 269/2018 Coll. on Quality Assurance in Higher Education and on Amendments to Act No. 343/2015 Coll. on Public Procurement and on Amendments to Certain Acts, as amended (hereinafter referred to as the Quality Assurance Act).
2. The methodology is in the sense of Sec. 2 letter d) a set of procedures, criteria, and indicators through which the Agency's Executive Board working group and the Agency's staff evaluate the compliance with the standards and measures to ensure compliance with the standards.
3. Standards mean applicable Standards for the Internal Quality Assurance System for Higher Education (hereinafter the Standards for the Internal System), the Standards for the Study Programme and the Standards for the Habilitation Procedure and the Procedure for Appointment of Professors (hereinafter the Standards for Habilitation Procedure and Inaugural Procedure) issued by the Agency.
4. Expert working group means the working group of the Agency's Executive Board following Sec. 8 of the Quality Assurance Act.
5. Verification of compliance with the Standards for the Internal System can be considered as an external part of quality assurance in higher education in the sense of the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG 2015).
6. The procedures set out in this methodology shall be applied *mutatis mutandis* depending on the type and nature of the procedures.
7. Activities in procedures under the Quality Assurance Act are regulated by separate follow-up regulations and guidelines of the Agency.

## **Part II.**

### **Procedures for Standard Evaluation**

#### **Article 2**

##### **Framework for the expert working group**

1. The expert working group and the staff of the Agency shall evaluate compliance with the standards and remedies by an expert assessment of:
  - a) documents,
  - b) information obtained by visiting the higher education institution,
  - c) available data; and
  - d) stakeholder consultation.
2. Working group in the process of evaluating compliance with standards and remedies searches for and records facts proving the compliance or non-compliance with standards by the higher education institution (evidence) and facts providing sufficient assurance that the higher education institution complies with them. These records are part of the documentation, which is then evaluated.
3. In the course of its work, the working group may request additional information, documents, or evidence, or request access to documentation, other information sources, access to written parts of the verification of learning outcomes, final theses of students, request a meeting with stakeholders etc..
4. The activities of the working group shall be managed by its chair in cooperation with the second staff member of the Agency.

#### **Article 3**

##### **Expert assessment of supporting documents and consideration of available data and information**

1. The working group shall start its work by examining the application and the supporting documents for the application.
2. Evidence of the compliance of the internal system (on the set of rules; policies, structures, and processes) shall be identified by the Agency's working group or staff, in particular in the application dossier and in the valid internal regulations of the institution published on its website.
3. The Agency's working group or staff shall take into account the self-assessment of compliance individual standards by the institution and references to the relevant evidence (in particular procedures, records, systems, list and characteristics of premises, databases, etc.) in the application dossier, in particular in the internal evaluation report.
4. The institution shall provide specific evidence to the working group or staff of the Agency as a reference to publicly available electronic documents, or as an annex or physically during the on-site assessment. The working group will take this fact into account in the timetable in the on-site assessment.
5. The working group, in cooperation with the Agency's authorized staff, shall verify the relevant information in the registers, in particular the central register of students, the register of university staff, the central register of final theses, rigorous theses and habilitation theses, the central register of records of publishing activities, the central register of records of artistic activity,

registers of study fields and registers of study programmes, where appropriate, supplement the necessary information.

6. The working group and the staff of the Agency may, in addition to the background information, search for and supplement other available data and information relevant to the procedures in question.
7. Evidence of compliance of the implementation of the internal system with the standards shall be verified by the working group or staff of the Agency, in particular in the records of the institution, by the university visit, in interviews with stakeholder representatives, and other procedures.
8. The level of creative activities for individual areas of evaluation of the level of creative activities (study programmes, habilitation procedures and inaugural procedures) are evaluated by designated members of the working group based on the university's documents and other available information according to the Evaluation methodology of creative activities (Part V).

#### **Article 4**

##### **Higher education institution visit on-site and stakeholder consultation**

1. Following the findings from the expert assessment, taking into account available data information, the working group in cooperation with the staff of the Agency and representatives of the institution draw up an **on-site assessment plan for the institution visit**<sup>1</sup>.
2. The on-site assessment plan aims to ensure the effectiveness of the institution visit, in particular agreement on the interaction between the institution and the working group in the assessment. The Chair of the working group may, in justified cases, adjust the plan during the on-site assessment.
3. The on-site assessment plan shall, as a general rule, include:
  - a) the subject and extent of the assessment,
  - b) time and material schedule of activities of the members of the working group,
  - c) participants of the on-site assessment from the institution as a party to the procedures and other stakeholders.
4. On-site assessment at workplaces implementing study programmes is carried out by the working group mainly during the period of implementation of educational activities.
5. The on-site assessment shall normally consist of:
  - a) an opening meeting with representatives of the institution and the workplace of the institution, including the management,
  - b) gathering information and evidence,
  - c) summaries of findings; and
  - d) a final meeting with representatives of the institution and the workplace of the institution, including management.
6. During the on-site assessment, the institution shall cooperate with the working group following the On-Site Assessment Plan, in particular by ensuring:
  - a) the presence of representatives
    - workplace management,
    - persons responsible for internal system processes,
    - persons responsible for the quality of study programmes and the habilitation procedure and inaugural procedures,
    - teachers,
    - students,

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<sup>1</sup> Time and material programme of the activities of the working group, the applicant 's representatives and the stakeholders' representatives during the assessment at a specific workplace of the institution.

- supporting staff,
  - persons representing external stakeholders, in particular graduates, employers, practice partners and
  - other participants in the assessment as planned.
- b) access of members of the working group to the premises of the workplace,
  - c) access to institution records, including files of students, staff, researchers, artists, and records of education,
  - d) access to information systems and databases,
  - e) possible participation of the members of the working group in the ongoing educational activities of the institution,
  - f) making available or inspecting the written parts of the verification of knowledge (examinations), assignments and elaboration of final theses, etc.,
  - g) suitable premises for the work of the working group and the conduct of interviews with participants in the assessment,
  - h) accompanying persons of the working group.
7. The working group may also hold other informal and formal interviews with stakeholders.
  8. If the institution does not provide the necessary cooperation to the working group or staff of the Agency under the previous paragraph, the Agency will consider this a breach of the obligation under Sec. 20 par. 1 letter e) of the Act on Higher Education Institutions and will take this fact into account when evaluating compliance of standards.
  9. When gathering information and evidence, the working group may not provide the institution-specific solutions or advice. Recommendations related to the findings can be formulated by the group after the assessment of the workplace in the evaluation report.
  10. The members of the working group shall keep records of findings and evidence on an ongoing basis.
  11. After completing all the on-site assessment tasks, the working group shall hold a final meeting, at which the members of the working group shall evaluate the findings and records of the assessment. They focus mainly on summarizing good practice and identifying workplace non-compliance and related evidence.
  12. In addition to the representatives of the institution management and the institution workplace, the following usually participate in the final meeting of the working group with the institution:
    - a. persons responsible for the internal system of the institution,
    - b. persons responsible for individual work processes and study programmes, and
    - c. student representative in the workplace.
  13. At the final meeting, the chair of the working group will normally
    - d. summarize the procedure and the outcome of the assessment,
    - e. briefly presents the findings of compliance in the category of good practice,
    - f. informs of non-compliance findings,
    - g. provide space for the opinion of the workplace representatives and confirmation of the **understanding of the findings**,
    - h. informs about the next procedure and deadlines,
    - i. if necessary, request copies of records proving significant findings of the working group.
  14. Upon completion of the on-site visit, the working group will prepare a **partial report assessment**, stating, in particular, the composition of the working group, the actual extent of the on-site assessment, the actual extent of the on-site assessment, and sampling procedures, if any, list of interviews and list interviewees, the premises inspected, the facilities and sources of information, records and evidence demonstrating the outcome of the assessment, propose measures

regarding the extent of the assessment entrusted to the workplace recommendations to the workplace.

## **Article 5**

### **Collection of information and evidence**

1. The expert working group shall collect information and evidence in particular:
  - a) examining of files, records, and information of the workplace,
  - b) examining the work of students (semester, year projects, final thesis) and their assignments,
  - c) examining the written parts of the verification of learning outcomes (examinations)
  - d) inspection of premises and equipment,
  - e) verification of spatial, material, technical, instrumental, laboratory, and information equipment of the workplace,
  - f) observing the activities and processes of the institution,
  - g) interviews depending on the type of procedures,
  - h) moderated by a discussion,
  - i) informal interviews.
2. The working group **shall verify the fact declared by the institution by conducting independent interviews in particular:**
  - a) with the rector and members of the institution management,
  - b) with the persons responsible for the internal system,
  - c) representatives of the structures responsible for the assessment and approval of study programmes,
  - d) persons responsible for the design, implementation, monitoring, evaluation of study programmes,
  - e) teachers of profile subjects of study programmes,
  - f) with teachers,
  - g) persons providing the habilitation procedure and inaugural procedure,
  - h) supporting staff;
  - i) with student representatives;
  - j) with students;
  - k) with representatives of practice – partners of study programmes;
  - l) with representatives of practice;
  - m) with graduates.

## **Article 6**

### **The extent of verification and sampling**

1. If the extent of the documentation or facts of the same nature to be verified is too large and a smaller extent of verification is sufficient to ensure the compliance with the standards, the Agency's working group or staff may review only part of the sample of relevant documentation, records, students, or others facts. However, it must be ensured that the results provide the most realistic picture possible of compliance with the standards or policies of the internal system of the institution.
2. The working group shall select samples from the full range of records examined, including borderline occurrences (e.g students with average, best and worst grades).
3. The working group shall record the method – sampling method (multiple, random selection, etc.), which it shall verify and record the samples it has selected.
4. In case of finding a deficiency, resp. non-compliance, the members of the working group shall adjust the sampling and examine whether:

- a) it is an individual failure or a recurring systemic failure,
  - b) the identified deficiency has or does not have an impact on the quality and outcomes of the training.
5. To increase the efficiency of assessment and reduce the burden of assessment in the institution related to on-site assessment, it is possible to apply sampling of study programmes in one field of study and degree of education at one workplace. A sampling of study programmes is determined by the Agency<sup>2</sup>.

## Article 7

### Processing of the Evaluation Report

1. After the completion of the on-site assessment at all workplaces of the higher education institution, the Chair of the working group and other members of the working group shall summarize the findings of the partial assessment reports and process the evaluation report.
2. The working group shall indicate in the evaluation report in particular:
  - a. the facts on which its conclusions were based,
  - b. the procedure for evaluating these documents,
  - c. evaluation of the level of compliance of each standard,
  - d. identified deficiencies,
  - e. recommendations for the party to the procedure,
  - f. the proposal of decision or opinion of the Agency; and
  - g. names and surnames of the members of the working group.
3. The Chair of the working group shall submit the working group's evaluation report to the Agency at the discussion on the Agency's Executive Board.

## Article 8

### Evaluation of compliance with the Standards for the Internal System

1. The members of the working group shall, based on the evidence examined and the findings gathered during the assessment, determine the degree of compliance of each Criterion for the Evaluation of Standards for the internal system using the Internal System Standards Compliance Scale, which takes the values A to D, or NA:
  - a) **value A** – based on the submitted evidence, compliance with the stated criterion of the standard was determined, which is an example of good practice for other institutions.
  - b) **value B** – based on the submitted evidence, compliance with the stated criterion of the standard was determined
  - c) **value C** – based on the submitted evidence, non-compliance with the stated criterion of the standard was found, the identified deficiency does not harm learning outcomes and its removal can be ensured within six months.
  - d) **value D** – based on the submitted evidence, non-compliance with the stated criterion of the standard was found and there is no presumption of removal of the identified within six months.**Value NA** – the given criterion is not assessed in the conditions of the institution.
2. In assessing the compliance of the implementation of the internal system of the institution with the Standards for Internal System the working group shall assess the compliance of the implemented study programmes with Standards for the Study Programme and meeting the requirements of the Standards for the Habilitation Procedure and Inaugural Procedures.
3. The evaluation of the compliance of the implemented study programmes in individual fields and degrees of higher education is carried out by selected members of the working group using the

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<sup>2</sup> Sampling of study programmes is not subject to verification of the criteria of SP 5 Teachers and SP 6 Creative activity and the criteria of SP 11 Periodic monitoring, periodic review and periodic approval of the study programme.



**Criteria for assessing the compliance of study programmes with the Standards for the Study Programme – SP Criteria and Scales for determining the compliance of implemented study programme and granting the right to design, implement and modify study programmes in the field and degree of the study programme (Article 13).**

4. The compliance of Standards for Habilitation Procedure and Inaugural Procedure<sup>3</sup> assessed by working members groups using the **Criteria for assessing the compliance with the Standards for the Habilitation Procedure and Inaugural Procedure – HI Criteria and Scales for determining the degree of compliance with the Standards for Habilitation Procedure and Inaugural Procedure** (Article 14).
5. Based on such a comprehensive assessment of the internal system, the working group in the Evaluation Report shall propose to the Executive Board a decision on the compliance of the internal system of higher education institution with Standards for the Internal System according to Sec. 25 para. 1 of the Quality Assurance Act and granting the right to design, implement, and modify study programmes in fields and degrees according to institution requests.
6. If the internal system or its implementation does not comply with the Standards for the Internal System, the working group shall also propose to the Executive Board the imposition of **corrective measures** under Sec. 25 para. 2 of the Quality Assurance Act. The working group may propose the imposition of several remedies at the same time.
7. **The compliance of the internal system** may be established by the working group if each criterion is assessed by each member of the working group responsible for its assessment with A or B performance rate indicator or has acquired an NA value.
8. The Working group proposes **the granting of the right to design, implement and modify study programmes in the field and degree** if the designated members of the working group in the fields and degrees of the performed study assessed all SP criteria at level **A or B** and at the same time was the compliance of the internal system according to paragraph 7.
9. If the working group finds a non-compliance, i.e. some IS criterion, or SP criterion is assessed at level **C or D** also proposes a corrective measure according to Sec. 25, par. 2:
  - a) The working group shall propose **a Regulation to eliminate deficiencies** if the compliance of some IS criterion was assessed at **level C**.
  - b) The working group shall propose **a Suspension to implement the study programme** if the compliance of some SP criterion was assessed at **level C or D**.
  - c) The working group shall propose **a Restriction to design and modify study programmes in the field and degree of study** if the compliance of some SP criterion was assessed at **level D**, or a **Restriction to design and modify study programmes in field and degree of study** if some IS criterion was assessed at **level D**.
10. The working group proposes to initiate procedures to withdraw the accreditation of the habilitation procedure and inaugural procedure under Sec. 32 of the Quality Assurance Act if some of the HI criteria were assessed at level C.

## Article 9

### Evaluation of compliance with the Standards for the Study Programme

1. The working groups of the Agency shall, following Sec. 30 of the Quality Assurance Act, assess the study programme in:
  - a) the assessment of the application for granting accreditation of the study programme and the granting the right carry out the study programme according to Sec. 30 para. 1 of the Quality Assurance Act.
  - b) the approval of the modifications of the study programme according to § 30 par. 9 of the Quality Assurance Act.

