



# **METHODOLOGY FOR THE EVALUATION OF STANDARDS**

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## Part I

### Article 1

#### Introductory provisions

1. The Slovak Accreditation Agency for Higher Education (hereinafter referred to as the “Agency”) issues the Methodology for the Evaluation of Standards 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 under Sec. 2 letter d) a set of procedures, criteria, and indicators through which the Agency's Executive Board review panel and the Agency's staff evaluate the compliance with the standards and measures to ensure compliance with the standards.
3. The standards include Standards for the Higher Education Internal Quality Assurance System (hereinafter the “Standards for the Internal System”), the Standards for Study Programmes, and the Standards for Habilitation Proceedings and Proceedings for the Appointment of Professors (hereinafter the “Standards for Habilitation Proceedings and Inauguration Proceedings”) issued by the Agency.
4. A review panel is an Executive Board panel of experts following Sec. 8 of the Quality Assurance Act.
5. The verification of compliance with the Standards for the Internal System is considered an external part of higher education quality assurance under the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG 2015).
6. The procedures, criteria, and indicators set out in this methodology shall be applied appropriately depending on the type, requirements, and nature of a proceeding.
7. Proceedings' activities under the Quality Assurance Act are regulated by separate follow-up regulations and guidelines of the Agency.

## **Part II**

### **Procedures for the evaluation of standards**

#### **Article 2**

##### **Procedure framework for review panels**

1. Review panels and the staff of the Agency **shall evaluate the compliance of standards** and corrective measures by an expert review of:
  - a) the application's supporting documentation,
  - b) information obtained by visiting the higher education institution (site visit evaluation),<sup>1</sup>
  - c) available data, and
  - d) consultations with stakeholders.
2. A review panel in the process of evaluating the compliance of standards and corrective measures examines and evaluates evidence of compliance or non-compliance with the standards of the higher education institution.
3. In the course of its activities, a review panel may request additional information, documents, or evidence from the higher education institution, or may request: an access to documentation, other information sources, written parts of the verification of learning outcomes, final theses of students, may request a meeting with stakeholders, etc.
4. Activities of a review panel shall be managed by its chair in cooperation with an allocated Agency's employee.

#### **Article 3**

##### **Evaluation of supporting documentation, available data and information**

1. A review panel shall start its work by examining the application and the supporting documentation of the application.
2. A review panel and the Agency staff shall identify the evidence of the compliance of the internal system (of the set of rules, policies, structures, and processes) mainly in the application's documentation and in the institution's valid internal regulations published on its website.
3. A review panel or the staff shall take into account the institution's self-assessment of compliance of individual standards and references to the relevant evidence (procedures, records, systems, a list and characteristics of premises, databases, etc.) in the application documentation, mainly in the internal evaluation report.
4. The institution shall provide a review panel or the Agency staff with specific evidence in the form of references to publicly available electronic documents, or in an attachment or physically during a site visit. A review panel will take this fact into account in the schedule of the site visit.
5. A review panel, in cooperation with the Agency's authorized staff, shall verify the relevant information in available registers, mainly in: 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, they may supplement the necessary information.

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<sup>1</sup> In the event of objective obstacles to a site visit (e.g. epidemiological measures), the Agency may use procedures of distant evaluation.

6. A review panel and the staff of the Agency may, in addition to the application documentation, seek and supplement other available data and information relevant to the proceedings in question.
7. A review panel or the Agency staff shall verify the evidence of compliance of the implementation of the internal system with the standards mainly in the institution's records, by a site visit, in interviews with stakeholder representatives, and through other procedures.
8. Designated members of a review panel evaluate the level of research, artistic and other activities for individual areas of evaluation (study programmes, habilitation and inauguration proceedings) on the grounds of the institution's documentation and other available data according to the Methodology for the Evaluation of Research, Artistic and Other Activities (Part V).

## Article 4

### Higher education institution site visit and consultations with stakeholders

1. Following the review panel's findings from the submitted documentation, and considering available data and information, the review panel in cooperation with the Agency staff and institution's representatives draw up a **site visit evaluation plan**<sup>2</sup>.
2. The site visit evaluation plan aims to ensure the effectiveness of the site visit, mainly the agreement of cooperation between the institution and the review panel. The chair of the review panel may, in justified cases, adjust the plan during the site visit.
3. The site visit evaluation plan shall include:
  - a) the subject and extent of the evaluation,
  - b) the times and the content of the review panel's schedule,
  - c) representatives of the visited institution and other stakeholders.
4. In the case of study programme proceedings, the site visit is arranged mainly during the delivery of educational activities.
5. The site visit evaluation shall consist of:
  - a) an opening meeting with representatives of the institution and of the workplace, including the management,
  - b) collecting information and evidence,
  - c) a summary of findings; and
  - d) a final meeting with representatives of the institution and of the workplace, including the management.
6. During the site visit evaluation, the institution shall cooperate with the review panel following the site visit evaluation plan, mainly by ensuring:
  - a) the presence of the representatives of
    - workplace management,
    - persons responsible for the internal system processes,
    - persons responsible for the quality of study programmes, habilitation proceedings and Inauguration proceedings,
    - teachers,
    - students,
    - supporting and administrative staff,
    - external stakeholders, mainly graduates, employers, practice partners, and other participants as stated in the site visit plan.
  - b) an access of review panel members to the premises of the workplace,

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<sup>2</sup> The times and the content of the programme of the review panel, the applicant's representatives and other stakeholders' representatives during the site visit evaluation.

- c) an access to the institution's records, including students', staff's, researchers', artists' files, and records of education,
  - d) an access to information systems and databases,
  - e) a possible participation of the review panel members in the institution's on-going educational activities,
  - f) availability of written records of assessment (examinations), assignments, final theses, etc.,
  - g) suitable premises for the review panel's work and consultations with the proceeding's participants,
  - h) accompanying persons for the review panel.
7. The review panel may also have other formal and informal interviews with stakeholders.
  8. The review panel members shall keep records of their findings and evidence.
  9. Once the review panel completed the site visit related tasks, and before the site visit final meeting, the members shall evaluate their findings and records. They focus mainly on summarizing good practice and identifying workplace's non-compliance and the related evidence.
  10. The final review panel site visit meeting shall include, in addition to the representatives of the institution's management and the representatives of the workplace, the following:
    - a) persons responsible for the institution's internal system,
    - b) persons responsible for the individual processes at the workplace and responsible for the study programmes, and
    - c) student representative of the workplace.
  11. At the final site visit meeting, the review panel chair shall usually
    - a) summarize the procedure and the outcome of the evaluation,
    - b) present briefly the partial findings,
    - c) provide the representative of the workplace with an opportunity to express their opinion on the presented partial findings,
    - d) inform about the next procedure,
    - e) if necessary, request making a copy of records proving significant findings.
  12. Upon completion of the site visit, the review panel shall prepare a partial report assessment, stating, in particular, the composition of the review panel, the real extent of the site visit evaluation, the extent and the process of sample selection if taken, a list of interviews and a list interviewees, inspected premises, facilities and sources of information, records and evidence demonstrating the outcome of the evaluation, propose measures relating to the extent of the evaluation and recommendations for the workplace.
  13. If the proceeding contains only one site visit evaluation, the review panel shall draw up an evaluation report directly in accordance with Article 7.
  14. If the institution does not provide the necessary cooperation to the review panel or the staff of the Agency in accordance with the requirements of this methodology, the Agency shall consider this a breach of the obligation under Sec. 20 par. 1 letter e) of the Act on Higher Education Institutions, as amended, and shall take this fact into account when evaluating compliance with the standards.
  15. The review panel does not provide any specific solutions or consultancy to the institution. After the site visit, the review panel formulates the recommendations related to the findings in the evaluation report.