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<sup>3</sup> Standards for the Internal Quality Assurance System of Higher Education, Article 2, paragraph 7.

- c) the assessment of the compliance of implementing the study programme and the granting of rights to modify the study programme and to design study programmes in the field and degree of study after two years from the date of regular completion of the first student of the study programme, but not before the expiration standard length of study from the validity of the Agency's decision to grant accreditation study programme according to Sec 30 par. 11 of the Quality Assurance Act.
2. When assessing the application for accreditation of the study programme and the application for modification of the study programme, the working group shall assess the compliance of the facts stated in the application and the application documents with the Standards for the Study Programme and during the on-site assessment the preconditions of the workplace for the implementation of the study programme following the application. In case of a request for a modification of the study programme, the need and extent of the on-site assessment depend on the type and the extent of the required modification.
  3. In assessing the application for accreditation of the study programme and in approving modifications of the study programme, the members of the working group shall assess the individual **Criteria for evaluating the compliance of the Standards for the Study Programme – SP criteria** using the **Scale for determining the degree of compliance with the Standards for the Study Programme and the granting of the right to carry out a study programme**, which may take the value of A to D, or NA:
    - a) **Value A** – in the submitted application and examination of the applicant's assumptions was found meeting the given criterion of the standard, which is an example of good practice for other institutions.
    - b) **Value B** – in the submitted application and examination of the applicant's assumptions was found compliance of the given standard criterion.
    - c) **Value C** – in the submitted application and examination of the applicant's assumptions was found non-compliance with a given standard criterion.
    - d) **Value NA** – the given criterion is not assessed in the conditions of the study programme.
  4. Based on the findings of the assessment of the study programme, the working group shall propose:
    - a) granting accreditation of the study programme and granting the right to implement the study programme, or consent to the modification of the study programme if each SP criterion is a working member group responsible for its assessment, assessed at **level A or B**.
    - b) rejection of an application for accreditation for non-compliance with the Standards for the Study Programme if is some SP criterion by the members of the working group assessed at **level C**. Or proposes rejection of the application for modification of the study programme.
  5. In assessing the compliance of the implementation of the study programme and granting the rights to modify the study programme and design the study programmes in the field and degree, the compliance of documents and information about the implemented study programme with the Standards for the Study Programme and compliance with the application for accreditation of the study programme is assessed based on the evidence (mainly Reports on the periodic review of the study programme) and data of registers according to Sec. 18 par. 4. of the Quality Assurance Act. During the on-site assessment, the working group focuses in particular on verifying the compliance of the implementation of the study programme with the application and the compliance of the learning outcomes (results) of the graduates of the relevant study programme with the learning outcomes stated in the application.
  6. When assessing the compliance of the implementation of the study programme, the working group shall assess the individual **Criteria for evaluating the compliance of Standards for the Study Programme – SP criteria** using the **Scale for determining the degree of compliance of the implemented study programme and granting the institution the right to design, implement and**

**modify the study programmes in the field and degree of the programme** which takes the values A to D, or NA:

- a) **Value A** – based on the submitted evidence, the compliance of the study programme(s) with the given criterion of the standard, which is an example of good practice for other institutions, was found.
  - b) **Value B** – based on the submitted evidence, the compliance of the study programme(s) with the given standard criterion was found.
  - c) **Value C** – based on the submitted evidence, the non-compliance of the study programme(s) with the given standard criterion was found, or the institution proceeded in conflict with its internal system when designing, approving, modifying, or implementing the study programme(s) and the identified deficiency can be eliminated by modifying the study programme(s).
  - d) **Value NA** – the given criterion is not assessed in the conditions of the institution.
7. Based on the assessment of the compliance of the implemented study programme with the application for accreditation of the study programme in the evaluation report, the working group shall propose:
- a) Removal of the restriction to design study programmes in the relevant field and degree of study and removal of the restriction on the modification of the relevant study programme if each SP criterion has been assessed at **level A or B** by each member of the working group responsible for its assessment.
  - b) If a participant in the procedures has applied for the accreditation of several study programmes in the same field and degree of study at the same time, the above condition must be met for all these programs.
  - c) If any of the criteria are assessed by the members of the working group at **level C**, the working group shall propose the suspension of the study programme under Sec. 27 of the Act.
  - d) The working group shall propose to initiate an extraordinary assessment of the internal system if the working group assesses some SP criterion at **level D**.
8. In the case of combined teacher education programmes, the working group shall assess compliance for each approbation and separately for the teaching basis.
9. In the case of translation and interpreting combined study programmes, it shall assess compliance for each approbation following the language and in particular for the translation basis.
10. In the case that a higher education institution carries out the study programmes in the relevant field of study in several parts or several seats, the working group shall assess each seat in which it carries out the study programme.

## Article 10

### Evaluation of compliance with the Standards for Habilitation Procedure and Inaugural Procedure

1. The working group of the Agency shall assess compliance with the Standards for the Habilitation Procedures and Inaugural Procedure by assessing the application and the supporting documents for the application and by assessing the preconditions of the workplace to conduct habilitation and inaugural procedures.
2. The working group shall assess the individual **Criteria for evaluating the compliance of the Standards for the Habilitation Procedure and Inaugural Procedure – HI criteria using the Scale for determining the degree of compliance of the Standards for the Habilitation Procedure and Inaugural procedure**, which may be B or C, or NA:
  - a) **Value B** – based on the submitted evidence, the compliance of the given standard criterion was found.

- b) **Value C** – based on the submitted evidence, non-compliance with the given criterion of the standard was found.
  - c) **Value NA** – the given criterion is not assessed in the conditions of the institution.
3. The members of the working group shall, based on the assessment made, assign one of the values set out in paragraph 2 to the criteria.
    - a) The working group shall assess the criterion as met if it is evaluated by the members of the working group by indicator B.
    - b) The working group shall assess the criterion as not met if it is evaluated by the members of the working group by indicator C.
  4. The working group shall state in the Evaluation Report that the Standards for the Habilitation Procedure and Inaugural Procedure have been met if neither criterion is assessed as not being met. The working group shall propose the granting of accreditation for the habilitation and inauguration procedures.
  5. The working group shall assess the standard as not being met if at least one criterion is assessed as not met. The working group shall propose that the Executive Board reject the application.

## Part III. Criteria for Evaluating Standards

### Article 11 Introductory provisions

1. The Agency has determined a set of criteria for evaluating standards:
  - a) Criteria for evaluating Standards for the Internal system – IS criteria.
  - b) Criteria for evaluating Standards for the Study programme – SP criteria.
  - c) Criteria for evaluating Standards for Habilitation Procedure and Inaugural Procedure – HI criteria.
2. A criterion is a specific requirement of the relevant standard or a partial aspect thereof, the compliance of which is a precondition for confirming the conformity of the subject matter of the procedure (internal system, study procedure, habilitation and inaugural procedure) with the standard.
3. The results of the assessment of the related criteria are the basis for evaluating compliance with the standard.

### Article 12 Criteria for evaluating Standards for the Internal System

1. To evaluate the compliance of the Standards for the Internal Quality Assurance System (hereinafter the IS Standards), the working groups and staff of the Agency use the Criteria for evaluating Standards for the Internal System – IS Criteria.
2. Criteria for evaluating the IS 2 standard, the Policies for quality assurance (Article 2, Standards for the Internal System)

**IS 2.1.1.** The higher education institution has determined and applied **the policies for quality assurance** as part of the strategic management of the institution.

**IS 2.1.2.** **The institution has accepted the primary responsibility for the quality** of education provided **for all structures of the institutions and at all levels and all aspects.**

**IS 2.2.1.** The institution has a clearly defined **mission** in its strategic documents, especially in the long-term plan.

**IS 2.2.2.** The institution **fulfills its mission** defined in its strategic documents.

**IS 2.3.1.** In its strategic documents, especially in the long-term plan, the institution has clearly **defined strategic objectives**, in terms of its educational activities, creative activities, and other related activities.

**IS 2.3.2.** The strategic objectives of the institution in the strategic documents are **following its mission.**

**IS 2.4.1.** The institution **has formalized and implemented quality assurance policies** and strictly follows them.

**IS 2.4.2.** The institution has **established appropriate structures** of a coherent internal quality assurance system for higher education that includes the whole institution.

**IS 2.4.3.** The institution has **established processes of a coherent internal system** of quality assurance of higher education that includes the whole institution.

**IS 2.4.4.** In the internal system, the institution **defined the powers, competences, and responsibilities** of individual structures, executives, other staff, and relevant stakeholders to ensure the quality of higher education and related activities.

**IS 2.5.1. The institution has sufficient personal staff** allocated for the functioning of the internal system, which commensurates with the size of the institution, and the extent of the implemented educational, creative, and other related activities.

**IS 2.5.2. The institution has sufficient financial resources** for the functioning of the internal system, which commensurate with the size of the institution and the extent of the implemented educational, creative and other related activities.

**IS 2.5.3. The institution has sufficient material resources** for the functioning of the internal system, which commensurate with the size of the institution and the extent of the implemented educational, creative, and other related activities.

**IS 2.6.a.1** The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure **involving students** in quality assurance.

**IS 2.6.a.2** The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure **involving external stakeholders** in quality assurance.

**IS 2.6.b.** The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure the **interrelationships between education and creative activities** while the level and focus of creative activity correspond to the level of higher education and the learning outcomes.

**IS 2.6.c.** The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure **support for the internationalization** of educational, creative, and other related activities, so that its level is commensurate with the mission and strategic objectives of the institution, the learning objectives, learning outcomes, and the needs of stakeholders.

**IS 2.6.d.1** The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system **ensure guarding against any forms of intolerance and discrimination against** students.

**IS 2.6.d.2** The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system **ensure guarding against any forms of intolerance and discrimination against** staff.

**IS 2.6.d.3** The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system **ensure guarding against any forms of intolerance and discrimination against** candidates.

**IS 2.6.e.** The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure the preservation of **academic integrity and respect for academic ethics**, vigilance against plagiarism, and other academic fraud, facilitate their detection, and ensure the consequences.

**IS 2.6.f.** The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure **effective and transparent mechanisms for examining incentives** that the student seeks to protect their rights or legally protected interests, or points out specific deficiencies in their activities or inactivity of the institution.

**IS 2.6.g.** The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure **consistency and compliance with the generally binding regulations** and internal regulations of the institution.

**IS 2.6.h.1** Policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure **continuous improvement of the quality** of activities carried out by the institution.

**IS 2.6.h.2** Policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure the **development of a quality culture** at all structures and levels of the institution.

**IS 2.6.i.** The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure the **interrelationships between the internal system with the long-term intention of the institution.**

**IS 2.6.j.** The policies, structures and processes of the internal system ensure the **efficient performance of administrative activities** related to quality assurance and the non-burdening on teachers, students, and other creative staff of the institution with unjustified bureaucracy.

- IS 2.7.1.** In the case of the institution carries out the **habilitation procedure and inaugural procedure**, the policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure that it meets the Standards for the habilitation procedure and the inaugural procedure.
- IS 2.8.1. Quality assurance policies are binding on all institution contractors or other third parties** that participate or have an impact on the quality of education, creative activities, and other related activities.
- IS 2.9.1.** Quality assurance policies and processes include **regular monitoring, evaluation, and review of the internal system**, in which all stakeholders participate.
- IS 2.9.1. Regular monitoring, evaluation, and revision of the internal system** take into account whether the internal system leads to the achievement of strategic objectives in the field of quality assurance, which the institution has set in its strategic documents, especially in the long term.
- IS 2.10.1.** The institution allows easy **public access to formalized policies and processes** and further documentation of the internal system.
- IS 2.10.2.** The method of accessing information available **respects the specific needs of people with disabilities**.
- IS 2.10.3.** The internal system documentation relevant to students is **published in all languages of the implementation of study programmes**.
3. Criteria for evaluating the IS 3 standard, Design, modification, and approval of the study programmes (Article 3, Standards for the Internal System)
- IS 3.1.1.** The institution has formalized **policies, structures, and processes for the design, modification, and approval of study programmes**<sup>4</sup>.
- IS 3.1.2.** The institution has established **powers, competences, and responsibilities** of individual structures, staff, and other stakeholders for ensuring the quality of the study programme.
- IS 3.2.a.1.** The policies, structures, and processes for the design, modification, and approval study programmes ensure **involving students**.
- IS 3.2.a.2.** The policies, structures, and processes for the design, modification and approval of study programmes ensure **involving employers and other relevant stakeholders**.
- IS 3.2.b.1.** The policies, structures, and processes for the design, modification and approval of study programmes ensure a **transparent, fair assessment, and approval** of the study programme.
- IS 3.2.b.2** The policies, structures, and processes for the design, modification, and approval of study programmes ensure a **professional assessment** and approval of the study programme.
- IS 3.2.b.3** The policies, structures, and processes for the design, modification, and approval of study programmes ensure an **objective and independent** assessment and approval of a study programme, avoiding conflicts of interest and possible bias.
- IS 3.2.c.** The policies, structures, and processes for the design, modification, and approval of study programmes ensure **permanent compliance of the study programmes with the Standards for the Study Programme**.
- IS 3.2.d.** The policies, structures, and processes for the design, modification, and approval of study programmes ensure that study programmes have a **specified and communicated qualification** acquired through their successful completion, corresponding to the requirements of the relevant level of the qualifications framework.

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<sup>4</sup> In the case of regulated medical study programmes following Government Decree no. 296/2010 Coll.

- IS 3.2.e.** The structures and processes for the design, modification, and approval of study programmes ensure that the content and level of qualifications meet the **sector-specific expectations of employers** and other external stakeholders<sup>5</sup>.
- IS 3.2.f.1** The policies, structures, and processes for the design, modification and approval of study programmes ensure that study programmes have a clearly **specified graduate profile and clearly defined and communicated learning objectives and learning outcomes** that are **verifiable**.
- IS 3.2.f.2** The policies, structures and processes for the design, modification, and approval of study programmes ensure that study programmes have a specified graduate profile and clearly defined and communicated learning objectives and **learning outcomes that correspond to the mission of the institution**.
- IS 3.2.f.3** The policies, structures, and processes for the design, modification and approval of study programmes ensure that study programmes have a specified graduate profile and clearly defined and communicated learning objectives and learning outcomes that **correspond to the relevant level of the qualifications framework**.
- IS 3.2.f.4** The policies, structures, and processes for the design, modification, and approval of study programmes ensure that study programmes have a specified graduate profile and clearly defined and communicated learning objectives and learning outcomes that **correspond to the field of knowledge according to the relevant field of study or a combination of fields of study in which their graduates obtain their university degree**.
- IS 3.2.f.5** The policies, structures, and processes for the design, modification, and approval of study programmes ensure that the study programmes **enable the achievement of the learning objectives and learning outcomes set in the graduate profile**.
- IS 3.2.g.** The policies for the design, modification, and approval of study programmes **ensure the interrelationships between education and creative activities in study programmes**, while the level and focus of creative activity correspond to the level of higher education and the learning outcomes.
- IS 3.2.h.** The policies, structures, and processes for the design, modification, and approval of study programmes ensure that the study programmes **provide students with transferable competencies** that affect their personal development and can be used in their future careers and lives as active citizens in democratic societies.
- IS 3.3.1.** The structures and processes for the design, modification, and approval of joint study programmes with institutions abroad ensure the application of the principles of **the European Approach to Quality Assurance of Joint Study Programmes**.
- IS 3.4.1.** The higher education institution designs, implements and modifies study programs **in the study fields and degree upon the compliance with the granted rights**<sup>6</sup>.
- IS 3.4.1.** **The content of the study programmes with the description of the field of study** at the appropriate level is proved.
- IS 3.4.2** Study programmes assigned to the relevant study field(s) and degree, which are carried out at the institution and its structures, are upon **the compliance with the Standards for the Study Programme**.
4. Criteria for evaluating the IS 4 standard, Student-centered learning, teaching, and assessment (Article 4, Standards for the Internal System)

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<sup>5</sup> Compliance with European guidelines for education in study programmes preparing for the performance of a regulated profession in a regulated profession.

<sup>6</sup> In the case of regulated medical study programs also following Government Decree no. 296/2010 Coll.



**IS 4.a.1.** The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure that **the active role, autonomy, and independence of students in education** and the learning process are encouraged in the implementation of study programmes.

**IS 4.a.2.** The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure that **the active role, autonomy, and independence of students in education are also reflected in student assessment.**

**IS 4.b.1.** The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure that **the diversity of students and their needs is respected** in the implementation of study programmes.

**IS 4.b.2.** The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure that **the flexibility of the learning paths is enabled**, also concerning the possibility of reconciling work/family life with university studies.

**IS 4.c.1.** The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure that **the variety of educational and assessment methods, forms, and concepts** are used flexibly in the implementation of study programmes.

**IS 4.c.2.** The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure that **the suitability and effectiveness** of the educational and assessment methods, forms, and concepts are **regularly evaluated and improved.**

**IS 4.d.1.** The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure that students are provided with adequate guidance and **support by teachers.**

**IS 4.d.2.** The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure that **mutual respect in the student-teacher relationship is encouraged.**

**IS 4.e.1.** The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure that **assessors are thoroughly familiar** with existing methods of verifying the achievement of learning outcomes, methods of testing, testing, examining, and assessing student performance.

**IS 4.e.2.** Policies, structures and processes of the internal system ensure that **assessors receive support from the university** in developing their skills in this field (methods of verifying the achievement of learning outcomes, methods of testing, testing, examining, and assessing student performance).

**IS 4.f.1.** The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure that the criteria for, methods, and deadlines for assessment and criteria for grading, **are known to the students and published in advance.**

**IS 4.g.1.** The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure that assessment allows students **to demonstrate** the extent and level to which **the intended learning outcomes have been achieved and provides feedback** to students.

**IS 4.g.2.** The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure that assessment **provides students with feedback on the extent and level of learning outcomes achieved.**

**IS 4.g.3.** The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure that assessment if necessary is linked **to advising on the learning process.**

**IS 4.h.1.** The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure that **assessment is consistent and fairly applied** to all students, carried out following the stated procedures and that produces reliable conclusions that do not lead to unjustified differences in similar cases.

**IS 4.i.1.** The assessment takes into account mitigating circumstances, including those cases **concerning students with known special needs.**

**IS 4.j.1.** The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure that, when circumstances allow, student assessment is carried out by **more than one assessor.**

- IS 4.k.1.** The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure a formal procedure for **student appeals** is in place, while fair treatment of applicants for remedies is ensured.
5. Criteria for evaluating the IS 5 standard, Student admission, progression, recognition, and certification (Article 5, Standards for the Internal System)

**IS 5.a.1.** The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure that institution **consistently applies pre-defined and publishes regulations covering all phases** of the student life cycle, e.g. student admission, progression, recognition, completion, and certification, graduation, the award of a university degree with the diploma, and further documentation as the evidence of education.

**IS 5.b.1.** The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure that the offer to candidates is **published in advance and provides objective and complete information** on the study programmes, admission requirements and criteria, and other study conditions.

**IS 5.c.1.** The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure that **the admission procedure is fair and transparent**.

**IS 5.c.1.** The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure that **the admission procedure is reliable and that the selection** of candidates is based on appropriate methods of assessing their eligibility and suitability for study.

**IS 5.c.2.** The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure that the conditions of the admission procedure are **inclusive and that equal opportunities are ensured to any candidate** who demonstrates the necessary prerequisites for graduation.

**IS 5.d.1.** The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure that **support measures are provided and an environment is created for equalizing opportunities to study** at university for students **with special needs**<sup>7</sup> and students from disadvantaged backgrounds.

**IS 5.e.1** The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure that the quality level of the **defended final and rigorous theses** corresponding to their degree, while at the same time ensure effective detection and principled sanctions of plagiarism and other academic fraud.

**IS 5.f.1.** Internal system policies, structures, and processes ensure that the recognition of **higher education qualifications**, periods and parts of studies, prior learning, including non-formal and informal learning is transparent, consistent, and reliable and complies with generally binding rules and principles of the Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European region<sup>8</sup> to support student mobility.

**IS 5.g.1.** Policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure that the institution **awards the relevant academic degree to graduates, issues a diploma and other evidence** of education, which states and characterizes the acquired qualification, including achieved learning outcomes, context, level and content of completed study.

6. Criteria for evaluating the IS 6 standard, Teaching staff (Article 6, Standards for the Internal System)

**IS 6.a.1.** The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure that the selection of higher education teachers is **transparent, objective, and professional**.

**IS 6.a.2.** The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure that the selection process of higher education teachers is made based on **pre-known requirements and criteria**.

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<sup>7</sup> According to Sec. 100 of the Higher Education Act.

<sup>8</sup> Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region, Lisbon 1997.

**IS 6.a.3.** The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure that the selection process of higher education teachers is following **the mission and long-term intention and generally binding regulations of the institution.**

**IS 6.b.1.** The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure the openness of the selection process of university teachers and enable **the interinstitutional, intersectoral, and international mobility.**

**IS 6.c.1.** The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure that the higher education institution **has teachers whose professional qualifications**, level the of **creative activities** enable it to achieve the learning outcomes to ensure study programmes.

**IS 6.c.2** The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure that the higher education institution **has teachers** for the provision of study programmes whose **practical experience and transferable competencies** make it possible to achieve learning outcomes.

**IS 6.c.3.** The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure that the higher education institution **has teachers whose pedagogical skills** enable it to achieve learning outcomes to ensure study programs.

**IS 6.c.4.** The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure that the **workload allocation and work capacity** of higher education teachers enables the provision of study programs corresponding to the number of students.

**IS 6.d.1.** The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure that the **interrelationships with education and teachers' creative activities** are strengthened, with the focus and level of results of creative activities **commensurate with the level of the qualifications framework** and the learning outcomes which education is provided.

**IS 6.e.1.** Internal system policies, structures, and processes ensure that teachers **develop their professional, linguistic, pedagogical, digital skills, and transferable competences.**

**IS 6.f.1.** The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure that the **assignment of teachers for the provision of study programmes and educational activities**, the teaching of individual subjects, and the conduct of final and rigorous theses is transparent and guarantees a level of qualifications, competences, practical experience, focus, and results of creative activities that correspond to the level and learning outcomes.

**IS 6.f.2.** **Profile study subjects** are normally provided<sup>9</sup> by university teachers in **the position of professor or associate professor** who works at the university for fixed weekly working time.

**IS 6.f.3.** In **vocational education-oriented programmes**, they are also provided by university teachers who are experienced **specialists from the relevant economic or social field** who work at a university for a fixed or part-time period.

**IS 6.g.1.** The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure that the **professional qualification** of teachers providing the study programme **is higher than those achieved by the completion of the study programme.** This requirement may be waived in justified cases.

**IS 6.h.1.** The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure that **the workload allocation of university teachers enables the provision and quality of study programs**, teaching and other related educational activities, assessment, conduct and review of final theses, participation in creative activities, and other activities related to their professional development and fulfillment of the university's mission to the extent and proportions corresponding to the working time fund with the size of their working time and the nature of their position.

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<sup>9</sup> Provision of the subject - to be responsible for the subject, to lead lectures and other central educational activities of the profile subjects, and to be responsible for the subject's quality assurance activities and the development of the subject so that they are achieved required learning outcomes of the study programme.

7. Criteria for evaluating the IS 7 standard, Learning resources and student support (Article 7, Standards for the Internal System)

**IS 7.a.1.** The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure that the higher education institution has **sufficient financial resources** allocated for the comprehensive provision of study programmes and related creative, supportive and other activities appropriate to its mission.

**IS 7.b.1.** The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure that **the spatial, material, technical, infrastructural, and institutional** provision of educational, creative and other related activities **corresponding to the learning outcomes**.

**IS 7.b.2.** The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure that **the spatial, material, technical, infrastructural, and institutional** provision of educational, creative, and other related activities corresponding **to the number of students and their specific needs**.

**IS 7.c.1.** The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure that the higher education institution has the **functional contractual partnerships** with specialized teaching establishments and institutions which are necessary to achieve the learning outcomes.

**IS 7.d.1.** The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure that **access to information resources, library collections, and services** corresponding to the learning outcomes and focus of creative activities.

**IS 7.d.2.** Internal system policies, structures, and processes ensure that **access to information resources, library collections, and services** is easy and commensurate with the number of students.

**IS 7.e.1.** Internal system policies, structures, and processes ensure that students have easy **access to counseling and other support services and administrative resources** that meet their diverse needs and are a prerequisite for their progress in the study and their personal and career development.

**IS 7.f.1** The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure that the higher education institution has **qualified support staff providing tutoring, counseling, administrative, and other support services**, and related activities for students, whose capacity is appropriate to their number of students and diverse needs.

**IS 7.g.1** Policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure that students have **adequate social security** during their studies.

**IS 7.g.2** Policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure that students have adequate **sporting, cultural, spiritual, and social activities** during their studies.

**IS 7.h.1.** The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure that all resources are also provided **for each location** where the study programmes or educational activities take place.

**IS 7.i.1** The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure that the **use of all resources is efficient and effective**.

**IS 7.j.1.** Internal system policies, structures, and processes ensure that **resources are accessible to students** and that students are informed about their accessibility.

8. Criteria for evaluating the IS 8 standard Information management (Article 8, Standards for the Internal System)

**IS 8.a.1** Policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure that information is **systematically collected, processed, analyzed, and evaluated, which is used in the effective**

**strategic, tactical and operational management** of the implementation and development of study programmes, creative activities, and other related activities of the institution.

**IS 8.1.b.1** Policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure that institution has a **set of indicators** which are systematically **monitored**.

**IS 8.1.c.** The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure that **all stakeholders are involved** in the collection and processing of information.

9. Criteria for evaluating the IS 9 standard, Public information (Article 9, Standards for the Internal System)

**IS 9.a.1** The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure that clear, accurate, adequate, and up-to-date quantitative and qualitative **information on study programmes** relevant to the candidates, students, employees, employers, other external stakeholders, and the public is published.

**IS 9.a.2** Policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure that clear, accurate, adequate, and up-to-date quantitative and qualitative **information on other related activities** is published following the mission of the institution, which is relevant for candidates, students, employees, employers, and other external stakeholders and the public.

**IS 9.1.b.** The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure that **up-to-date information on the implementation and functioning of the internal system**, the results achieved and the measures taken are published.

**IS 9.1.c.** The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure that information on study programmes is published in **all languages** of their implementation.

**IS 9.1.d.** The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure that the information is **easily accessible**, even for **people with disabilities**.

10. Criteria for evaluating the IS 10 standard, On-going monitoring and periodic review and approval of study programmes (Article 10, Standards for the Internal System)

**IS 10.a.1** The policies, structure,s and processes of the internal system ensure that study programmes are **continuously monitored, periodically reviewed, and periodically approved**, with employers, students, and other stakeholders involved in the internal system.

**IS 10.b.1** Policies, structures, and processes of the internal system **ensure that the implementation of study programmes, student assessment, and achieved learning outcomes are in line with the latest knowledge**, technological possibilities, society needs, student needs, and expectations of employers and other stakeholders and the institution creates the supportive and effective learning environment for students<sup>10</sup>.

**IS 10.c.1** Policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure that the institution **has sufficient spatial, personnel, material, technical, infrastructural, information, and financial resources** for the implementation of study programmes and other related activities.

**IS 10.d.1.** The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure that **students have the opportunity to express at least once a year on the quality of study programmes, the quality of teachers, the quality of support services, and the quality of the university environment**.

**IS 10.1.e.** The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure **the modification to study programmes** resulting from their on-going monitoring and the periodic review and are designed with the participation of students, employers, and other stakeholders.

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<sup>10</sup> In study programmes preparing for the pursuit of a regulated profession following the relevant European Guidelines for Education in the Regulated Profession.

**IS 10.1.f.** The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure that study programmes are **periodically approved at a period appropriate to their standard length of study.**

11. Criteria for evaluating the IS 11 standard, Cyclical external quality assurance (Article 11, Standards for the Internal System)

**IS 11.1.1.** The institution undergoes periodic **external quality assurance review** to ensure that the internal system is developed and implemented in accordance with the Standards for the Internal System.

### **Article 13**

#### **Criteria for evaluating Standards for the Study Programme**

1. To evaluate the compliance of the Standards for the Study Programme (hereinafter the SP Standards), the working groups and staff of the Agency use the Criteria for evaluating Standards for the Study Programme – SP Criteria.
2. Criteria for evaluating the SP 2 standard, Design and modifications of the study programme (Article 2, Standards for the Study programme)

**SP 2.1.1.** The design of a new study programme or a modification of the study program is elaborated and submitted **by the formalized processes of the internal quality assurance system** of higher education institution<sup>11</sup>.

**SP 2.1.2** If the institution does not have an internal system approved, the quality assurance rules are set out directly in the relevant design of the study programme.

**SP 2.2.1.** The study programme is elaborated **following the mission and strategic objectives of the institution**, determined in the long-term plan of the institution.

**SP 2.3.1.** The **persons responsible** for the implementation, development, and quality assurance of the study programme are designated.

**SP 2.4.1. Students are involved** in the preparation of the design of the study programme.

**SP 2.4.2. Employers and other stakeholders are involved** in the preparation of the design of the study programme.

**SP 2.5.1.** The study programme is **assigned to the field of study** and the level of qualifications and the degree of its **consistency with the relevant field of study is justified**<sup>12</sup>.

**SP 2.5.2.** A study programme combining two fields of study or an interdisciplinary study programme is assigned to the relevant fields of study and the degree of its content with the relevant fields of study is justified.

**SP 2.6.1.** The study programme **clearly defines and communicates the level of qualification** that students achieve upon their successful completion.

**SP 2.6.2.** The qualification defined and communicated in the study programme corresponds to the **appropriate level of education under the qualification framework.**

**SP 2.7.1.** The specified **graduate profile** is clearly defined in the study programme.

**SP 2.7.2.** Following the graduate profile, verifiable **learning outcomes** are defined and communicated through descriptors corresponding to the mission of the institution.