## **Article 5**

### **Verification of information and evidence**

1. The review panel shall verify information and evidence by means of:
  - a) examining files, records, and information of the workplace,
  - b) examining students' work (term/year projects, final theses) and their assignments,

- c) examining written records of assessment (examinations),
  - d) inspecting premises and equipment,
  - e) verifying spatial, material, technical, laboratory, and information equipment of the workplace,
  - f) examining the institution's activities and processes,
  - g) conducting interviews (depending on the type of proceedings),
  - h) conducting group interviews,
  - i) conducting informal interviews.
2. The review panel shall verify the facts declared by the institution by conducting independent interviews mainly with:
- a) the rector and members of the institution management,
  - b) persons responsible for the internal system,
  - c) representatives of the bodies responsible for the evaluation and approval of study programmes,
  - d) persons responsible for the design, delivery, monitoring, and evaluation of study programmes,
  - e) teachers of profile courses of study programmes,
  - f) teachers,
  - g) persons providing habilitation and inauguration proceedings,
  - h) supporting staff,
  - i) student representatives,
  - j) students,
  - k) representatives of professional experts – partners of the study programme,
  - l) representatives of external professional stakeholders,
  - m) graduates.

## **Article 6**

### **The extent of verification and sample selection**

1. If the extent of the documentation or facts of the same nature to be verified is too large and if a lesser extent of verification is sufficient to ensure the compliance with the standards, the Agency's review panel or staff may in such case review only a part of the sample of relevant documentation, records, students, or other facts. However, it must be ensured that the results provide the most realistic picture possible of the level of compliance with the standards or policies of the institution's internal system.
2. The review panel shall select samples from the full range of records examined, including borderline cases (e.g. students with average, best and worst grades).
3. In case of a deficiency, or non-compliance, the review panel members shall adjust the sample selection and examine whether:
  - a) it is a one-off failure or a recurring systemic failure,
  - b) the identified deficiency has or does not have an impact on the quality and outcomes of the education.
4. To increase the efficiency of the evaluation and to reduce the burden on the institution during a site visit, it is possible to apply the study programme sample selection in one field of study and at one level of education in one workplace. The sample selection is determined by the Agency<sup>3</sup>.

## **Article 7**

### **Elaborating the Evaluation Report**

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<sup>3</sup> The verification of the study programme criteria number 6 ( Teaching staff), 7 (Research, artistic and other activities) and 11 (On-going monitoring, periodic review, and periodic approval of study programmes) is not liable to the sample selection.

1. After the completion of the site evaluation of all higher education institution's workplaces, the chair along with the other members of the review panel, shall summarize the findings of the partial reports and elaborate the Evaluation Report.
2. The Evaluation Report presents:
  - a) the facts that the review panel's conclusions were based on,
  - b) the procedure used for the evaluation of documentation
  - c) the evaluation of the level of compliance of each standard,
  - d) identified deficiencies,
  - e) recommendations for the proceeding's party
  - f) the proposal of the decision or stance of the Agency; and
  - g) the names and surnames of the review panel members.
3. The chair of the review panel shall submit the Evaluation Report to the Agency.

## Article 8

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

1. The members of the review panel shall, based on the evidence reviewed and the findings gathered during the evaluation, determine the level of compliance of each criterion of the evaluation of Standards for the Internal System (IS Criteria, Article 12 of the Methodology) using the Internal System Standards Compliance Scale, ranging between grades **A to D**, or **NA**:
  - a) **grade A** – the submitted evidence shows compliance with the stated criterion of the standard; the compliance is an example of good practice for other institutions.
  - b) **grade B** – the submitted evidence shows compliance with the stated criterion of the standard.
  - c) **grade C** – the submitted evidence does not show compliance with the stated criterion of the standard; the identified deficiency has no impact on the learning outcomes and its removal can be carried out within six months.
  - d) **grade D** – the submitted evidence does not show compliance with the stated criterion of the standard; the removal of the identified deficiency is not expected to be carried out within six months.
  - e) **NA (not available)** – the given criterion is not applicable within the institution.
2. When evaluating the institution's compliance of the implementation of the internal system with the Standards for the Internal System, the review panel shall evaluate the compliance of the delivered study programmes with the Standards for Study Programmes and the fulfilment of requirements for the Standards for Habilitation and Inauguration Proceedings.
3. The evaluation of the compliance of delivered study programmes in individual fields of study and levels of higher education<sup>4</sup> is carried out by the assigned review panel members using the Criteria for evaluating the Standards for Study Programmes (SP Criteria, Article 13) and the Scale for determining the level of compliance of delivered study programmes and the lift of restriction to design, deliver and modify study programmes in a given field of study and at a given level of the study programme (Article 9, paragraph 6).
4. The review panel evaluates the compliance of the Standards for Habilitation and Inauguration Proceedings<sup>5</sup> using the Criteria for evaluating the Standards for Habilitation and Inauguration Proceedings (HI Criteria, Article 14) and the Scale for determining the level of compliance with the Standards for Habilitation and Inauguration Proceedings (Article 10, paragraph 2).
5. The review panel shall, on the basis of the evaluation of the internal system, propose in the Evaluation Report to the Executive Board a decision on the compliance or non-compliance of the internal system of the higher education institution with the Standards for the Internal System according to Sec. 25 para. 1 of the Quality Assurance Act and on the abolition, retention, or

<sup>4</sup> Standards for the Higher Education Internal Quality Assurance System, Art. 3, para. 4.

<sup>5</sup> Standards for the Higher Education Internal Quality Assurance System, Art. 2, para. 7.

- designation of restrictions to design, deliver, and modify study programmes in given fields of study and at levels according to the institution's applications.
6. If the internal system or its implementation does not comply with the Standards for the Internal System, the review panel shall also propose to the Executive Board the imposition of **corrective measures** under Sec. 25 para. 2 of the Quality Assurance Act. The review panel may propose the imposition of several corrective measures at the same time.
  7. The review panel proposes **the compliance of the internal system and the abolition of the restrictions to design, deliver and modify study programmes in given fields of study and at levels** if the institution has this restriction, if the review panel gives each criterion **A** or **B** grades, or if a criterion is **NA**.
  8. If the review panel finds a non-compliance, i.e., any of the the IS criteria, or the SP criteria are given grades **C** or **D**, it also proposes corrective measures according to Sec. 25, par. 2:
    - a) **a regulation to remove deficiencies**, if the compliance of some IS criteria is given **grade C**.
    - b) **a suspension of study programme delivery**, if the compliance of any of the SP criteria is given **grades C or D**.
    - c) **a restriction to design and modify study programmes in a given field of study and at a level of study**, if the compliance of any of the SP criteria is given **grade D**, or **a restriction to design and modify study programmes in fields of study and at levels of study** if the compliance of any of the IS criteria is given **grade D**.
  9. If any of the HI criteria is given grade C, the review panel proposes the initiation of procedures to withdraw the accreditation of the habilitation and inauguration proceedings under Sec. 32 of the Quality Assurance Act.

## Article 9

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

1. Review panels shall, following Sec. 30 of the Quality Assurance Act, evaluate the study programme when:
  - a) evaluating the application for granting accreditation for a study programme according to Sec. 30 para. 1 of the Quality Assurance Act.
  - b) approving modifications of a study programme according to § 30 par. 9 of the Quality Assurance Act.
  - c) evaluating the compliance of a study programme delivery and the abolition of restrictions to modify a study programme and to design study programmes in a field of study and at a level of study after two years from the date of regular completion of the first students of the study programme, but not before the expiry of the standard length of study from the validity of the Agency's decision to grant a study programme accreditation according to Sec 30 par. 11 of the Quality Assurance Act.
2. When evaluating the application for a study programme accreditation and the application for a study programme modification, the review panel shall evaluate the compliance of the facts stated in the application and the supporting documentation with the Standards for Study Programmes and, at a site visit they evaluate the compliance of the conditions of the workplace for the delivery of the study programme with the application. In case of an application for a study programme modification, the need and extent of the site visit evaluation depends on the type and the extent of the required modification.
3. In evaluating the application for a study programme accreditation and the application for a study programme modification, the review panel shall, on the basis of the application evaluation and the site visit evaluation, evaluate individual **Criteria for evaluating the compliance of the Standards for Study Programmes** (SP criteria, Article 13) using the **Scale for determining the level of compliance with the Standards for Study Programmes**, using grades **A to D**, or **NA**:

- a) **Grade A** – the submitted application and the examination of the conditions for the applicant show compliance of the given standard criterion, the compliance is an example of good practice for other institutions.
  - b) **Grade B** – the submitted application and the examination of the conditions for the applicant show compliance of the given standard criterion.
  - c) **Grade C** – the submitted application and the examination of the conditions for the applicant does not show compliance with the given standard criterion.
  - d) **NA (not available)** – the given criterion is not applicable within the study programme.
4. On the grounds of the evaluation findings, the review panel shall propose:
    - a) granting a study programme accreditation, or the consent to a study programme modification, if each SP criterion is given the grades **A or B**.
    - b) rejection of an accreditation application for non-compliance with the Standards for Study Programmes, if any of the SP criterion is given grade **C**, or rejection of an application for a study programme modification.
  5. When evaluating the compliance of a study programme delivery, and lifting the restriction to modify a study programme, and designing study programmes in a given field of study and at a given level of study, the compliance of documentation and information about the delivered study programme with the Standards for Study Programmes and the compliance with the study programme accreditation application is evaluated on the grounds of the evidence made available by the institution (mainly the Report on the periodic review of a study programme) and the data of registers according to Sec. 18 par. 4. of the Quality Assurance Act. During a site visit evaluation, the review panel focuses mainly on verifying the compliance of the study programme delivery with the application and the compliance of the graduates' learning outcomes (results) of a given study programme with the learning outcomes stated in the application.
  6. When evaluating the compliance of the study programme delivery, the review panel shall evaluate the individual Criteria for evaluating the compliance of Standards for Study Programmes (SP criteria, Article 13) using the Scale for determining the level of compliance of the delivered study programme and for lifting the restriction to design, deliver and modify study programmes in a field of study and at a level of study of the programme using the grades **A to D**, or **NA**:
    - a) **grade A** – the submitted evidence shows compliance of the study programme with the given standard criterion, the compliance is an example of good practice for other institutions.
    - b) **grade B** – the submitted evidence shows compliance of the study programme with the given standard criterion.
    - c) **grade C** – the submitted evidence does not show compliance of the study programme with the given standard criterion, or the institution did not proceed in line with its internal system when designing, approving, modifying, or delivering a study programme and the identified deficiency can be removed through a study programme modification.
    - d) **grade D** – the submitted evidence does not show compliance of the study programme with the given standard criterion. Due to the way the internal system has been implemented the delivery of the study programme is not in line with the Standards for Study Programmes and the learning outcomes do not correspond to the relevant level of qualifications framework.
    - e) **NA** – the given criterion is not applicable within the institution.
  7. On the grounds of the evaluation of the compliance of the delivered study programme with the application for granting a study programme accreditation, the review panel shall in the Evaluation Report propose:
    - a) to lift the restrictions to design study programmes in a given field of study and at a level of study and lift the restriction to modify a given study programme if each SP criterion is given grades **A or B** by the review panel members. If a proceeding party has applied for the accreditation of several study programmes in the same field and level of study at the same time, the above - mentioned condition must be met for all these programmes.
    - b) to suspend a study programme under Sec. 27 of the Act, if any of the criteria are given a grade **C**.

- c) to initiate a proceeding for an extraordinary evaluation of the internal system if the review panel grades any SP criterion **D**.
8. In the case of teacher training combination study programmes, the review panel shall evaluate the compliance of each specialization and separately the teacher training foundations.
9. In the case of translation combination study programmes, the review panel shall evaluate the compliance of each language specialization and separately for the translation studies foundations.
10. In case a higher education institution delivers study programmes a given field of study in several parts of the institution or at several seats, the review panel shall evaluate each seat in which the study programme is delivered.

## Article 10

### Evaluation of compliance with the Standards for Habilitation Proceedings and Inauguration Proceedings

1. The review panel shall evaluate the compliance with the Standards for Habilitation Proceedings and Inauguration Proceedings by reviewing the application and the supporting documentation and by evaluating the requirements of the workplace for carrying out habilitation and inauguration proceedings.
2. The review panel shall evaluate the individual criteria for reviewing the compliance of the Standards for Habilitation Proceedings and Inauguration Proceedings (HI criteria, Article 14) using the Scale for determining the level of compliance of the Standards for Habilitation Proceedings and Inauguration Proceedings, using grades **B or C**, or **NA**:
  - a) **grade B** – the submitted evidence shows the compliance of the given standard criterion.
  - b) **grade C** – the submitted evidence does not show the compliance of the given criterion.
  - c) **NA** – the given criterion is not applicable within the institution.
3. The review panel members shall, on the basis of their findings, give the criteria one of the grades from paragraph 2.
4. The review panel shall state in the Evaluation Report that the Standards for Habilitation Proceedings and Inauguration Proceedings are met and shall propose granting accreditation for the habilitation and inauguration proceedings if no criterion is graded **C**.
5. The review panel shall evaluate the standard as non-compliant and shall propose to the Executive Board to reject the application or the accreditation for habilitation and inauguration proceedings if one of the criteria is graded **C**.

## Part III

### Criteria for the evaluation of standards

#### Article 11

##### Setting criteria for the evaluation of standards

1. The Agency has determined a set of criteria for standards evaluation:
  - a) Criteria for evaluating the Standards for the Internal System – IS criteria.
  - b) Criteria for evaluating the Standards for Study Programmes – SP criteria.
  - c) Criteria for evaluating the Standards for Habilitation Proceedings and Inauguration Proceedings – 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 compliance of the subject matter of the proceedings (internal system, study programme, habilitation proceedings and inauguration proceedings) with the standard.
3. The results of the evaluation of the related criteria are the basis for evaluating compliance with the standard.

#### Article 12

##### Criteria for the evaluation of the Standards for the Internal System

1. To evaluate the compliance of the Standards for the Internal Quality Assurance System (hereinafter the IS Standards), the review panel and the Agency staff shall use the Criteria for evaluating the Standards for the Internal System – **IS Criteria**.
2. The criteria for evaluating the IS 2 standard, the Policies for quality assurance (Article 2, the Standards for the Internal System)
  - IS 2.1.1.** The higher education institution has defined and applies **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 provided education at **all parts of the institution, at all levels and in 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, research, artistic and other activities, and other related activities.
  - IS 2.3.2.** The institution's strategic objectives in the strategic documents are **in compliance with the institution's mission**.
  - IS 2.4.1.** The institution **has formalized and implemented quality assurance policies** and it strictly follows them.
  - IS 2.4.2.** The institution has **established appropriate structures of a coherent higher education internal quality assurance system** for the whole institution.
  - IS 2.4.3.** The institution has **established processes of a coherent higher education internal quality assurance system** for the whole institution.
  - IS 2.4.4.** In the internal system, the institution has **defined the competence, scope, and responsibility** of individual structures, institution management, other employees, and other relevant stakeholders to ensure the quality of higher education and related activities.

- IS 2.5.1.** The institution has, for the workings of the internal system, **sufficient personal staff** which commensurate with the size of the institution, and the extent of the implemented educational, research, artistic and other activities, and with other related activities.
- IS 2.5.2.** The institution has, for the workings of the internal system, **sufficient financial resources** which commensurate with the size of the institution and the extent of the implemented educational, research, artistic and other activities, and with other related activities.
- IS 2.5.3.** The institution has, for the workings of the internal system, **sufficient material resources** which commensurate with the size of the institution and the extent of the implemented educational, research, artistic and other activities, and with other related activities.
- IS 2.6.a.1** The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure the **involment of students** in quality assurance.
- IS 2.6.a.2** The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure the **involment of external stakeholders** in quality assurance.
- IS 2.6.b.** The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure the **interrelations between education and research, artistic and other activities** while the level and focus of the research, artistic and other activities 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, research, artistic and other activities, and of 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 protection against any forms of intolerance and discrimination against** students.
- IS 2.6.d.2** The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system **ensure protection against any forms of intolerance and discrimination against** staff.
- IS 2.6.d.3** The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system **ensure protection against any forms of intolerance and discrimination against** applicants.
- IS 2.6.e.** The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure the maintainance of **scientific integrity, adherence to academic ethics, vigilance against plagiarism and other academic fraud**. The policies, structures and processes of the internal system enable their detection, and guarantee drawing consequences.
- IS 2.6.f.** The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure **effective and transparent mechanisms for examining claims** that students seek to protect their rights or legally protected interests, or point out specific deficiencies in the actions or inactions of the institution.
- IS 2.6.g.** The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure **consistency and compliance with generally binding regulations** and with internal regulations of the institution.
- IS 2.6.h.1** The 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** The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure the **development of a quality culture** at all parts and levels of the institution.
- IS 2.6.i.** The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure the **interrelationship between the internal system with the long-term plan of the institution**.
- IS 2.6.j.** The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure **effective administration** related to quality assurance, and not overloading teachers, students, and other staff of the institution with unnecessary bureaucracy.

- IS 2.7.1.** In case the institution carries out **habilitation proceedings and inauguration proceedings**, the policies, structures, and processes of the internal system shall ensure that the institution meets the standards for such proceedings.
- IS 2.8.1.** Quality assurance **policies are binding to all contractors of the institution or other third parties** that participate in or have an impact on the quality of education, research, artistic and activities, and on other related activities.
- IS 2.9.1.** Quality assurance policies and processes shall include **regular monitoring, evaluation, and review of the internal system involving all stakeholders**.
- IS 2.9.1.** Regular monitoring, evaluation, and review of the internal system take into account whether the internal system **results in 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 plan.
- 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 type of access to the information **respects specific needs of people with disabilities**.
- IS 2.10.3.** The internal system documentation relevant to students is **published in all the languages of the delivered study programmes**.
3. Criteria for evaluating the IS 3 standard, Design, modification, and approval of 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>6</sup>.
- IS 3.1.2.** The institution has established **competences, scope, and responsibilities** of individual structures, employees, 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 of study programmes **ensure the involvement of students**.
- IS 3.2.a.2.** The policies, structures, and processes for the design, modification, and approval of study programmes ensure the **involvement of 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 evaluation, 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 evaluation 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 evaluation 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 study programmes with the Standards for Study Programmes**.
- IS 3.2.d.** The policies, structures, and processes for the design, modification, and approval of study programmes ensure that study programmes have a **clearly specified and publicly known qualification** acquired upon the successful completion, corresponding to the requirements of the relevant level of the qualifications framework.
- IS 3.2.e.** The policies, 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>7</sup>.

<sup>6</sup> In the case of regulated medical study programmes they also comply with Government Decree No. 296/2010 Coll.

<sup>7</sup> In the case of study programmes preparing for the performance in regulated professions they comply with the European regulations for preparing for the performance in regulated professions.

- 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 publicly known 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 clearly specified graduate profile and clearly defined and publicly known 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 publicly known 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 publicly known 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 graduates obtain their higher education.
- IS 3.2.f.5** The policies, structures, and processes for the design, modification, and approval of study programmes ensure that study programmes **enable the achievement of the learning objectives and learning outcomes stated in the graduate profile**.
- IS 3.2.g.** The policies for the design, modification, and approval of study programmes **ensure interrelationship between educational, and research, artistic and other activities in study programmes**, while the level and focus of research, artistic and other activities correspond to the level of higher education and to the learning outcomes.
- IS 3.2.h.** The policies, structures, and processes for the design, modification, and approval of study programmes ensure that study programmes **provide students with transferable competencies** that contribute to their personal development and that can be used in their future careers and life 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 in Joint Study Programmes**.
- IS 3.4.1.** A higher education institution designs, delivers and modifies study programmes **in fields of study and levels in accordance with the granted rights<sup>8</sup>**.
- IS 3.4.2.** **The extent of consistency of the content of study programmes with the description of a given field of study**, at a given level is documented.
- IS 3.4.3** Study programmes assigned to the relevant field(s) of study and level, which are delivered at the institution and its parts, are in **compliance with the Standards for Study Programmes**.
4. Criteria for evaluating IS 4 standard, Student-centered learning, teaching, and assessment (Article 4, Standards for the Internal System)
- IS 4.a.1.** The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure that in the delivery of study programmes students are encouraged to take an **active, autonomous, and independent role in their education** and in the learning process.
- IS 4.a.2.** The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure that students' **active role, autonomy, and independence in education are reflected in their assessment**.

<sup>8</sup> In the case of regulated medical study programs they also follow Government Decree No. 296/2010 Coll.

- 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 delivery of study programmes.
  - IS 4.b.2. The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure that **a flexibility of learning paths is enabled**, also with regard to the possibility of managing work/family life while studying at a higher education institution.
  - IS 4.c.1. The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure that **various teaching and assessment methods, forms and concepts** are used within the delivery of study programmes.
  - IS 4.c.2. The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure that **the suitability and effectiveness** of the teaching 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 between students and teachers is promoted**.
  - IS 4.e.1. The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure that examiners are familiar with existing testing and examination methods of verifying the achievement of learning outcomes, and with methods of testing and assessing students' performance
  - IS 4.e.2. The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure that higher education institutions support examiners in developing their skills in the field of methods verifying the achievement of learning outcomes, and methods of testing and assessing students' performance.
  - IS 4.f.1. The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure that assessment criteria, methods, deadlines, and marking criteria **are known to students in advance and are easily available**.
  - IS 4.g.1. The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure that the assessment allows students **to demonstrate** the extent and level to which **the intended learning outcomes have been achieved and it provides** students with feedback.
  - IS 4.g.2. The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure that the assessment provides students with **feedback on the extent and level of achieved learning outcomes**.
  - IS 4.g.3. The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure that the assessment, if necessary, is accompanied by recommendations and **advice on the learning process**.
  - IS 4.h.1. The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure that the **assessment is consistent and fairly applied** to all students, carried out according to the stated procedures and that it enables students to draw reliable conclusions that do not lead to unjustified differences in similar cases.
  - IS 4.i.1. The assessment appropriately takes into account circumstances concerning students with special needs.
  - IS 4.j.1. The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure that, if possible, student assessment is carried out by **more than one examiner**.
  - IS 4.k.1. The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure a formal procedure for student appeals against the assessment is available and that applicants for remedies are guaranteed a fair treatment.
5. Criteria for evaluating IS 5 standard, Student admission, progression, recognition, and awarding of academic degrees (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, published and** easily accessible regulations covering all stages of the study cycle, e.g. student admission, progression, assessment, recognition of

- education, study completion, awarding of academic degrees, diplomas and any other evidence of formal qualifications;
- IS 5.b.1.** The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure that information for candidates is available in advance and provides objective and complete information on 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 applicants is based on appropriate methods of assessing their eligibility for admission.
  - IS 5.c.2.** The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure that the conditions of admission procedure are **inclusive and that equal opportunities are guaranteed to all applicants** who demonstrate eligibility for study.
  - IS 5.d.1.** The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure support measures and an environment for equalizing opportunities to study at a higher education institution for students with **special needs**<sup>9</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** is in accordance with the corresponding degree, requires an appropriate level of research, artistic and other activities and that effective detection and principled sanctions of plagiarism and other academic fraud are ensured.
  - IS 5.f.1.** The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure that the recognition of **higher education qualifications**, periods and parts of studies, prior education, including non-formal and informal education, is transparent, consistent, and reliable and it complies with generally binding rules and principles of the Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region<sup>10</sup> in order to support student mobility.
  - IS 5.g.1.** The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure that the institution **awards corresponding academic degrees, issues university diplomas and other documentation** indicating the obtained qualifications, including the achieved learning outcomes, context, level and the content of the successfully completed studies.
6. Criteria for evaluating 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 teaching staff is **transparent, objective, and professionally well-founded.**
  - IS 6.a.2.** The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure that the selection of higher education teaching staff is based on **requirements and criteria available in advance.**
  - IS 6.a.3.** The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure that the selection of higher education teaching staff follows **the mission and long-term plan and generally binding regulations of the institution.**
  - IS 6.b.1.** The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure that the selection of higher education teaching staff is open, and it enables their **interinstitutional, inter-sectoral and international mobility.**
  - IS 6.c.1.** The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure that the higher education institution systematically assures that it **has teaching staff whose professional qualifications**, and the level of **research, creative and other activities** enables the achievement of learning outcomes.

<sup>9</sup> According to § 100 of the Higher Education Act

<sup>10</sup> Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region, Lisbon 1997.