**SP 2.7.3.** Learning outcomes correspond to the relevant **level of the qualifications framework.**

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<sup>11</sup> In the case of regulated medical study programmes following Government Decree no. 296/2010 Coll.

<sup>12</sup> In the case of study programmes combining two fields of study or interdisciplinary studies, the study programme is assigned to the relevant fields of study, and the degree of consistency with the relevant fields of study is justified.

- SP 2.7.4.** The learning outcomes correspond to the areas of knowledge according to the **relevant field of study**.
- SP 2.8.1.** The study programme **indicates the professions** for which the acquired qualification is necessary.
- SP 2.8.2.** The learning outcomes and qualifications obtained by completing the study programme **meet sector-specific professional expectations** for the pursuit of the profession.
- SP 2.8.3.** These facts are **confirmed by the statements** of relevant external stakeholders or by the agreement of the legal entity indicated in the description of the relevant field of study, or by a favorable opinion of the relevant ministry for the implementation of the study programme.
- SP 2.9.1.** **The professional content, structure, and sequence of profile subjects** and other educational activities of the study programme and the conditions for successful completion of studies enable **the achievement of learning outcomes**.
- SP 2.9.2.** In the case of professionally oriented Bachelor's study programmes, the content of the study programme is **designed to enable employers to achieve the expected learning outcomes** with an emphasis on the development of practical professional skills in the relevant sector of the economy or social practice<sup>13</sup>.
- SP 2.9.3.** The professional content, structure, and sequence of profile subjects and other educational activities of the study programme ensure **the access to the latest knowledge, skills, and competencies**.
- SP 2.9.4.** The professional content, structure, and sequence of profile subjects and other educational activities of the study programme ensure **the access to transferable competencies** that affect students' personal development and can be used in their future careers and lives as active citizens in democratic societies.
- SP 2.10.1.** The study programme has a **standard length of study, and specified workload for the student**.
- SP 2.10.2.** The study programme has a **specified student workload** for each study subject expressed in ECTS credits, and some hours of contact instruction, except where the nature of the educational activity so requires.
- SP 2.10.3.** The standard length of study, workload, and hours of contact instruction **enable the achievement of learning outcomes** corresponding to the form of the study programme.
- SP 2.11.1.** In the case of professionally oriented Bachelor's degree programmes, their content includes **the compulsory professional practice of students** in a contracting organization for a total of at least one semester, the purpose of which is the development of practical professional skills<sup>14</sup>.
- SP 2.11.2.** Professional practice enables the students **to undertake activities through which they acquire the workflows** typical for the relevant level of qualification and the relevant field of study, has the opportunity to participate in professional processes, projects and acquire specific knowledge, skills, and competences relevant to the respective professions.
- SP 2.12.1.** The study programme has a clearly **defined level and nature of creative activities** required for the successful completion of studies, especially to the final thesis.
3. Criteria for evaluating the SP 3 standard, Approval of the study programme (Article 3, Standards for the Study programme)

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<sup>13</sup> In study programmes preparing for the pursuit of a regulated profession following the relevant European Guidelines for Education in the Regulated Profession.

<sup>14</sup> In medical study programmes, mandatory clinical practice according to Government Decree no. 296/2010 Coll.

- SP 3.1.1.** The study programme is approved following the formalized processes of the internal system.
- SP 3.1.2.** An **independent, unbiased, and objective assessment and approval** of the study programme is ensured. The persons approving the study programme are different from the persons preparing the design of the study programme.
- SP 3.1.3.** **Professionally based assessment and approval** of the study programme is ensured.
- SP 3.1.4.** A **transparent and fair assessment** of the design and **approval** of the study programme is ensured.
- SP 3.1.5.** **Students, employers, and other stakeholders are involved** in the assessment of the design and approval of the study programme.
4. Criteria for evaluating the SP 4 standard, Student-centered learning, teaching, and assessment (Article 4, Standards for the Study programme)
- SP 4.1.1.** The rules, forms, and methods of teaching, learning, and assessment of learning outcomes in the study programme **enable the achievement of learning outcomes**.
- SP 4.1.2.** The rules, forms, and methods of teaching, learning, and assessment of learning outcomes in the study programme **respect the diversity of students and their needs** in achieving the learning objectives and outcomes.
- SP 4.2.1.** The **flexibility of learning paths** and the achievement of learning outcomes is enabled.
- SP 4.2.2.** The study programme allows for appropriate education **outside the university** in domestic and foreign institutions, in particular through the mobility support.
- SP 4.2.3.** Learning outcomes **outside the university** in domestic and foreign institutions are recognized by the institution.
- SP 4.3.1.** The forms and methods used in teaching, learning, and assessing learning outcomes stimulate students to take an **active role in the process of learning and developing academic careers**.
- SP 4.3.2.** Students **are involved in the creative activities of the institution** appropriately concerning the learning outcomes and the level of the qualification framework of the study programme.
- SP 4.4.1.** The study programme **reinforces the sense of autonomy, independence, and self-evaluation**.
- SP 4.4.2.** Students are provided with **appropriate guidance and support by teachers** based on mutual respect and esteem.
- SP 4.5.1.** The study programme is carried out in a way that reinforces **the internal motivation of students to continuously improve**.
- SP 4.5.2.** The study programme is carried out in a way that leads to the observance of the **principles of academic ethics and professional ethics** in the case of a professionally oriented bachelor's study programme.
- SP 4.6.1.** The study programme has determined and **published rules, criteria, and methods for the assessment** of learning outcomes in the study program.
- SP 4.6.2.** The assessment results **are recorded, documented, and archived**.
- SP 4.7.1.** The assessment methods and criteria **are known in advance and accessible to students**.
- SP 4.7.2.** The assessment methods and criteria **are included in the different parts/subjects/modules** of the programme.



- SP 4.7.3.** The assessment methods and criteria **are suitable for fair, consistent, transparent** validation of acquired knowledge, skills, and competences.
- SP 4.8.1.** The assessment provides students with **reliable feedback** on the level of fulfillment of learning outcomes.
- SP 4.8.2.** The assessment feedback **is linked to study progress counseling** as needed.
- SP 4.9.1.** Where circumstances allow, the assessment of students in the study programme is carried out by **several teachers**.
- SP 4.10.1.** Students have the opportunity to use **remedies against the results of their assessment** while ensuring fair treatment of remedies.
5. Criteria for evaluating the SP 5 standard, Student admission, progression, recognition, and certification (Article 5, Standards for the Study programme)
- SP 5.1.1.** The study programme is conducted by pre-defined and **easily accessible rules of study at all stages of the study cycle**, which are student admission, progression and assessment, recognition of education, completion of studies, awarding a diploma, and other evidence of qualifications.
- SP 5.1.2.** The specificities arising from **the specific needs** of students are taken into account.
- SP 5.2.1.** The study programme **specifies the requirements for candidates and the selection process**, which correspond to the level of the qualifications framework.
- SP 5.2.2.** The admission procedure is **reliable, fair, and transparent**.
- SP 5.2.3.** The selection process of candidates is based on **appropriate methods of assessing their eligibility** for study (drop-off rate in the 1st year of study).
- SP 5.2.4.** The criteria and requirements for candidates **are published in advance and easily accessible**.
- SP 5.2.5.** The conditions of the admission procedure are inclusive and guarantee **equal opportunities for every candidate** who demonstrates the prerequisites for graduation.
- SP 5.3.1.** The rules for the implementation of the study programme **regulate and facilitate the recognition of study and parts of studies** by the Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region, to promote student mobility at home and abroad.
- SP 5.4.1.** As part of the implementation of the study programme, the **effective use of tools to ensure research integrity and to prevent and to prevent and deal with plagiarism** and other academic fraud is ensured.
- SP 5.5.1.** Students of the study programme have effective mechanisms for **examining incentives** seeking to protect their rights or legally protected interests, which they believe have been violated or point to specific deficiencies in the activity or inactivity of the institution.
- SP 5.5.2.** The examination of incentives is transparent and takes place with **the participation of student representatives**.
- SP 5.5.3.** The complainants are provided with **feedback** on the results of their examination and the measures taken.
- SP 5.6.1.** The successful completion of the study programme is confirmed by the institution by **the award of an academic title, by the issuance of a university diploma**, as well as by the issuance of further documentation (diploma supplement) explaining the qualification, including achieved learning outcomes, context, level, and content of completed study. This document complies with applicable regulations.

6. Criteria for evaluating the SP 6 standard, Teaching staff (Article 6, Standards for the Study programme)

**SP 6.1.1.** The institution ensures for the study programme teachers whose **qualifications, the level of results of creative activities** enable them **to achieve learning outcomes**.

**SP 6.1.2.** The institution ensures for the study programme teachers whose **practical skills, pedagogical skills, and transferable competencies** enable them **to achieve learning outcomes**.

**SP 6.1.3.** For the study programme, the institution ensures teachers whose **language knowledge** corresponding to the languages of the study programme.

**SP 6.1.4.** The institution ensures for the study programme teachers whose **number, work capacity, and workload allocation** corresponding to the number of students and the personnel intensity of educational activities.

**SP 6.2.1.** **The qualifications of teachers** providing the study programme are **at least one degree higher than the qualification achieved by its completion**<sup>15</sup>.

**SP 6.3.1.** **Profile subjects** are normally provided **by professors or associate professors** who work at a university in the relevant field of study or a related field for fixed weekly working time.

**SP 6.3.2.** In vocational education programmes, profile subjects are also provided **by university teachers who are experienced professionals from the relevant economic or social field** and who work at the university for fixed weekly working time or part-time period.

**SP 6.3.3.** The sustainability of the teaching staff in the profile subjects of the programme from **the age structure of teachers is ensured**.

**SP 6.4.1.** The institution **has identified the main person with necessary competencies to ensure the responsibility** for the implementation, development, and quality assurance of the study programme or an otherwise defined integral part of the study programme (aprobation, language, part of the joint programme, and provides the profile subject of the program).

**SP 6.4.2.** This person is in a **position of a professor in the relevant field of study for fixed weekly working time**; in the case of a bachelor's study programme, he/she works as a professor or as an associate professor in the relevant field of study for a fixed weekly working time.

**SP 6.4.3.** This person **does not bear the main responsibility** for the implementation, development, and quality assurance of the study program **at another university** in the Slovak Republic.

**SP 6.4.4.** This person **does not have the main responsibility** for the implementation, development, and quality assurance of the study programme for **more than three study programmes**.

**SP 6.5.1.** Persons **conducting the final theses** carry out **an active creative activity or practical activity** at the level corresponding to the degree of the study programme in the field of professional and thematic focus of the thesis being conducted.

**SP 6.5.2** **Dissertations supervisors** are persons in the **position of professor or associate professor** or other similar position in a research institution contractually cooperating in the provision of a third-degree study programme with a higher education institution.

**SP 6.6.1.** Teachers of the study program **develop their professional, language, pedagogical, digital skills, and transferable competencies**.

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<sup>15</sup> This requirement may be waived in justified cases, such as, in particular foreign language tutors, in-service teachers, practitioners, and doctoral candidates.

**SP 6.7.1.** In the case of **teacher** combination study programmes, the institution ensures the compliance of the criteria SP 6.1 to SP 6.6 by teachers separately for each following the affiliation of the subject to the field of study and separately for the teaching basis.

**SP 6.8.1.** In the case of **translation and interpretation** combination programmes, the institution ensures the compliance of the criteria SP 6.1 to SP 6.6 by teachers separately for each approbation in accordance with the affiliation to the language and separately for the translation basis.

**SP 6.9.1.** In the case of study programmes **combining two fields of study** or first-degree programmes carried out as interdisciplinary studies, the institution ensured the compliance of the criteria SP 6.1 to SP 6.6 by teachers for each field of study in which its graduates receive the higher education.

**SP 6.10.1.** In the case of **joint study programmes**, the institution ensures the compliance of the SP criteria 6.1 to SP 6.6 by teachers for the relevant part of the joint study program, which it provides within it.

**SP 6.11.1.** In the case that the higher education institution carries out study programmes in the relevant field of study **at several structures or multiple locations**, the institution ensures the compliance of the criteria SP 6.1 to SP 6.6 by teachers separately for each structure and separately for each institution where they carry out the study programme as a whole.

7. Criteria for evaluating the SP 7 standard, The creative activity of higher education institution (Article 7, Standards for the Study programme)

**SP 7.1.1. Teachers** providing profile subjects of the study programme **demonstrate the results of creative activity** in the relevant study field(s) in which the study programme is at an **internationally significant level, in the case of a third-degree study programme**<sup>16</sup> separately for each study programme<sup>17</sup> according to the Evaluation methodology of creative activity stated in Part V of this methodology.

**SP 7.1.2. Teachers** providing profile subjects of the study programme **demonstrate the results of creative activity** in the relevant study field(s) in which the study programme is at an **internationally recognized level, in the case of a second-degree study programme or a study programme combining first and second degree** separately for each study programme<sup>18</sup> according to the Evaluation methodology of creative activities stated in Part V of this methodology.

**SP 7.1.3. Teachers** providing profile subjects of the study programme **demonstrate the results of creative activity** in the relevant study field(s) in which the study programme is at a **nationally recognized level, in the case of a first-degree study programme** separately for each study programme<sup>19</sup> according to Evaluation methodology of creative activities stated in Part V of this methodology.

**SP 7.4.1.** In the case that institution conducts several study programmes in the relevant field of study in several locations, it ensures the demonstration of the results of creative activity for each location separately.

**SP 7.5.1.** For the implementation of the third-degree study programme, the institution demonstrates **long-term continuous research or artistic activity in the field of the study programme** (possibility of substitution by the criterion of SP 7.6.1).

<sup>16</sup> The institution ensures the constant availability of records on submitted outcomes of creative activity and on responses to these outcomes in bibliometric and citation databases, registers of records of publishing and artistic activity, or in other search systems that are accepted as relevant in the relevant field of study.

<sup>17</sup> Except in the cases provided for in paragraph 3, Art. 7 Standards for the Study Programme.

<sup>18</sup> Except in the cases provided for in paragraph 3, Art. 7 Standards for the Study Programme.

<sup>19</sup> Except in the cases provided for in paragraph 3, Art. 7 Standards for the Study Programme.

**SP 7.5.2.** The workplace achieves long-term and continuous success in obtaining financial support for the relevant research or artistic activity and the existence of ongoing or new research/artistic projects from domestic and international grant schemes and other competition sources<sup>20</sup> (possibility of substitution by the SP 7.6.1 criterion).

**SP 7.6.1.** The university underwent a **periodic review of research, development, artistic and other creative activities** in each field of research every six years and, based on the results of the most recent evaluation, was authorized to use the designation "research university" (possibility of substituting criteria SP 7.5.1 and SP 7.5 .2).

8. Criteria for evaluating the SP 8 standard, Learning resources and student support (Article 8, Standards for the Study programme)

**SP 8.1.1.** Sufficient spatial, material, and technical resources of the study program are provided, which ensure the achievement of learning objectives and learning outcomes<sup>21</sup>.