- IS 6.c.2** The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure that the higher education institution systematically assures it **has teaching staff** for the provision of study programmes whose **practical experience and transferable skills enable the** achievement of learning outcomes.
- IS 6.c.3.** The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure that the higher education institution systematically assures that its **teaching staff have the teaching skills** that enable the achievement of learning outcomes.
- IS 6.c.4.** The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure that the higher education institution systematically assures that the teaching staff's **workload and capacity** enables the provision of study programmes and that it corresponds to the number of students.
- IS 6.d.1.** The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure that the **interrelationship between educational and research, artistic and other activities** of the teaching staff is strengthened, and that the focus and level of these activities is **commensurate with the learning outcomes and with the level of qualifications framework** at which the education is provided.
- IS 6.e.1.** Internal system policies, structures, and processes ensure that teaching staff **develop their professional, linguistic, teaching, digital and transferable skills.**
- IS 6.f.1.** The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure that the **assignment** of teaching staff to the delivery of study programmes and educational activities as well as to the teaching of individual courses and the supervision of final and rigorous theses is transparent and guarantees such a level of qualification, skills, practical experience, research, artistic and other outputs that corresponds to the level and learning outcomes.
- IS 6.f.2.** **Profile courses** are normally provided<sup>11</sup> by teaching staff in **the position of professor or associate professor** employed by the university at fixed weekly working hours.
- IS 6.f.3.** In **professionally-oriented programmes**, profile courses are also provided by teachers who are experienced professionals **from relevant economic or social fields and** who work at the institution full time or part time.
- IS 6.g.1.** The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure that the **professional qualifications** of teachers providing a study programme **is higher than the qualification achieved by its completion.** 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 teaching staff enables the delivery and quality development of study programmes**, teaching and other related educational activities, assessment of students, supervision and assessment of final theses, participation in research, artistic and other activities and in activities related to their professional development and the fulfilment of the institution's mission to the extent and proportion corresponding to the working hours and nature of their position.
7. Criteria for evaluating 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 to the comprehensive provision of study programmes and to the related research, artistic and other activities, supportive activities and other activities corresponding to its mission.

<sup>11</sup> Provision of courses implies having responsibility for a course, giving lectures and carry out other essential educational activities of a profile course, and responsibility for course's quality assurance activities and the development of the course so that the required learning outcomes of the study programme are achieved.

- 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, research, artistic and other activities, and other related activities **correspond 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, research, artistic and other activities, and other related activities **correspond 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 **functional contractual partnerships** with specialized teaching establishments and other institutions which are necessary to achieve the learning outcomes.
- IS 7.d.1.** The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure that the **access to information resources, library collections, and services** corresponds to the learning outcomes and the focus of research, artistic and other activities.
- IS 7.d.2.** Internal system policies, structures, and processes ensure that the **access to information resources, library collections, and services** is easy and that it is commensurate with the number of students.
- IS 7.e.1.** Internal system policies, structures, and processes ensure that students have an easy **access to counseling and other support services and administrative resources** that meet their diverse needs and that are necessary for their progress in the study and for 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 other related activities for students, and whose capacity is appropriate to the number of students and their diverse needs.
- IS 7.g.1** The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure that students have **adequate social support** during their studies.
- IS 7.g.2** The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure that students have adequate **sports, cultural, spiritual, and social activities** during their studies.
- IS 7.h.1.** The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure that all the resources are also provided **for all the institution's parts outside its seat** where study programmes or educational activities are delivered.
- 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 of their accessibility.
8. Criteria for evaluating IS 8 standard, Information management (Article 8, Standards for the Internal System)
- IS 8.a.1** The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure that information is **systematically collected, processed, analyzed, and evaluated, and is used in the effective, strategic, tactical and operational management** of the delivery and development of study programmes, research, artistic and other activities, and other in related activities of the institution.
- IS 8.1.b.1** The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure that institution has a **set of systematically monitored indicators.**
- 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 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 applicants, students, employees, employers, other external stakeholders, and the public is available.
  - IS 9.a.2 The 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** in accordance with the mission of the institution that is relevant to applicants, students, employees, employers and other external stakeholders, and to the public is available.
  - 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** on the results achieved and the measures taken is available.
  - IS 9.1.c. The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure that information on study programmes is published in **all the languages** of their delivery.
  - 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 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, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure that study programmes are **continuously monitored, periodically reviewed, and periodically approved** by employers, students, and other stakeholders involved in the internal system.
  - IS 10.b.1 The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system **ensure that the delivery of study programmes, student assessment, and achieved learning outcomes are in line with the latest knowledge**, technological possibilities, needs of the society, students' needs, and expectations of employers and other stakeholders and that the institution creates a supportive and effective learning environment for students<sup>12</sup>.
  - IS 10.c.1 The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure that the institution **has sufficient spatial, personal, material, technical, infrastructural, information, and financial resources** for the delivery of study programmes and other related activities.
  - IS 10.d.1. The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure that, at least once a year, **students have the opportunity to express their opinion on the quality of study programmes, the quality of teaching staff, the quality of support services, and the quality of the institution environment**.
  - IS 10.1.e. The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure that **the modification of study programmes** resulting from their on-going monitoring and the periodic review is designed with the participation of students, employers, and other stakeholders.
  - IS 10.1.f. The policies, structures, and processes of the internal system ensure that study programmes are **periodically approved at periods corresponding to their standard length of study**.
11. Criteria for evaluating IS 11 standard, Periodic 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 being developed and implemented in line with the Standards for the Internal System.

<sup>12</sup> In study programmes preparing for the pursuit of a regulated profession following the relevant European Guidelines for Education in the Regulated Profession.

## Article 13

### Criteria for the evaluation of the Standards for Study Programmes

1. To evaluate the compliance of the Standards for Study Programmes (hereinafter the SP Standards), the review panels and the Agency staff shall use the Criteria for the evaluation of the Standards for Study Programmes – **SP Criteria**.
2. The criteria for evaluating SP 2 standard, Proposals and modifications of study programmes (Article 2, Standards for Study programmes)
  - SP 2.1.1.** A proposal of a new study programme or a modification of a study programme is elaborated and submitted **in accordance with the formalized processes of the higher education internal quality assurance system**.<sup>13</sup>
  - SP 2.1.2.** If the institution does not have an approved internal system, the quality assurance rules are stated directly in the given proposal of the study programme.
  - SP 2.2.1.** A study programme is elaborated **in compliance with the institution's mission and strategic goals**, which are determined in the institution's long-term plan.
  - SP 2.3.1.** **Designated persons are responsible** for the delivery, development, and quality assurance of the study programme.
  - SP 2.4.1.** **Students are involved** in the preparation of a study programme proposal.
  - SP 2.4.2.** **Employers and other stakeholders are involved** in the preparation of a study programme proposal.
  - SP 2.5.1.** A study programme **is assigned to a field of study** and to a level of study and the extent of consistency of the programme's content with the given field of study is justified.<sup>14</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 extent of consistency of the programme's content with the relevant fields of study is justified.
  - SP 2.6.1.** A study programme **clearly defines and communicates the level of qualification** that students will acquire upon their successful completion of the programme.
  - SP 2.6.2.** The qualification defined and communicated in the study programme corresponds to the **appropriate level of education under the qualifications framework**.
  - SP 2.7.1.** A study programme clearly defines a **graduate's profile**.
  - SP 2.7.2.** In line with a graduate's profile, descriptors define and communicate learning outcomes that are verifiable and appropriate to the institution's mission,
  - SP 2.7.3.** Learning outcomes correspond to the given **level of the qualifications framework**.
  - SP 2.7.4.** Learning outcomes correspond to the subject field according to the **relevant field of study**.
  - SP 2.8.1.** A study programme **indicates the professions** for which the acquired qualification is necessary.
  - SP 2.8.2.** Learning outcomes and qualifications obtained by completing a study programme **meet the sector-specific professional expectations** for the pursuit of the profession.
  - SP 2.8.3.** This is **confirmed by statements** of relevant external stakeholders or by an agreement of a legal entity indicated in the description of the relevant field of study, or by a favorable opinion of the relevant ministry for the delivery of the study programme.

<sup>13</sup> In the case of regulated medical study programmes following Government Decree No. 296/2010 Coll.

<sup>14</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 extend of consistency of the programme's content with the relevant fields of study is justified.

- SP 2.9.1. The professional content, structure, and sequence of profile courses** 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 the achievement of employers' expected learning outcomes** with an emphasis on the development of practical professional skills in the relevant sector of the economy or social practice<sup>15</sup>.
- SP 2.9.3.** The professional content, structure, and sequence of profile courses and other educational activities of the study programme guarantee **access to the latest knowledge, skills, and competencies**.
- SP 2.9.4.** The professional content, structure, and sequence of profile courses and other educational activities of the study programme ensure **access to transferable skills** that affect students' personal development and can be used in their future careers and life as active citizens in democratic societies.
- SP 2.10.1.** A study programme must include **a standard length of study and a specified workload for students**.
- SP 2.10.2.** A study programme has a **specified workload** for each course expressed in ECTS credits and it has a number of face-to-face teaching hours, except where the nature of educational activities does not require it.
- SP 2.10.3.** The standard length of study, workload, and hours of contact instruction **allow 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 **compulsory professional practice** in a contracting organization for at least one term; the purpose of the practice is to develop practical professional skills<sup>16</sup>
- SP 2.11.2.** Professional practice enables students **to undertake activities through which they acquire work procedures** typical for the relevant level of qualification and the relevant field of study; it allows students to participate in professional processes and projects; by engaging in specific tasks students acquire knowledge, skills and competencies relevant for the performance of given professions.
- SP 2.12.1.** A study programme has a clearly **defined level and nature of research, artistic and other activities** required for successful completion of studies, especially concerning final theses.
3. Criteria for evaluating SP 3 standard, Approval of study programmes (Article 3, Standards for Study programmes)
- SP 3.1.1.** A study programme is approved in accordance with the formalized processes of the internal system.
- SP 3.1.2. The review and approval of a study programme** is guaranteed to be **independent, unbiased, and objective**. The persons reviewing and approving the study programme must be different from the persons preparing the study programme proposal.
- SP 3.1.3. The review and approval** of the study programme guaranteed to be **professionally erudite**.
- SP 3.1.4. The review of the proposal and the approval of a study programme** is guaranteed to be **transparent and fair**.
- SP 3.1.5. Students, employers, and other stakeholders are all involved** in the review of the proposal and in the approval of a study programme.

<sup>15</sup> In study programmes preparing for the pursuit of regulated professions following the relevant European Guidelines for Education in the Regulated Profession.

<sup>16</sup> In medical study programmes, mandatory clinical practice according to Government Decree No. 296/2010 Coll.

4. Criteria for evaluating SP 4 standard, Student-centered learning, teaching, and assessment (Article 4, Standards for Study programmes)
  - SP 4.1.1. The rules, forms, and methods of teaching, learning, and assessment of learning outcomes within a 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 within a study programme **respect the diversity of students and their needs** in achieving learning objectives and outcomes.
  - SP 4.2.1. There is a **flexibility of learning paths** and in the achievement of learning outcomes.
  - SP 4.2.2. The study programme allows for appropriate education **outside the university** in domestic and foreign institutions, particularly through mobility support.
  - SP 4.2.3. Learning outcomes from **outside the university**, from domestic and foreign institutions, are recognized by the higher education 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 their academic careers.**
  - SP 4.3.2. Students **are appropriately involved in the research, artistic and other activities** of the institution in relation to the learning outcomes and the level of the qualifications framework of the study programme.
  - SP 4.4.1. Within a study programme **a sense of autonomy, independence, and self-evaluation is reinforced.**
  - SP 4.4.2. Students are provided with **appropriate guidance and support by teachers**, based on mutual respect and reverence.
  - SP 4.5.1. A study programme is delivered in a way that reinforces **the internal motivation of students to continuously improve.**
  - SP 4.5.2. A study programme is delivered in a way that leads students to the observance of the **principles of academic ethics and of professional conduct** in the case of professionally oriented bachelor's study programmes.
  - SP 4.6.1. **Rules, criteria, and assessment methods for the assessment** of learning outcomes are defined and known in advance.
  - SP 4.6.2. The assessment results must be **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/courses/ modules** of the programme.
  - SP 4.7.3. The assessment methods and criteria **are suitable for a fair, consistent, and transparent** verification of acquired knowledge, skills, and competencies.
  - SP 4.8.1. The assessment provides students with **reliable feedback** on the degree of fulfillment of learning outcomes.
  - SP 4.8.2. The assessment feedback is where appropriate accompanied with **advice on study progression.**
  - SP 4.9.1. If circumstances allow the assessment of students is carried out by **several teachers.**
  - SP 4.10.1. Students can appeal **against their assessment results and shall be** assured that their appeal will be handled fairly.
5. Criteria for evaluating SP 5 standard, Student admission, progression, recognition, and awarding of academic degrees (Article 5, Standards for Study programmes)
  - SP 5.1.1. A study programme is delivered according to 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 of academic degrees, and issuance of other evidence of acquired education.

- SP 5.1.2. Specificities of **specific needs** of students are taken into consideration.
  - SP 5.2.1. A study programme **specifies the requirements for applicants and the selection process; the requirements** 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 of applicants is based on **appropriate methods of assessing their eligibility** for the study (drop-off rate in the 1<sup>st</sup> year of study).
  - SP 5.2.4. The criteria and requirements for applicants **are published in advance and easily accessible**.
  - SP 5.2.5. The conditions of the admission procedure are inclusive and ensure **equal opportunities for every applicant** demonstrating feasibility for study completion.
  - SP 5.3.1. The rules for the delivery of the study programme **regulate and facilitate the recognition of study and parts of the study** by the Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region to ensure the promotion of domestic and foreign student mobility.
  - SP 5.4.1. An effective use of tools ensuring scientific integrity, prevention and dealing with plagiarism and other academic fraud is guaranteed in the delivery of the study programme.
  - SP 5.5.1. Students of a study programme have effective mechanisms for **examining claims** seeking the protection of their rights or legally protected interests which they believe have been violated. Students can also point to specific deficiencies in the action or inaction of a higher education institution.
  - SP 5.5.2. The examination of claims 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 of the measures taken.
  - SP 5.6.1. The successful completion of the study programme is confirmed by the institution by **the awarding of an academic title, by the issuance of a university diploma**, and by the issuance of further documentation (diploma supplement) explaining the qualification obtained including the achieved learning outcomes, context, level, and content of the completed study. These documents comply with applicable regulations.
6. Criteria for evaluating SP 6 standard, Teaching staff (Article 6, Standards for Study programmes)
- SP 6.1.1. The institution has for a study programme a sufficient number of teaching staff whose **qualifications and level of research, artistic and other activities** enable the **achievement of learning outcomes**.
  - SP 6.1.2. The institution has for a study programme teaching staff whose **practical skills, teaching skills, and transferable skills** enable the **achievement of learning outcomes**.
  - SP 6.1.3. The institution has for a study programme teaching staff whose **language competencies** correspond to the language requirements of the study programme.
  - SP 6.1.4. The institution has for a study programme teaching staff whose **number, work capacity, and workload** correspond to the number of students and the personal demands 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>17</sup>.

<sup>17</sup> This requirement may be waived in justified cases, such as foreign language teachers, in-service teachers, specialists, and doctoral candidates.