**SP 8.1.2.** Sufficient information resources of the study programme are provided, which ensure the achievement of learning objectives and learning outcomes.

**SP 8.1.3** Appropriate financing of spatial, material, technical, and information resources of the study programme is provided.

**SP 8.2.1.** In the case that educational activities are provided by distance or combined methods, systems for the management of course content and the management of education are provided.

**SP 8.2.2.** Students are ensured access to course content and other study materials if the educational activities are provided by the distant or combined methods.

**SP 8.3.1.** Professional supportive staff who are competent to meet the needs of students and teachers of the study programme with meeting learning objectives and learning outcomes is provided.

**SP 8.3.2.** Professional supportive staff who are competent and numbered to meet the needs of students and teachers of the study programme with meeting learning objectives and learning outcomes is provided.

**SP 8.4.1.** Binding partnerships are maintained that require relevant stakeholders to participate in quality assurance, implementation, and development of the study programme.

**SP 8.5.1.** The institution has sufficient personnel, spatial, material, technical, and information resources of the study programme, separately for each location where the programme or its part is to be carried out, in proportion to learning objectives and outcomes of the relevant part of the programme.

**SP 8.6.1.** The institution responds effectively to the diversity of needs and interests of students in the study programme.

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<sup>20</sup> Meeting criteria 7.5. may replace the higher education institution by subjecting it to periodic review of research, development, artistic and other creative activity in each field of research every six years following (Sec. 88a) of the Act on Higher Education Institutions and based on the results of the most recent evaluation, was authorized to use the designation "research university".

<sup>21</sup> These include in particular lecture halls, classrooms, study rooms, laboratories, and laboratory equipment and other necessary equipment, technical means and equipment, studios, workshops, design and art studios, interpreting booths, clinics, priest's seminars, science and technology parks, technology incubators, school enterprises, practice centers, training schools, classrooms, sports halls, swimming pools, sports grounds, libraries, access to study literature, information databases and other information sources, information technology and external services and their corresponding funding.

- SP 8.6.2.** The institution provides students with the study programme with support for successful progress in their studies and career guidance.
- SP 8.7.1.** Students in the study programme are provided with appropriate social security during their studies.
- SP 8.7.2.** Students in the study programme are provided with appropriate sporting, cultural, spiritual, and social activities during their studies.
- SP 8.8.1.** Students in the study programme have ensured access and support for participation in domestic and foreign mobility and internships.
- SP 8.9.1.** The institution provides individualized support and creates suitable conditions for students of the study programme with special needs.
- SP 8.10.1.** In professionally-oriented study programmes, the programme has contractual partners in the form of organizations providing professional practice and practical training for students.
- SP 8.10.2.** The contractual partners have sufficient spatial, material, technological, and personnel conditions to ensure that the planned learning outcomes can be achieved.
9. Criteria for evaluating the SP 9 standard, Information management (Article 9, Standards for the Study programme)
- SP 9.1.1.** The institution collects, analyzes, and uses relevant information for effective management of their study programmes and other activities.
- SP 9.2.1.** Effective processes to collect and analyse information about the study programmes and other activities enter into the evaluation of the study programme and the design for its modifications.
- SP 9.3.1.** The study programme monitors the key indicators of education and learning, especially the profile of candidates and students, student progression, success and drop-out rates, students' satisfaction, career path of graduates, opinions of graduates and employers, information on resources and student support.
- SP 9.4.1.** Appropriate tools and methods are used to collect and process the information on the study programme.
- SP 9.4.2.** Students, teachers, employers, and other stakeholders in the study programme are involved in the acquisition, analysis, and follow-up of measures in the study programme.
10. Criteria for evaluating the SP 10 standard, Public information (Article 10, Standards for the Study programme)
- SP 10.1.1.** The institution provides readily accessible and structured information about the study programme<sup>22</sup>.
- SP 10.2.1.** Published information about the study programme is easily accessible to current students, their supporters, prospective students, graduates, other stakeholders, and the public in all languages in which the study programme is conducted.
- SP 10.2.2** The method of making information available also takes into account the needs of candidates and students with special needs.

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<sup>22</sup> These include their intended learning objectives and learning outcomes, the requirements for the candidates, the selection criteria for them, the recommended personality requirements, the level of the national qualifications framework, the field of study, the qualification they award, the programme conditions, assessment procedures and criteria used, programme resources, pass rates, the learning and development opportunities available to their students, as well as graduate employment information.

11. Criteria for evaluating the SP 7 standard, On-going monitoring and periodic review of study programmes (Article 7, Standards for the Study programme)

**SP 11.1.1.** The institution regularly monitors, review, and appropriately modifies the study programme to ensure that it complies with the Standards for the Study Programme.

**SP 11.1.2.** The institution continuously monitors, review, and appropriately modifies the study programme to ensure that the achieved learning objectives and learning outcomes are in line with the needs of students, employers, and other stakeholders and that corresponded to the latest knowledge, technological possibilities, and the graduate level.

**SP 11.1.3.** The institution continuously monitors, review, and appropriately modifies the study programme to ensure that the level of graduates, especially through the achieved learning outcomes, is in line with the required level of the qualification framework.

**SP 11.2.1.** The part of the monitoring and review of the study programme is to obtain relevant feedback from program stakeholders.

**SP 11.2.2.** Students have the opportunity to express at least once a year through an anonymous questionnaire on the quality of teaching and the teachers of the study programme.

**SP 11.2.3.** Stakeholders of the programme also participate in the preparation of the methodology for obtaining and evaluating relevant feedback.

**SP 11.3.1.** The results of the feedback evaluation are reflected in the adoption of improvement measures.

**SP 11.3.2.** Students are also ensured to be involved in proposing measures to improve the results of the feedback.

**SP 11.4.1.** The results of the feedback evaluation and the measures taken and any planned or follow-up activities resulting from the evaluation of the study programme are communicated to stakeholders.

**SP 11.4.2.** The results of the feedback evaluation and the measures taken and any planned or follow-up activities resulting from the evaluation of the study program shall be made public.

**SP 11.5.1.** The study programme is periodically approved by the formalized processes of the internal system at the period corresponding to its standard length of study (according to SP 3.1.)

#### Article 14

#### Criteria for evaluating Standards for the Habilitation Procedure and Inaugural Procedure

1. To evaluate the compliance of the Standards for the Habilitation Procedure and Inaugural Procedure (hereinafter the HI Standards), the working groups and staff of the Agency use the Criteria for evaluating Habilitation Procedure and Inaugural Procedure – HI Criteria.
2. Criteria for evaluating the HI 2 standard, Definition of the field of habilitation procedure and inaugural procedure (Article 2, Standards for the Habilitation Procedure and Procedure for Appointment of Professors)

**HI 2.1.1.** The institution is defined by **its name and content in the field** of habilitation procedure and inaugural procedure.

**HI 2.1.2.** The institution **assigned the field** of habilitation procedure and inaugural procedure **to one or two** study fields.

**HI 2.1.3.** The content of the field of habilitation procedure and the inaugural procedure is defined **as close as possible to the field(s) of study** to which it is assigned.

3. Criteria for evaluating the HI 2 standard, The level of education in the field of habilitation procedure and inaugural procedure (Article 3, Standards for the Habilitation Procedure and Procedure for Appointment of Professors)

**HI 3.1.1.** The institution is entitled to design, implement, and modify the third-degree study programmes in the field(s) of study to which the field of habilitation procedure and inaugural procedure is assigned. If the field of habilitation procedure and the inaugural procedure is assigned to two fields of study, the institution is entitled to create, implement, and modify third-degree study programmes in both fields of study.

**HI 3.2.1.** The institution in the field(s) of study to which the field of habilitation procedure and the inaugural procedure is connected implements a study programme of the third degree, a study programme of the second degree, or a study programme combining the first degree and the second degree.

4. Criteria for evaluating the HI 2 standard, Personal provision of habilitation procedure and inaugural procedure (Article 4, Standards for the Habilitation Procedure and Procedure for Appointment of Professors)

**HI 4.1.1.** A group of at least five persons, who are responsible for the development and quality assurance of the field of habilitation procedure and inaugural procedure work for the fixed weekly working time at the university. Of these persons, at least two are in the position of professor with the title of „professor“, and other persons are at least in the position of associate professor with the title of „associate professor“<sup>23</sup>.

**HI 4.1.2.** Persons who are responsible for the development and quality assurance of the field of habilitation procedure and inaugural procedure engaged scientifically or artistically in the field of habilitation procedure and inaugural procedure or in a related field.

**HI 4.1.3.** Persons who are responsible for the development and quality assurance of the field of habilitation procedure and inaugural procedure are not responsible for the development and quality assurance of another field of habilitation procedure and inaugural procedure and only at one institution in the Slovak Republic.

**HI 4.2.1.** The Scientific Board of the institution and the faculty, if the habilitation procedure and the inaugural procedure take place at the faculty, is composed of the relevant provisions of the generally binding regulations.

**HI 4.2.2.** The Scientific Board of the institution and the faculty, if the habilitation procedure and the inaugural procedure take place at the faculty, consists of significant experts, including at least one expert with professional capacity to evaluate the habilitation procedure and the inaugural procedure in the relevant field of study to which the field of habilitation procedure and the inaugural procedure is assigned.

5. Criteria for evaluating the HI 2 standard, The level of creative activity in the field of habilitation procedure and inaugural procedure, and the level of higher education quality culture (Article 5, Standards for the Habilitation Procedure and Procedure for Appointment of Professors)

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<sup>23</sup> In the case of the field of habilitation and inaugural procedures, the content of which is related to the preparation of experts for some of the regulated professions with the coordination of education listed in Annex no. 2 of Decree of the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic no. 16/2016 Coll. and is based on the definition of the specializations assigned to the regulated professions in question in Annex no. 3 of Government Regulation no. 296/2010 Coll., it is sufficient to meet this requirement if three persons are working in the field of habilitation and inauguration procedures or the related field at a university for fixed weekly working time, at least one of them is a professor and has the title of professor and others are associate professors and are associate professors. Each of these persons may be responsible for the development and quality assurance of at most one habilitation and inaugural procedure at a university in the Slovak Republic.

6. **HI 5.1.1.** The institution carries out **long-term and continuous creative activity in the field** of habilitation procedure and inaugural procedure, the intensity and extent of which correspond to the nature of these procedures and **the results reach an excellent international level**<sup>24</sup>.

**HI 5.2.1.** The institution **is entitled to design, implement, and modify the third-degree study programmes in at least half of the study fields** in which it provides higher education.

**HI 5.3.1.** The institution undergoes to periodic review of research, development, artistic and other creative activities in each field of research and, based on the results of the most recent review, has been granted the right to use the designation "research university".

7. Criteria for evaluating the HI 2 standard, The level of criteria of the institution for reviewing the compliance of the conditions for obtaining the title of associate professor (Article 6, Standards for the Habilitation Procedure and Procedure for Appointment of Professors)

**HI 6.1.1.** The institution **has accepted and publicly accessible criteria** for reviewing the compliance of the conditions for obtaining a scientific-pedagogical degree or an artistic-pedagogical degree "associate professor", which **complies with generally binding regulations**.

**HI 6.2.1.** The criteria of the institution **for obtaining the title of associate professor from the candidate require a third-degree higher education**.

**HI 6.2.2.** The criteria of the institution for obtaining the title of associate professor from the candidate **require up-to-date scientific-pedagogical or artistic-pedagogical work in the relevant field** of the habilitation procedure and inaugural procedure at the university.

**HI 6.2.3.** The criteria of the institution for obtaining the title of associate professor from the candidate **require experience and results in the compliance of tasks in the field of higher education to the extent, structure, and quality corresponding to international customs and specificities in the relevant field** of habilitation procedure and inaugural procedure, as leading lectures from selected chapters, seminars, and exercises, student assessment, conducting and reviewing the final theses, designing study materials, consultations for students, arranging excursions and professional practices for students, etc.

**HI 6.2.4.** The criteria of the institution for obtaining the title of associate professor from the candidate **require experience and results in the field of creative activities**, as conducting research, development, artistic or other creative activities of the workplace and publishing its results in the form of scientific works or artistic outputs or artistic performances or other output of creative activity in the number, structure, extent, intensity, the rate of author's contribution and the quality corresponding to international customs and specificities in the relevant field of habilitation procedure and inaugural procedure.

**HI 6.2.5.** The criteria of the institution for obtaining the title of associate professor **require from the candidate to demonstrate that he/she is recognized as a scientific or artistic person in professional circles or an artistic person in artistic circles in the relevant field** of habilitation procedure and the inaugural procedure, in particular, demonstration of responses to published scientific works or artistic output or performances or other outputs of creative activity in number, structure and other attributes corresponding to international practices and specificities of the relevant field of habilitation procedure and inaugural procedure. Autocitations are excluded.

**HI 6.3.1.** The criteria of the institution for obtaining the title of associate professor **contain measurable indicators with determined minimum threshold values**, which serve as one of the bases for assessing the compliance of the requirements (HI 6.2.4 and HI 6.2.5). The minimum threshold values of measurable indicators are based on international practices in the relevant field of habilitation procedure and inaugural procedure.

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<sup>24</sup> The evaluation of the criterion follows the Evaluation Methodology of Creative Activities, which is set out in Part V of this methodology.