- SP 6.3.1. Profile courses** are normally provided by staff members in the position of **professor or associate professor** employed at a university in the relevant field of study or a related field for fixed weekly working hours.
- SP 6.3.2.** In vocational education programmes, profile courses are also provided **by university teachers who are experienced professionals from the relevant economic or social fields** and who work at the institution for fixed weekly working hours or part-time period.
- SP 6.3.3.** The sustainability of the teaching staff in profile courses of the programme is guaranteed in terms of the **the age of the teachers**.
- SP 6.4.1.** The institution **has a designated staff member who has the necessary competencies to guarantee main responsibility** for the delivery, development, and quality assurance of the study programme or an otherwise defined integral part of the study programme (combination, language, part of a joint programme), and who is also responsible for a profile course within the programme.
- SP 6.4.2.** This person is in **the position of a professor in the relevant field of study for fixed weekly working hours**; in the case of a bachelor's study programme, he/she is a professor or an associate professor in the relevant field of study for fixed weekly working hours.
- SP 6.4.3.** This person **cannot be responsible** for the delivery, development, and quality assurance of a study program **at another university** in the Slovak Republic.
- SP 6.4.4.** This person **can be responsible** for the delivery, development, and quality assurance for up to **three study programmes**.
- SP 6.5.1.** The staff supervising **final theses** are active in **research, artistic and other activities or in a professional activity** at the level corresponding to the degree of the study programme in the field of professional and thematic scope of the supervised theses.
- SP 6.5.2** **Dissertations supervisors** are staff members in the **position of professor or associate professor** or other similar position in a contracted research institution cooperating with a higher education institution in the delivery of a third level study programme.
- SP 6.6.1.** The teaching staff of the study programme **develop their professional, language, teaching, digital, and transferable skills**.
- SP 6.7.1.** In the case of **teacher training** combination study programmes, the institution engages teachers according to Art. 6 (1 to 6) of the Standards separately for each specialization of the combination in compliance with the relevance of the subjects to the field of study, and separately for teacher training foundations.
- SP 6.8.1.** In the case of **translation and interpretation** combination study programmes, the institution engages teachers according to Art. 6 (1 to 6) of the Standards separately for each specialization of the combination in compliance with the language relevance, and separately for translation studies foundations.
- SP 6.9.1.** In the case of study programmes **combining two fields of study** or first-level study programmes delivered as interdisciplinary studies, the institution engages teachers according to Art. 6 (1 to 6) of the Standards for each field of study in which its graduates receive a higher education degree.
- SP 6.10.1.** In the case of **joint study programmes**, the institution engages teachers according to Art. 6 (1 to 6) of the Standards for that part of the study programme which the institution provides.
- SP 6.11.1.** In the event that an institution delivers study programmes in a given field of study at several faculties or at several addresses, it engages teachers according to Art. 6 (1 to 6) of the Standards separately for each faculty and separately for each address where the study programme is delivered as a whole.
7. Criteria for evaluating SP 7 standard, Research, artistic and other activities of a higher education institution (Article 7, Standards for Study Programmes)

- SP 7.1.1.** In the case of a third-level study programme<sup>18</sup> **teachers** providing profile courses **demonstrate the outputs of their research, artistic and other activities** in the relevant study field(s) in which the study programme is delivered at least at an internationally significant level, separately for each programme<sup>19</sup> according to Part V: Methodology for the Evaluation of Research, Artistic and other Activities stated in this Methodology.
- SP 7.1.2.** In the case of a second-level study programme or a study programme combining the first and second levels **teachers** providing profile courses **demonstrate the outputs of their research, artistic and other activities** in the relevant study field(s) in which the study programme is delivered at least at an **internationally recognized level**, separately for each study programme<sup>20</sup> according to Part V: Methodology for the Evaluation of Research, Artistic and other Activities stated in this Methodology.
- SP 7.1.3.** In the case of a first-level study programme **teachers** providing profile courses **demonstrate the outputs of their research, artistic and other activities** in the relevant study field(s) in which the study programme is delivered at least at a **nationally recognized level**, separately for each study programme<sup>21</sup> according to Part V: Methodology for the Evaluation of Research, Artistic and other Activities stated in this Methodology.
- SP 7.4.1.** If the institution delivers several study programmes in a given field of study at different seats, it demonstrates the outputs of its research, artistic and other activities for each seat separately.
- SP 7.5.1.** In the case of a third-level study programme delivery, the institution demonstrates its **long-term continuous research or artistic activities in the field of the study programme**. (this requirement may be substituted by SP 7.6.1 criterion).
- SP 7.5.2.** The workplace must show the existence of long-term and continuous success in receiving financial grants for research or artistic projects and the existence of follow up or new projects from domestic and international grant schemes or other sources<sup>22</sup> (this requirement may be substituted by SP 7.6.1 criterion).
- SP 7.6.1.** The institution undergoes a **periodic review of research, artistic and other creative activities** in each field of research every six years and if, on the basis of the latest evaluation, it has been granted the right to use the label "research university" (this requirement may be substituted by criteria SP 7.5.1 and SP 7.5 .2).
8. Criteria for evaluating SP 8 standard, Learning resources and student support (Article 8, Standards Study Programmes)
- SP 8.1.1.** The institution has sufficient **spatial, material, and technical** resources for the study programme to ensure the achievement of learning objectives and learning outcomes<sup>23</sup>.
- SP 8.1.2.** The institution has sufficient **information resources** for the study programme to ensure the achievement of learning objectives and learning outcomes.

<sup>18</sup> The higher education institution provides constant access to the records of submitted outputs of research, artistic and other activities and to the citations on these outputs in bibliometric and citation databases, in Central Registry of Publication Activity and the Central Registry of Artistic Activity or in other searching systems, that are acceptable as relevant in a given field of study.

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

<sup>20</sup> Except in the cases provided for in para. 3, Art. 7 Standards for Study Programmes.

<sup>21</sup> Except in the cases provided for in para. 3, Art. 7 Standards for Study Programmes.

<sup>22</sup> The institution may replace the criterion 7.5. by subjecting itself to a periodic review of research, artistic and other activities in each field of research every six years following Sec. 88a of the Act on Higher Education Institutions and if, on the basis of the results of the latest evaluation the institution was granted the right to use the label "research university".

<sup>23</sup> These mainly include lecture halls, classrooms, study rooms, laboratories, and laboratory equipment and other necessary equipment, technical facilities and equipment, studios, workshops, design and art studios, interpreting booths, clinics, priests' 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, external services and their corresponding funding.

- SP 8.1.3** The institution has **adequate funding** for spatial, material, technical, and information resources for the study programme.
- SP 8.2.1.** In the event that educational activities are provided by **distance or combined methods**, the institution has **systems** for the management of the course content and of such education.
- SP 8.2.2.** Students are guaranteed **access to the course content** and other study materials if the educational activities are provided by **distant or combined methods**.
- SP 8.3.1.** The institution has **professional support staff** whose **competencies** meet the needs of students and teachers in relation to the learning objectives and learning outcomes.
- SP 8.3.2.** **The institution has professional support staff** whose **numbers** meet the needs of students and teachers of the study programme in relation to learning objectives and learning outcomes.
- SP 8.4.1.** The institution maintains **binding partnerships** that enable relevant stakeholders to participate in the quality assurance, delivery and development of the study programme.
- SP 8.5.1.** The institution has sufficient teaching staff, spatial, material, technical, and information resources for the study programme, separately **for each seat** where the programme or a part thereof is to be delivered, and in proportion to the learning objectives and outcomes of the given part of the programme.
- SP 8.6.1.** The institution **responds effectively to the diversity of students' needs and interests**.
- SP 8.6.2.** The institution provides students with **support for their successful progression** and career guidance.
- SP 8.7.1.** Students are provided with appropriate **social support** during their studies.
- SP 8.7.2.** Students are provided with appropriate **sport, cultural, spiritual, and social activities** during their studies.
- SP 8.8.1.** Students are provided with support for and access to **domestic and foreign mobility, and internships**.
- SP 8.9.1.** The institution provides individualized support and suitable conditions for special needs students.
- SP 8.10.1.** In professionally oriented study programmes, the programme has contractual partners which are **organizations providing professional practice and practical training for students**.
- SP 8.10.2.** The contractual partners have sufficient **spatial, material and technological conditions and staff** to ensure that the planned learning outcomes can be achieved.
9. Criteria for evaluating SP 9 standard, Information management (Article 9, Standards for Study Programmes)
- SP 9.1.1.** The institution collects, analyses and makes use of relevant information for the effective management of their programmes and other activities.
- SP 9.2.1.** The effective collection and analysis of information about study programmes and other activities play a role in the evaluation, design and modification of a study programme.
- SP 9.3.1.** The following key **indicators of teaching and learning** performance are monitored and evaluated in a study programme: applicants' and students' profiles, students' progression, success and drop-out rates, satisfaction of students, employability of graduates, feedback from students and employers, information about learning resources and support available to students.
- SP 9.4.1.** **Appropriate tools and methods** are used to collect and process information about the study programme.
- SP 9.4.2.** **Students, teachers, employers and other stakeholders** of the study programme are **involved** in the collection and analysis of information and in follow-up measures.