- HI 6.3.2.** The criteria of the institution for obtaining the title of associate professor **contain measurable indicators with determined minimum threshold values that meet the requirements of HI 6.5.1.**
- HI 6.4.1.** The criteria of the institution for obtaining the title of associate professor **require from the candidate to demonstrate that by his/her scientific or artistic works he/she created a complete scientific work in the relevant field of habilitation procedure and inaugural procedure.**
- HI 6.4.2.** The criteria of the institution for obtaining the title of associate professor **ensure that the candidate meets further qualification prerequisites if required by the nature of the relevant field** of habilitation procedure and the inaugural procedure.
- HI 6.5.1.** The level of a higher education institution for obtaining the title of associate professor **ensures that at least the level of extent, intensity, quality, and recognition of their scientific, artistic, and other creative activity are required of the candidates for the title of associate professor in the relevant field of habilitation procedure and inaugural procedure before the date of entry into force of these standards.** If the institution has not yet been accredited for habilitation procedure and inaugural procedure in the relevant field, then as a benchmark to meet this requirement, it will use the criteria of another university in the Slovak Republic in the relevant field of habilitation procedure and inaugural procedure or the related field of habilitation procedure and inaugural procedure or another similar field assigned to the relevant field of study.
8. Criteria for evaluating the HI 2 standard, The level of criteria of the institution for reviewing the compliance of the conditions for obtaining the title of professor (Article 7, Standards for the Habilitation Procedure and Procedure for Appointment of Professors)
- HI 7.1.1.** The institution **has accepted and publicly accessible criteria** for reviewing the compliance of the conditions for obtaining a scientific-pedagogical degree or an artistic-pedagogical degree "professor", which **complies with generally binding regulations.**
- HI 7.2.1.** The criteria of the institution for obtaining the title of professor from the candidate **require the prior obtaining of a scientific-pedagogical degree or an artistic-pedagogical degree „associate professor“.**
- HI 7.3.1.** The criteria of the institution for obtaining the title of professor from the candidate **require up-to-date scientific-pedagogical or artistic-pedagogical work in the relevant field** of the habilitation procedure and inaugural procedure at the university.
- HI 7.3.2.** The criteria of the institution for obtaining the title of professor from the candidate **require experience and results in the compliance of tasks in the field of higher education to the extent, structure, and quality corresponding to international customs and specificities in the relevant field** of habilitation procedure and inaugural procedure, as leading lectures, seminars and exercises, students assessment, including state examinations, conducting and reviewing the final theses, designing study materials, etc.
- HI 7.3.3.** The criteria of the institution for obtaining the title of professor from the candidate **require experience and results in the field of creative activities**, as conducting research, or artistic teams, organizing scientific works or artistic events, development, artistic or other creative activities of the workplace and publishing its results in the form of scientific works or artistic outputs or artistic performances or other output of creative activity in the number, structure, extent, intensity, the rate of author's contribution and the quality corresponding to international practices and specificities in the relevant field of habilitation procedure and inaugural procedure.
- HI 7.4.1.** The criteria of the institution for obtaining the title of professor **ensure that the candidate demonstrates that he/she has influenced the development of the relevant field** of habilitation procedure and inaugural procedure by setting up a scientific school or art school or an original generally recognized group following its outputs, in particular, that he/she has trained two completed doctoral students or one completed doctoral student and at least another doctoral

student after the dissertation examination in the field of study to which the field of habilitation procedure and the inaugural procedure is assigned

**HI 7.4.2.** The criteria of the institution for obtaining the title of professor **require from the candidate to demonstrate that he/she is a recognized scientific or artistic person in the relevant field of habilitation procedure and inaugural procedure, in particular, his/her scientific work/s or artistic performances have also achieved international recognition**, in particular responses to published scientific works or artistic outputs or other outputs of creative activity in number, structure and other attributes corresponding to international practices and specificities of the relevant field of habilitation procedure and inaugural procedure, which also normally require responses from abroad. Autocitations are excluded.

**HI 7.4.3.** The criteria of the institution for obtaining the title of professor **require the written references to the candidate's results from leading foreign experts from at least three different countries outside the Slovak Republic**, while the references will confirm that the candidate meets the requirements for acting as a professor in an international context.

**HI 7.4.4.** The criteria of the institution for obtaining the title of professor **ensure that the candidate meets further qualification prerequisites if required by the nature of the relevant field** of habilitation procedure and the inaugural procedure.

**HI 7.5.1.** The criteria of the institution for obtaining the title of professor **contain measurable indicators with determined minimum threshold values**, which serve as one of the bases for assessing the compliance of the requirements (HI 7.3.2 and HI 7.4.2). **The minimum threshold values of measurable indicators are based on international practices in the relevant field** of habilitation procedure and inaugural procedure.

**HI 7.5.2.** The criteria of the institution for obtaining the title of associate professor **contain measurable indicators with determined minimum threshold values that meet the requirements of HI 7.6.1.**

**HI 7.6.1.** The level of a higher education institution for obtaining the title of professor **ensures that at least the level of extent, intensity, quality, and recognition of their scientific, artistic, and other creative activity are required of the candidates for the title of professor in the relevant field of habilitation procedure and inaugural procedure before the date of entry into force of these standards.** If the institution has not yet been accredited for habilitation procedure and inaugural procedure in the relevant field, then as a benchmark to meet this requirement, it will use the criteria of another university in the Slovak Republic in the relevant field of habilitation procedure and inaugural procedure or the related field of habilitation procedure and inaugural procedure or another similar field assigned to the relevant field of study.

9. Criteria for evaluating the HI 2 standard, Rules and processes of habilitation procedure and inaugural procedure (Article 8, Standards for the Habilitation Procedure and Procedure for Appointment of Professors)

**HI 8.1.1.** The institution **has established and publicly accessible rules and processes** of habilitation procedure and the inauguration procedure, which are following generally binding regulations.

**HI 8.2.1.** The rules and processes of the habilitation procedure and the inaugural procedure **ensure the transparency and openness of the processes for all candidates** and are known to them in advance.

**HI 8.2.2.** The rules and processes of the habilitation procedure and inaugural procedure **ensure that the proven plagiarism of the candidate is the reason for not awarding the title** of associate professor or the title of professor.

**HI 8.2.3.** The rules and procedures of the habilitation procedure and the inaugural procedure ensure impartial, objective, professionally based, consistent, and unambiguous verification of candidate's compliance of the set requirements and criteria.

**HI 8.2.4.** The rules and processes of the habilitation procedure and the inaugural procedure ensure that the selection and composition of opponents of the habilitation procedure and inaugural procedure, the members of the habilitation committee, and the members of the inaugural committee comply with generally binding regulations. The selection criteria for these persons ensure that they are scientifically or artistically engaged in the relevant field of habilitation procedure and the inaugural procedure or, in justified cases, in the field of science, technology, and art according to the candidate's creative activity.

**HI 8.3.1.** The institution shall, in its processes, consistently and without exception adhere to the generally binding regulations, valid and effective rules and processes of habilitation procedure and inaugural procedure and its criteria for the assessing of the compliance of the conditions for obtaining the scientific or pedagogical title of „associate professor“ and scientific-pedagogical title or an artistic-pedagogical title „professor“ which were the basis for decision-making in the previous accreditation procedure for the relevant habilitation procedure and inaugural procedure.

## **Part IV. Standards Evaluation Indicators**

### **Article 15 Introductory provisions**

1. The working groups of the Agency shall rely on their assessment of compliance with the standards on a set of indicators.
2. The working groups assess the values of the indicators in the context of a particular higher education institution and field of study. They are mainly used for:
  - a) evaluation of the development of indicators over time in the context of the mission and goals of the institution,
  - b) demonstration of on-going progression,
  - c) comparison with typical values in the field of measurement (e.g in field of study, school size, degree of education, etc.).
3. Institutions shall design indicators, collection of necessary data, method, and frequency of measurement following their procedures of the internal quality assurance system.
4. Institutions also use other indicators in their internal system to support the institution's mission and goals.
5. Institutions report indicators and their trend in the report from the periodic review of the internal system/study programmes together with other indicators monitored by the institutions.
  - a) Individual indicators are evaluated on an annual basis;
  - b) generally for the last 10 years,
  - c) to an appropriate extent for the study programme, the whole institution, or its part.

### **Article 16 Indicators of entry into education**

The results and development of indicators of entry into education indicate the consistency of the offer and interest in studying the study programmes of the higher education institution.

- a) Number of offered study programmes according to the 1st, 2nd, 3rd degree of higher education
- b) Share of unopened study programmes in the academic year from the total offer
- c) Number of candidates for the study in the relevant academic year
- d) Proportion of enrolled students from all registered candidates for study in the relevant academic year
- e) Proportion of admitted students from other institutions in the 2nd and 3rd degree of higher education

## **Article 17**

### **Training indicators**

#### **1. Student admission, progression, and certification**

The results and development of indicators are used to monitor the suitability of methods for selecting and assessing eligibility for study; evaluation of the state and development of students' progress in the process of education and early completion of studies.

- a) Number of students/study programme in individual years of study.
- b) Proportion of students of the first year of study who prematurely completed their studies in the structure following the reason (exclusion for failure, dropping out of the study, change of study programme).
- c) Early completion rate in subsequent years of study.
- d) Proportion of foreign students in the total number of students.
- e) Proportion of foreign students studying in a language other than Slovak in the total number of students.
- a) Proportion of students exceeding the standard length of study.
- f) Average length of the above-standard length of study.
- g) Number of detected academic frauds, of which the number of plagiarism.
- h) Number of disciplinary procedures (exclusion from studies, reprimand, no consequences, etc.).
- i) Number of graduates.

#### **2. Student-centered learning, teaching and assessment**

The set of indicators is used to assess the status and perception of student-centered learning and student support.

- a) Ratio of the number of students and teachers.
- b) Number of final theses conducted by the supervisor (average and maximum).
- c) Proportion of contact teaching (including student support) in the total work capacity of institution/study programme (in hours per week).
- d) Proportion of posted students for mobility abroad in the total number of students.
- e) Number of students admitted for mobility from abroad in a particular academic year.
- f) Extent of support and career guidance services (estimated in hours per student).
- g) Number of employees with a focus on student support (study, career counseling).
- h) The degree of student satisfaction with the quality of teaching, assessment, and support from teachers.
- i) The degree of satisfaction of students with special needs.
- j) Number of submitted student complaints.

#### **3. Teaching staff**

The indicators are used to monitor the structure of teaching staff with a focus on the qualifications, age, and circulation of teachers.

- a) Numbers of all teachers in the position of professor, associate professor, special assistant, assistant, lecturer, others.

- b) Numbers of independent researchers with a second-degree of higher education (together with the number of teachers = number of creative staff).
- c) Number of senior teachers (prof. doc., DrSc., VKSI., VKSIa), the proportion of all teachers.
- d) Proportion of teachers with PhD. and higher in the total number of teachers.
- e) Age of teachers of the study programme providing profile subjects (average age and range).
- f) Proportion of teachers of graduates of another university.
- g) Proportion of teachers who obtained a Ph.D. (or equivalent) at a university other than the one in which they work.
- h) Proportion of teachers with more than 1 year of experience at a foreign university or research institution abroad.
- i) Number of teachers recruited for mobility from abroad in a particular academic year.
- j) Proportion of posted teachers in mobility abroad.

#### **4. Creative activity and habilitation procedure and inaugural procedure**

Indicators are used in assessing the creative activities in connection with the implementation of education at each degree and fields of higher education, or in assessing the compliance of Standards for Habilitation Procedures and Inaugural Procedures.

- a) Number of publication outputs of teachers for the last 6 years in each field of study and categories of outputs.
- b) Number of publication outputs of teachers who are registered in the Web of Science or Scopus databases for the last 6 years in each field of study and output categories (or equivalent, e.g in art).
- c) Number of publication outputs of doctoral students who are registered in the Web of Science or Scopus databases for the last 6 years in each field of study and output categories (or equivalent, e.g in art).
- d) Number of responses to teachers' publications for the last 6 years.
- e) Number of responses to teachers' publications, which are registered in the Web of Science and Scopus databases for the last 6 years.
- f) Number of outputs of creative activity of excellent international quality, which are equivalent to the 1st quartile in the Web of Science database according to the practice in the field (or equivalent, e.g in art).
- g) Evaluation of the level of creative activity of the university workplace.
- h) The amount of financial support obtained from domestic and international grant schemes and other competitive sources in the field.
- i) Number of third-degree students (PhD.) per tutor (average and maximum).
- j) Number of third-degree students (PhD.) in the relevant field of habilitation and inaugural procedure.
- k) Number of tutors in the field of habilitations and inaugurations (natural persons and FTE<sup>25</sup>).
- l) Number of approved proposals for the title of professor in the Scientific Board of a university in the current year.
- m) Number of approved proposals for the title of associate professor in the Scientific Board in the current year.
- n) Number of discontinued habilitation procedures and inaugural procedures (procedures commenced which were not approved by the Scientific Board, withdrawn by the candidate or otherwise discontinued) in the current year.

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<sup>25</sup> FTE (Full-time equivalent).

## **Article 18**

### **Learning outcomes indicators**

Indicators indicate the compliance of the achieved education with the requirements of the labor market and the perception of learning outcomes by employers and related trends.

- a) Applicability rate of university graduates/study programme.
- b) The degree of satisfaction of employers with the achieved learning outcomes of the study programme.

## **Part V.**

### **Evaluation methodology of creative activities**

## **Article 19**

### **Introductory provisions**

1. Evaluation methodology of creative activities regulates the assessment of the level of creative activity to the relevant Standards for the Study Programme<sup>26</sup> and the Standards of the Habilitation Procedure and the Inaugural Procedure<sup>27</sup>.
2. Creative activity is understood as a research activity, development activity, artistic activity, or other creative activity of a higher education institution that is relevant to its mission, mostly to learning objectives and learning outcomes.
3. The creative activity is evaluated by reviewing:
  - a) the level of creative activity of teachers who provide profile subjects of the study programme in the relevant field of study(s) in which the study programme takes place, or
  - b) the level of creative activity of teachers who are responsible for the development and quality assurance of the field of habilitation procedure and inaugural procedure.
4. The higher education institution demonstrates the creative activity through the most important outputs of the creative activity of teachers providing profile subjects of the study programme or the outputs of persons responsible for the development and quality assurance of the department of habilitation procedure and inaugural procedure.
5. In reviewing the level of creative activity, a holistic peer review of the outputs of creative activity, applied by the relevant reviewers in the working group of the Agency's Executive Board, is applied.
6. The review of the level of creative activity shall take into account the specificities of the nature of creative activities across scientific disciplines and artistic disciplines, which may justify differences in the detailed approach to evaluation.
7. An underpinning principle is that for each discipline, all forms and types of creative activities and their outputs are assessed on a fair and equal basis. The working groups are responsible for applying assessment criteria and procedures that enable them to identify and treat the levels of creative activity across the spectrum of applied, practical, fundamental, and strategic research, arts, and other creative activities, where the creative activity took place.
8. The result of the evaluation of each creative activity output is its classification into one of the quality levels: A+, A, A-, B, or C.
9. The terms „internationally excellent“, „internationally significant“, „internationally recognized“ and „nationally recognized“ in the evaluation of creative activities refer to the level of quality and

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<sup>26</sup> Article 7 of Standards for the Study Programme.

<sup>27</sup> Article 7 of Standards for the Study Programme.

they do not relate to the nature, or geographic scope of particular studies, nor to the place where the research is carried out or the place where results are disseminated.

## **Article 20**

### **Areas and period of assessment**

1. The area of assessment is indicated by the higher education institution in its application.
2. The areas of assessment are defined:
  - a) by the study programme<sup>28</sup> in the relevant field of study in which the study programme is or is to be carried out, or
  - b) by self-assessed approbation<sup>29</sup>, translational basis<sup>30</sup> or teacher basis<sup>31</sup>, or
  - c) by the field of habilitation procedure and inaugural procedure which is assigned to one or two fields of study<sup>32</sup>.
3. The area of assessment is assigned to the field of study(s) in which the relevant study programme, approbation, teaching basis, translation basis, or to which the field of habilitation procedure and the inaugural procedure is carried out.
4. The assessment period is 6 years before the year in which the relevant application for accreditation was submitted.

## **Article 21**

### **Assessed persons**

1. The higher education institution shall identify persons who provide profile subjects of the study programme or are responsible for the development and quality assurance of the field of habilitation procedure and inaugural procedure in the relevant assessment area.
2. Only persons with full-time employment in a higher education institution at the time of application may be included in the selection process. In the areas of assessment related to study programmes with a focus on vocational training, training of health professionals, members of the armed forces, and artists, it is permissible to include experts from the practice who have a part-time employment relationship with a higher education institution the time of application.
3. One person may be included in only one area of assessment defined by the study programme and in one area of assessment defined by the field of habilitation procedures and inaugural procedures.
4. One person may be included in the assessment at only one higher education institution.

## **Article 22**

### **Submission of creative output and other submitting documents for assessment**

1. The higher education institution shall ensure the availability of records on submitted outputs of creative activity and responses to these outputs in bibliometric and citation databases, registers of records of publishing and artistic activity, or in other search systems that are accepted as relevant in the particular field of study.

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<sup>28</sup> It can also be several study programmes that meet some of the provisions in Art. 7 par. 3 letter a-h) Standards for the Study programme.

<sup>29</sup> According to Art. 12 par. 3 Standards for the Study programme.

<sup>30</sup> According to Art. 12 par. 3 Standards for the Study programme.

<sup>31</sup> According to Art. 12 par. 3 Standards for the Study programme.

<sup>32</sup> The list of study fields is given in the Decree of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports of the Slovak Republic No. 244/2019 Coll. on the System of Study Branches of the Slovak Republic.

2. The higher education institution shall submit a total of 25 outputs for each area of assessment, or 15 outputs if the area of assessment is defined by a separate assessment of the approbation, teaching basis, translation basis or in another specific case<sup>33</sup>.
3. The higher education institution shall submit only such outputs of creative activity that relate to the outputs of education or the solution of a problem within the relevant area of assessment, while its justified interdisciplinary overlaps are permissible.
4. For outputs with several authors, the output can be attributed to an individual who made a substantial contribution to the output/its creation. In the case of outputs with several authors, the institution also shall attach in the documents the characteristics of the author's contribution of the assessed person.
5. The higher education institution shall submit the same output within the relevant area of assessment only once.
6. In case of outputs with several authors, the same output may be submitted and attributed to other persons in other areas of assessment of creative activity, at most three times.
7. Where a higher education institution carries out more than one study programme in the relevant field of study, it shall demonstrate the level of results of the creative activity referred to in paragraphs 1 and 4 separately for each study programme. This does not apply in cases such as:
  - a) the content-related study programme of a higher degree in the relevant field of the study carried out in the same part of a higher education institution;
  - b) another form or language mutation of an identical study programme carried out in the same part of a higher education institution;
  - c) the part of the joint study programme based in terms of content on the relevant field of study carried out at the same part of a higher education institution;
  - d) the part of the study programme in a combination of two fields of the study based on the content of the relevant field of study and carried out in the same part of a higher education institution;
  - e) approbation of the teacher combination study programme based on the content of the relevant field of the study carried out in the same part of the university;
  - f) approbation of a translation combination study programme based on the content of the relevant language carried out in the same part of a higher education institution;
  - g) a conversion study programme based on the content of the study programme in the relevant field of study and degree carried out at the same part of a higher education institution;
  - h) a part of the study programme of the first degree carried out as interdisciplinary studies based on the content of the relevant field of study.
8. If a higher education institution carries out several study programmes in the relevant field of study in several places or several parts, it guarantees the demonstration of the results of creative activity for each place and each part separately. An exception is the teaching base and the translation base, which can be jointly provided for several parts, as long as they are located in the same place of residence.
9. The higher education institution shall provide sufficient information for each submitted output to determine precisely what the output is whether it is authored solely or co-authored by the staff member, in what physical form the output exists, and where it is located.

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<sup>33</sup> Another specific case is the area of assessment defined by the study programme in the field of study, the content definition of which is related to the preparation of experts for some of the regulated professions with the coordination of education listed in Annex no. 2 Decree of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports of the Slovak Republic no. 16/2016 Coll. and is based on trade unions assigned to regulated professions according to Government Regulation no. 296/2010 Coll.



10. The outputs are presented in full, i.e so that they can be assessed through holistic expert evaluation. In justified cases, in particular, if the nature of the output does not allow for its remote assessment, the higher education institution shall ensure access to the output during the visit of the working group on-site.
11. The publication date of at least 2 outputs of the creative activity of each assessed person shall fall within the assessment period.
12. If the submitted output is published in a language other than the state language and English, a short abstract in English, which characterizes the content, nature, and main results of the output should provide by the higher education institution.
13. For each output a list of citations and a brief annotation in which it provides contextual information on the impact of the output on socio-economic practice. The annotation will include factual information about the evidence of how the output has gained the recognition, influenced the state of science, art, technology, led to further development, or was used. This evidence should be concise, verifiable and, where appropriate, externally cited. Where claims concerning the industrial significance of the output are made, the contact details of the industrial partner must be provided to allow the claims to be verified.
14. Where a non-textual or other practical output (including patents, software, and standards documents) is submitted, an annotation with contextual information, in particular a description of the creative process and the content of the creative activity, should be attached, if this is not apparent in the output.
15. If a higher education institution decides to submit an output containing secret information, it is its responsibility to obtain the approval of the relevant authority or stakeholder to submit it for evaluation. The institution is obliged to make this output available to the working group for assessment/review. The reviewers of this output are bound by the confidentiality agreement.

### **Article 23**

#### **Aspects and procedures for assessing the level of outputs of creative activity**

1. The basis for assessment shall, as a general rule, be:
  - a) the output of creative activity,
  - b) other documents provided by the higher education institution,
  - c) other publicly available contextual information and information from bibliometric and citation databases, registers of records of publishing and artistic activity, repositories, full-text, bibliographic and bibliometric electronic information sources or from other search systems that are accepted as relevant in the relevant field,
  - d) interviews with the authors of the outputs during the visit of the working group on-site.
2. As part of the assessment of the quality level domain of the output, the reviewers assess the originality, rigor, and relevance of each output, taking into account the peculiarities of creative activities and their assessment in the relevant field.
3. Originality will be understood as the extent to which the output makes an important and innovative contribution to understanding and knowledge in the field. The outputs that demonstrate originality may do one or more of the following:
  - a) produce and interpret new empirical findings or new material;
  - b) engage with new and/or complex empirical problems;
  - c) develop innovative empirical methods, methodologies, and analytical techniques;
  - d) show imaginative and creative solutions;
  - e) provide new arguments and/or new forms of expression, formal innovations, interpretations and/or insights;

- f) collect and engage with new types of data; and/or advance theory or the analysis of doctrine, policy or practice, and new forms of expression.
4. Rigour will be understood as the extent to which the output demonstrates intellectual coherence and integrity, and adopts robust and appropriate concepts, analyses, sources, theories, and/or methodologies.
5. The relevance of the output is understood as the beneficial effect of the output on the external environment outside the higher education institution as well as on its learning activities and students, i.e economy, society, culture, public policy and services, health, environment, or quality of life in different geographical contexts along the local-global continuum. Impact includes, for example, effect, change, or benefit in activities, attitudes, awareness, behaviors, opportunities, capacities, performance, policies, practices, and understanding processes. It can manifest itself in different categories of beneficiaries – clients, voters, communities, students, organizations, society, or individuals. The relevance may also mean limiting or preventing risks, damages, costs, or other adverse effects. Part of the evaluation of the impact of output is the assessment of its impact on the development of a scientific or artistic discipline, scientific and artistic thinking, and the impact on students, education, and other activities. The relevance will be assessed in terms of the extent to which potential categories of beneficiaries have been reached – clients, voters, communities, organizations, society, students, or individuals. The relevance will not be assessed from a purely geographical point of view or from the absolute number of beneficiaries. The criteria will apply regardless of where the impact occurred, regardless of the geographical location of the recipient. The relevance assessment shall also take into account the extent to which the impact has enabled, enriched, influenced, informed, or changed the performance, policy, procedures, attitudes, products, services, understanding, information, or quality of life and saturation of beneficiaries' needs.
6. When assessing outputs, the reviewers will holistically consider the evidence of the output quality in terms of its originality, rigor, and impact and will apply the general definitions of quality levels/standards of excellence indicated by the letters A +, A, A-, B, and C.
  - a) A+: internationally excellent level in terms of originality, rigor, and relevance of output of creative activity;
  - b) A: internationally significant level in terms of originality, rigor, and relevance of the output of the creative activity which lags slightly behind world quality standards;
  - c) A-: internationally recognized level in terms of originality, rigor, and relevance of the output of the creative activity;
  - d) B: nationally recognized level in terms of originality, rigor, and relevance of the output of the creative activity;
  - e) C: a level below the nationally recognized quality standard of the creative activity in terms of originality, rigor, and relevance of the output of the creative activity or unclassified output.
7. Reviewers shall classify the output of the creative activity as „unclassified“ (C) if the output is not submitted following the requirements under Art. 4 of this Methodology. Missing outputs will also be considered unclassified if the institution does not submit the required number of outputs for each person in the relevant area of assessment.
8. In assessing the outputs, the assessors shall take into account the specificities of the assessment of the level of creative activity according to the fields of study to which the relevant area of assessment is assigned.
9. The specificities of the evaluation of the level of outputs of creative activity are taken into account within the groups of study fields to which the area of assessment is assigned. Fields of study are classified into the following groups as follows:

- a) Group of Exact and Natural Sciences: Biology, Ecological and Environmental Sciences, Physics, Chemistry, Informatics, Mathematics, Earth Sciences.
- b) Group of Social Studies and Humanities: Security Sciences, Economics and Management, Philology, Philosophy, Historical Sciences, Speech Therapy and Medical Education, Media and Communication Studies, Political Sciences, Law, Psychology, Social Work, Sociology and Social Anthropology, Theology, Teaching, and Pedagogical Sciences, Arts and Culture Sciences, Sports Sciences.
- c) Group of Medical and Health Care Sciences: Pharmacy, Nursing, Midwifery, Public Health, Veterinary Medicine, General Medicine, Health Sciences, Dentistry.
- d) Group of Technical and Technological Sciences: Architecture and Urbanism, Biotechnology, Transport, Woodworking, Electrical Engineering, Geodesy and Cartography, Chemical Engineering and Technology, Cybernetics, Forestry, Defense and Military, Agriculture and Landscaping, Food, Spatial Planning, Construction, Engineering, Acquisition and processing of earth resources.
- e) Group of Arts: Art.

## **Article 24**

### **The specificities of domain evaluation level of output quality by the group of branches**

1. For the areas of assessment of outputs from the group of Exact and Natural Sciences, the working groups shall focus on seeking evidence of any of the following quality characteristics, which are appropriate for each of the quality levels indicated by letters:
  - a) scientific precision and consistency about the theoretical framework, methodological design, selection and use of empirical methods and techniques, presentation and interpretation of results, compliance with ethical principles,
  - b) a significant contribution and dissemination of empirical knowledge and conceptual framework of the field,
  - c) a significant contribution to the introduction of new empirical methods and techniques,
  - d) the academic relevance of research and its significant contribution to building theory, enriching scientific thinking or developing a new paradigm in the field,
  - e) the social relevance of research,
  - f) the application benefits of output for the development of knowledge, skills, socio-economic practice, new materials and technologies, management and / or policy,
  - g) the difficulty of the research/empirical challenge in terms of scale, labor intensity, material and infrastructure needs, data collection, and research logistics.
2. The reviewers within the assessment of outputs from the group of Exact and Natural Sciences shall welcome and appreciate research practices that promote reproducible science and the application of best practices. Examples include registered reports, the publication of data and data sets, experimental materials, analytical code, and use of report checklists for publication and those relating to the use of animals in research. They contribute to the rigor assessment of the outputs presented. Replication studies may be submitting as outputs and will be evaluated on the extent to which they contribute significant new knowledge, improved methods, or theory or practice.
3. The reviewers within the assessment of outputs from the group of Exact and Natural Sciences shall, as a standard, take into account information from reputable international databases, in particular to assess the academic relevance and impact of output.
4. For the areas of assessment of outputs from the group of Social Sciences and Humanities, the working groups shall focus on seeking evidence of any of the following quality characteristics, which are appropriate for each of the quality levels indicated by letters:

- a) scientific precision and consistency about the theoretical framework, epistemological anchoring, methodological design, selection and use of empirical methods and techniques, presentation and interpretation of results,
- b) a significant contribution and dissemination of empirical knowledge and conceptual framework of the field,
- c) the creativity of the solution and significant contribution to the building of theory and enrichment of scientific thinking and paradigms of the field,
- d) the social relevance of research,
- e) the application benefits of output for the development of knowledge, skills, socio-economic practice, civil society development, governance and / or policy,
- f) the difficulty of the research/empirical challenge in terms of scale, labor intensity, material and infrastructure needs, data collection, and research logistics.

5. The reviewers within the assessment of outputs from the group of Social Sciences and Humanities, where relevant in the field concerned, may take into account information from reputable international databases, in particular to assess the academic relevance and impact of output.

6. For the assessment areas of outputs from the group of Medical and Health Care Sciences, the working groups shall focus on seeking evidence of any of the following quality characteristics that are appropriate for each of the quality levels indicated by the letters:

- a) scientific precision and consistency about the theoretical framework, methodological design, selection and use of empirical methods and techniques, presentation and interpretation of results, compliance with ethical principles,
- b) a significant contribution and dissemination of empirical knowledge and conceptual framework of the field,
- c) a significant contribution to the introduction of new empirical methods and techniques, diagnostic, therapeutic, and nursing procedures,
- d) the academic relevance of research and its significant contribution to building theory, enriching the scientific thinking of the field,
- e) the social relevance of research,
- f) the application benefits of output for the development of knowledge, skills, socio-economic practice, new medicines, management and / or policy,
- g) the difficulty of the empirical challenge in terms of scale, labor intensity, material and infrastructure needs, data collection, and research logistics.

7. The reviewers within the assessment of outputs from the group of Medical and Health Care Sciences shall welcome and appreciate research practices that promote reproducible science and the application of best practices. Examples include registered reports, the publication of data and data sets, experimental materials, analytical code, and use of report checklists for publication and those relating to the use of animals in research. They contribute to the rigor assessment of the outputs presented. Replication studies may be submitting as outcomes and will be evaluated on the extent to which they contribute significant new knowledge, improved methods, or theory or practice.

8. The reviewers within the assessment of outputs from the group of Medical and Health Care Sciences, if relevant in the field concerned, shall take into account information from reputable international databases, in particular to assess the academic relevance and impact of output to the extent appropriate to international practice in the relevant field of study.

9. For the assessment areas of outputs from the group of Technical and Technological Sciences, the workgroups shall focus on seeking evidence of any of the following quality characteristics, which are appropriate for each of the quality levels indicated by the letters:

- a) scientific precision and consistency about the theoretical framework, methodological design, selection and use of empirical methods and techniques, presentation and interpretation of results,

- b) a significant contribution and dissemination of empirical knowledge and conceptual framework of the field,
  - c) a significant contribution to building theory and enriching scientific thinking in the field;
  - d) the social, technological, and economic relevance of research,
  - e) the application benefits of output for the development of knowledge, skills, socio-economic practice, new materials, new technical and technological solutions, management and / or policy,
  - f) the difficulty of the empirical challenge in terms of scale, labor intensity, material and infrastructure needs, data collection, and research logistics.
10. The reviewers within the assessment of outputs from the group of Technical and Technological Sciences shall take into account information from reputable international databases in the assessment, in particular to assess the academic relevance and impact of output.
11. In the field of art assessment, art outputs are assessed in the following types of artistic activity: architecture, audiovisual art, theater/drama art, design, music art, curatorial work, restoration, dance art, fine art.
12. To assess the creative activities in art, reputable institutions or events are considered to be, based on their long-term programme, considered by professional reflection (feedback, reviews, research) as a quality criterion given the current state of thought in the art field.
13. For the assessment areas of outputs from the group of Art, the working groups shall focus on seeking evidence of any of the following quality characteristics that are appropriate for any of the quality levels indicated by letters:
- a) an excellent output of artistic activity, which brings by its inventiveness and originality new developmental tendencies in the relevant type of art in an international context,
  - b) a significant output of artistic activity that brings new creative solutions, ideas, or approaches enriching contemporary artistic tendencies in the relevant type of art,
  - c) standard output, which takes into account current artistic trends in the relevant art with creative potential and is realized abroad or presented at reputable foreign institutions or events considered by the professional community as opinion-forming,
  - d) standard output, which takes into account current artistic trends in the relevant art with creative potential and is realized at home or presented at reputable home institutions or home events considered by the professional community as opinion-forming.
14. For the assessment of research outputs related to art, specificities for Social Sciences and Humanities shall be applied.
15. In impact assessment of art outputs, the working groups shall concentrate on seeking evidence of any of the following characteristics, which are appropriate for each level. These include:
- a) the output valuation obtained,
  - b) awards at festivals and competitions,
  - c) the reproduction of the work,
  - d) the inclusion of the work in a significant collection,
  - e) the inclusion of the work in a major international database,
  - f) professional nomination of the work/performance for the top international jury award,
  - g) responses, citations/reproductions, reviews in reputable professional periodicals and publications,
  - h) monographs on the author's work and catalogs published by reputable publishing houses,
  - i) invited participation in domestic artistic symposia.

## **Article 25**

### **Procedure for determining the overall quality profile for the assessment area**

1. The overall quality profile of outputs shall be developed by calculating the percentage of outputs that are assigned to each quality level, with each output contributing equally. Percentage values are rounded

to an integer. As a fictitious example, the proportions can be given: A + (16%), A (34%), A- (39%), B (11%), C (0%).

2. The total score is calculated by assigning weights from 5 to 1 to the individual levels A + to C. in succession. The resulting creative activity level score for the assessment area is calculated according to a fictitious example as follows:  $16 \times 5 + 34 \times 4 + 39 \times 3 + 11 \times 2 + 0 \times 1/100 = 3.55$ .

3. The lower assessment thresholds for categorization of creative activity levels are as follows:

- a) internationally excellent quality A +: 4,50;
- b) internationally significant quality A: 3,50;
- c) internationally recognized quality A- quality: 2,50;
- d) nationally recognized quality B: 1,50;
- e) inadequate quality C: 1.00.

4. The final level of creative activity is A.

## Part VI.

### Glossary of terms

#### Article 26

##### Introductory provisions

1. To assess the Standards for the Internal System, the Standards for the Study Programme and Standards for the Habilitation procedure and Inaugural procedure, the following conceptual system is defined, this would ensure a uniform understanding of the requirements for the internal system, for the study programme, and habilitation procedure and inaugural procedures by employees and working groups of the Slovak Accreditation Agency for Higher Education, higher education institutions and other stakeholders in the process granting accreditation and conformity assessment according to Act no. 269/2018 Coll. on quality assurance of higher education and amending Act no. 343/2015 Coll. on public procurement and on the amendment of certain laws as amended.
2. There is no requirement to replace terms used by the higher education institutions with terms used in the Standards if the higher education institutions explain any significant differences in the application or the annex application or another document of its internal system.

#### Article 26

##### Terms used

1. **A criterion** is a specific requirement of a standard or a partial aspect thereof, the fulfillment of which is a prerequisite for the overall assessment of the fulfillment of the relevant standard.
2. **A part of the higher education institution** is a faculty or other pedagogical, research, development, artistic, economic-administrative and information workplace at the seat of the institution or its faculty, special purpose facility, detached workplace, consultation center, or another workplace outside the seat of the institution or its faculty.
3. **A related field** is a field of study, an interdisciplinary or transdisciplinary field of knowledge, which contributes in a relevant way to the achievement of the learning outcomes of the study programme concerned.
4. **A response** is a citation, review, or art criticism of a published work. The response to artistic activity is in particular a published citation of work, presentation and artistic performance, review or artistic criticism of work, presentation or artistic performance, reproduction of a work with a clear designation of the author in a foreign publication or domestic publication or medium.

5. **Academic fraud** is a dishonest action that is contrary to academic integrity and moral standards. These include plagiarism, cheating tests, fabrication of research results, recording fictitious data, omitting inappropriate facts and data, falsifying research, dishonest practices in publishing results, not declaring conflicts of interest, misusing the information gathered during the assessment, fictitious authorship, superficial and poor quality assessment, systematic and conscious publishing in magazines and publishing houses showing signs of dishonest practices (magazines and publishing houses referred to in the academic community as predatory).
6. **Accreditation of habilitation procedure and inaugural procedure** is the right to conduct habilitation procedure and inaugural procedure in the field of habilitation procedure and inaugural procedure.
7. **Accreditation of study programme** is the right to conduct a study programme and award its graduates a corresponding academic degree.
8. **Approbation** in teacher combination study programmes is a set of subjects and rules that apply to a single subject; approbation in translation combination programmes is a set of subjects and rules that apply to one language<sup>34</sup>.
9. **Assessment of compliance with a standard** is a systematic, independent, and documented process of providing and obtaining evidence of compliance with the criteria of the standard and objectively evaluating the degree of compliance. It is a cooperation between the higher education institution and the working group of the agency, whose common interest is to provide sufficient confidence in the quality of education provided.
10. **Autocitation** is the agreement of any author or several authors in a cited and citing the document.
11. **Competence** is an authority, extent, responsibility, the person's reach to the role, process, procedure, activity which the person is responsible for.
12. **Competence** is the ability of a person to perform a certain professional activity. Competences, together with knowledge and skills, serve as structural characteristics of learning outcomes.
13. **Creative activity** means a research activity, development activity, artistic activity, or other creative activity<sup>35</sup> of a higher education institution that is relevant to its mission, mostly to learning objectives and outcomes.
14. **Evidence** is a verifiable record, a statement of verifiable facts or other information proving the fulfillment/non-fulfillment of a criterion provided by a higher education institution or verifiable by the Agency from available sources.
15. **Efficiency** is a measure of the implementation of planned activities and the achievement of planned objectives, results.
16. **Efficiency** is the relationship between the results obtained and the resources, inputs, and outputs of the process used.
17. **Final thesis** means bachelor thesis in first-degree study programmes, diploma thesis in second-degree study programmes, and dissertation thesis in third-degree study programmes. It is a part of every study programme and together with its defense, it forms one subject. The defense of the final thesis belongs to the state exams.
18. **Informal education** is the learning through the lifelong process of acquiring knowledge, skills, and attitudes from day-to-day experience, from the environment, and contacts with other people.
19. **Internal system processes** are flows of necessary interrelated activities that the higher education institution identifies, plans, implements, monitors and improves in fulfilling the mission and strategic goals of the institution (educational processes, creative processes, other institution processes) following the internal system policy.

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<sup>34</sup> According to Sec. 53a) art. 3 of the Higher Education Act.

<sup>35</sup> According to Sec. 3 art. 2, letter a) of the Quality Assurance Act.

20. **Learning objective of the study programme** are the statements that identify the student's ability at the end of the programme; i.e express the expectations for graduates of the study programme. The objectives are implemented in the programme through verifiable/measurable learning outcomes.
21. **Learning outcome**<sup>36</sup> is a detailed description of what the learner knows, understands, and can do at the end of the learning process so that the individual learning objectives of the programme (e.g in the structure of knowledge, skills, competences<sup>37</sup>) are fulfilled. In contrast to the learning objective, the learning outcome is fixed and the rate of its fulfillment is measurable and verifiable. Learning outcomes are determined for the study programme as a whole, as well as for its parts and individual study subjects.
22. **Long-term and continuous success** is a continuous success over the last 10 years before the year in which the creative activity is assessed.
23. **Modification of the study programme** means the addition or deletion of compulsory subjects or compulsory optional subjects, a change in the conditions for the regular completion of study or modification of the information sheet of a compulsory subject or compulsory optional subject, except for teacher updates, recommended literature or subject evaluation<sup>38</sup>.
24. **Non-formal education** means systematic education, carried out outside the formal education system, organized by different institutions to provide education for certain groups of the population in selected types, forms, and content areas.
25. **Profile study subject** is the subject of the study programme that significantly contributes to the achievement of the graduate profile, i.e. the learning objectives and learning outcomes of the relevant study programme.
26. **Quality assurance/internal system policies** are deliberately set out a set of principles and procedures that guide the activities of the higher education institutions and its staff, students, and external stakeholders to achieve continuous quality assurance and development of higher education and related activities.
27. **Scientific integrity** is a prerequisite for quality scientific work consisting of strict adherence to the highest professional and moral standards, transparency, conducting research critically and without prejudice, and the absolute integrity of the practice, teaching, and administration of science. Its opposite is scientific dishonesty and dishonesty.
28. **Skill** is the competence or instrumental art to apply knowledge and to perform a certain cognitive, psychomotor, or social activity easily and accurately. Skills, together with knowledge and competence, serve as structural characteristics of learning outcomes.
29. **Stakeholders** are higher education actors, persons, communities, or organizations that may influence or be influenced by the learning process and creative activity. A distinction is made between internal stakeholders (students and teaching staff) and external stakeholders (employers and other representatives of the relevant sectors of the economy and social practice, university graduates, domestic and foreign university partners, etc.).
30. **Standards for habilitation procedure and inaugural procedure** are the set of requirements whose fulfillment is conditional on the granting of the accreditation for habilitation procedure and inaugural procedure. These requirements are set out in Articles 2 – 8 of these standards.

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<sup>36</sup> Refers to the „outcome of higher education“ in the terminology of the Quality Assurance Act (Sec. 3, art. 3, letter a) and art. 4), respectively “Outcome of education” in the terminology of the Decree of the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic no. 614/2002 Coll. on the study credit system.

<sup>37</sup> Competences in terms of Act, competences in terms of discourse in the pedagogical professional literature.

<sup>38</sup> According to Sec. 2 letter g) of the Quality Assurance Act.



31. **Standards for the internal quality assurance system of higher education** are the set of requirements for the internal system and its implementation<sup>39</sup>.
32. **Standards for the study programme** are the set of requirements whose fulfillment is conditional for the granting of the accreditation of the programme.
33. **Teachers (Teaching staff)** are all persons who provide study programmes, whether employed as a university teacher, a researcher, an art worker, or as a doctoral candidate or practitioner, regardless of whether they work at the university for fixed weekly working time or for shorter weekly working time or on the basis.
34. **The assessment schedule** is the timetable for the procedures from receiving the application or the Agency's initiative to the decision or opinion of the Executive Board.
35. **The Catalog of Good Practices** is a continuously updated database of examples of good practice concerning the fulfillment of individual standards and criteria.
36. **The excellent international level of creative activity** is the highest level of quality of the results of creative activities, determined based on evaluation according to the procedures and criteria set out in the Evaluation methodology of creative activities issued by the Agency. The concept does not cover the nature or geographical scope, nor the place of implementation, nor the place of dissemination of the results of the creative activity.
37. **The findings of the working group** are the determination of the degree of compliance of the subject matter of the procedures by the assessment of the provided evidence quantified by the performance indicator. The findings of the working group are the basis for processing the conclusions of the working group in the assessment report of the working group.
38. **The internal quality assurance system for higher education** is a consistently interrelated set of policies, structures, and processes through which the higher education institution ensures and develops the quality of its mission in the field of higher education, creative activities, and other related activities.
39. **The internationally recognized level of creative activity** is the third-highest level of quality in the results of creative activities, determined based on evaluation according to the procedures and criteria set out in the Evaluation methodology of creative activities issued by the Agency. The concept does not refer to nature or geographical scope, nor the place of implementation, nor the place of dissemination of the results of the creative activity.
40. **The nationally recognized level of creative activity** is the fourth-highest level of quality of the results of creative activities, determined based on evaluation according to the procedures and criteria set out in the Evaluation methodology of creative activities issued by the Agency. The concept does not refer to nature or geographical scope, nor the place of implementation, nor the place of dissemination of the results of the creative activity.
41. **The on-site assessment plan** is time and material programme of activities of the working group, representatives of the applicant, and representatives of stakeholders during the assessment at a specific workplace.
42. **The qualifications framework** is the national qualifications framework. The levels of the National Qualifications Framework are assigned to the levels of the Qualifications Framework in the European Higher Education Area<sup>40</sup> and the European Qualifications Framework<sup>41</sup>.
43. **The rigorous thesis** is a work following a completed study programme, the defense of which is part of a rigorous examination, which is authorized to conduct only institutions that have an accredited study programme in the relevant field of study, after which the academic title "master" is awarded.

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<sup>39</sup> According to Sec. 2 letter a) of Act no. 269/2018 Coll. on Quality Assurance of Higher Education and Amendment of Act no. 343/2015 Coll. on Public Procurement and Amendments to Certain Acts, as amended.

<sup>40</sup> Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area.

<sup>41</sup> European Qualification Framework.

44. **The significant international level of creative activity** is the second-highest level of quality in the results of creative activities, determined based on an evaluation by the procedures and criteria set out in the Evaluation methodology of creative activities issued by the Agency. The term does not relate to nature or geographical scope, the place of implementation, or the place of dissemination of the results of creative activity.
45. **The structures of the internal system** are collective bodies, committees, departments of the institution, posts, and contractors or persons, and their relations with the designated competencies and responsibilities for the defined extent of implementation of the internal quality assurance system policies.
46. **The teaching basis** in teacher combination study programmes is a set of subjects of pedagogical-psychological basis, social science background, and didactics of teaching subjects. The teaching basis together with the combination of two approbations forms the teacher combination study programme<sup>42</sup>.
47. **The teacher providing the subject** is responsible for the subject, leads lectures and other central educational activities of the subject, and is responsible for quality assurance activities in the subject and development of the subject so that the required learning outcomes of the study programme are achieved.
48. **Transferable competences** are not specifically linked to a particular job or profession, but can be used and further developed in a variety of situations and conditions. Examples include communication skills, mathematical skills, organizational skills, digital skills, analytical skills, interpersonal skills, creativity and abstract thinking ability, critical thinking skills, mentoring and supervising skills, business skills, motivation and learning skills, contextual thinking, and metacognitive skills.
49. **Translatological basis** in translation and interpretation combination study programmes is a set of subjects of the translation basis. The translation basis, together with a combination of two approbations, forms a translational combination study programme<sup>43</sup>.
50. **Working in a field of study** is a condition when a person is in employment with a higher education institution and pursues an educational or creative activity within the relevant field of study.

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<sup>42</sup> According to Sec. 53a art. 4 of the Higher Education Act.

<sup>43</sup> According to Sec. 53a) art. 4 of the Higher Education Act.