10. Criteria for evaluating SP 10 standard, Public information (Article 10, Standards for Study Programmes)
- SP 10.1.1.** The institution provides **accessible and clearly structured information** about a study programme<sup>24</sup>.
- SP 10.2.1.** This information is easily accessible to **students, their supporters, prospective students, graduates, other stakeholders and to the public** in all the languages in which the study programme is delivered.
- SP 10.2.2.** The form in which the information is available also considers **special needs applicants** and students
11. Criteria for evaluating SP 11 standard, On-going monitoring and periodic review and approval of study programmes (Article 11, Standards for Study Programmes)
- SP 11.1.1.** The institution regularly **monitors, reviews, and modifies** a study programme in order to comply with the Standards for Study Programmes.
- SP 11.1.2.** The institution regularly **monitors, reviews, and modifies** a study programme to ensure that the learning objectives and learning outcomes are in line with the needs of students, employers, other stakeholders, the latest knowledge in the field of study and the technological possibilities.
- SP 11.1.3.** The institution regularly **monitors, reviews, and modifies** a study programme to ensure that the level of the graduates, by means of the achieved learning outcomes, is in line with the required level of the National Qualifications Framework and the stakeholders' expectations.
- SP 11.2.1.** The monitoring and reviewing of a study programme include obtaining **relevant feedback from the programme stakeholders**.
- SP 11.2.2.** At least once a year, students have an opportunity to **comment on the quality of teaching and the teachers** of the study programme in an anonymous questionnaire.
- SP 11.2.3.** Stakeholders also participate in the **preparation of the feedback methodology**.
- SP 11.3.1.** The feedback results are reflected in **improvement measures**.
- SP 11.3.2.** Students are guaranteed a role in the design of **improvement measures**.
- SP 11.4.1.** The feedback results, implemented measures and any planned or follow-up activities resulting from the evaluation of the study programme should be **discussed with the stakeholders**.
- SP 11.4.2.** The feedback results, implemented measures, and any planned or follow-up activities resulting from the evaluation of the study programme are **accessible to the public**.
- SP 11.5.1.** The study programme is periodically approved in compliance with the formalized processes of the internal system at a period corresponding to its standard length of study (according to SP 3.1.).

## Article 14

### Criteria for the evaluation of the Standards for Habilitation Proceedings and Inauguration Proceedings

1. To evaluate the compliance of the Standards for Habilitation Proceedings and Inauguration Proceedings, the review panel and the Agency staff shall use the Criteria for the evaluation of

<sup>24</sup> These include mainly intended learning objectives and learning outcomes, requirements for applicants, selection criteria, recommended personality requirements, the level of the national qualifications framework, the field of study, the qualifications they award, teaching and learning rules, the programme's completion conditions, assessment procedures and criteria, programme resources, pass rates, learning opportunities available to students, and information about available jobs for successful graduates and their employability.

- compliance with the Standards for Habilitation Proceedings and Inauguration Proceedings – **HI Criteria.**
2. Criteria for evaluating HI 2 standard, Definition of the field of study of habilitation and inauguration proceedings (Article 2, Standards for Habilitation Proceedings and Inauguration Proceedings)
    - HI 2.1.1.** The institution has habilitation and inauguration proceedings defined by **name and content of the field of study.**
    - HI 2.1.2.** The institution **assigned the field** of habilitation and inauguration proceedings **to one or two** fields of study.
    - HI 2.1.3.** The content of the field of study of the habilitation and the inauguration proceedings is defined **as close as possible to the field(s) of study** to which it is assigned.
  3. Criteria for evaluating HI 3 standard, The level of education in the field of habilitation and inauguration proceedings (Article 3, Standards for Habilitation and Inauguration Proceedings)
    - HI 3.1.1.** The **institution is entitled to design, deliver, and modify third-level study programmes in the field of study** to which the field of habilitation and inauguration proceedings is assigned. If the field of habilitation and inauguration proceedings is assigned to two fields of study, the institution is entitled to design, deliver, and modify third-level study programmes in both fields of study.
    - HI 3.2.1.** The institution is entitled to **deliver a third-level, second-level study programme or a study programme combining first and second- levels** in those field(s) of study to which the field of habilitation and inauguration proceedings is assigned.
  4. Criteria for evaluating HI 4 standard, Persons responsible for the habilitation and inauguration proceedings (Article 4, Standards for Habilitation Proceedings and Inauguration Proceedings)
    - HI 4.1.1.** **A group of at least five persons responsible for the development and quality assurance of the field of habilitation and inauguration proceedings** work for the fixed weekly working hours at the institution. Of these persons, at least two are in the position of professor with the title of “professor”, and the other persons are at least in the position of associate professor with the title of “associate professor”<sup>25</sup>.
    - HI 4.1.2.** The persons responsible for the development and quality assurance of the field of habilitation and inauguration proceedings are in their scientific or artistic work **engaged in the field of habilitation and inauguration proceedings** or in a related field.
    - HI 4.1.3.** The persons responsible for the development and quality assurance of the field of habilitation and inauguration proceedings may be responsible for the development and quality assurance of maximum one habilitation and inauguration proceeding at a university in the Slovak Republic. These persons **cannot be responsible for the development and quality assurance of another field of habilitation and inauguration proceedings at another institution in Slovakia.**
    - HI 4.2.1.** **The composition** of the institution’s or faculty’s **scientific board**, if the habilitation and inauguration proceedings take place at the faculty, **is in compliance with the relevant provisions of generally binding regulations.**
    - HI 4.2.2.** The institution’s or faculty’s **scientific board**, if the habilitation and inauguration proceedings take place at the faculty, **consists of significant experts, including at least one**

<sup>25</sup> In the case of a field of habilitation and inauguration proceedings 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 work at the institution in the field of habilitation and inauguration proceeding or in a related field for fixed weekly working hours, of these persons at least one of them works in the position of professor and has the title of “professor” and the others are in the position of associate professors and have the title “associate professor”. Each of these persons may be responsible for the development and quality assurance of maximum one habilitation and inauguration proceeding at a university in the Slovak Republic.

**expert with a professional capacity to evaluate the habilitation and inauguration proceeding in the given field of study** to which the field of the habilitation and inauguration proceedings is assigned.

5. Criteria for evaluating HI 5 standard, The level of research, artistic and other activities in the field of study of habilitation and inauguration proceedings, and the level of higher education quality culture (Article 5, Standards for Habilitation Proceedings and Inauguration Proceedings)
  - HI 5.1.1.** The institution carries out **long-term and continuous research, artistic and other activities in the field** of habilitation and inauguration proceedings. The intensity and extent of these activities correspond to the nature of the proceeding and **their outputs are at internationally significant level<sup>26</sup>**.
  - HI 5.2.1.** The institution **is entitled to design, deliver, and modify third-level study programmes in at least half of the fields of study in which the institution provides** higher education.
  - HI 5.3.1.** The institution undergoes periodic review of development, research, artistic and other activities in each field of research and, based on the results of the latest review, it has been granted the right to use the designation "research university".
  
6. Criteria for evaluating HI 6 standard, The level of higher education institution criteria for reviewing the compliance of conditions for obtaining the title "associate professor" (Article 6, Standards for Habilitation Proceedings and Inauguration Proceedings)
  - HI 6.1.1.** The institution **has adopted criteria** for evaluating the compliance of the conditions for obtaining a scientific-pedagogical title or an artistic-pedagogical title "associate professor". These criteria **comply with generally binding regulations and are accessible to the public**.
  - HI 6.2.1.** The higher education institution criteria **for obtaining the title "associate professor" require that the candidate has a third-level higher education**.
  - HI 6.2.2.** The higher education institution criteria for obtaining the title "associate professor" require that the candidate **has up-to-date scientific-pedagogical or artistic-pedagogical experience at an institution in the given field of study** of the habilitation and inauguration proceedings.
  - HI 6.2.3.** The higher education institution criteria for obtaining the title "associate professor" require that the candidate **has experience and outputs in fulfilling tasks within the higher education to the extent, structure, and quality corresponding to international practices and specificities of the given field of study** of the habilitation and inauguration proceedings, such as: giving lectures, seminars and training on selected chapters, student assessment, supervising and reviewing final theses, designing study materials, consultations for students, arranging excursions and providing professional practice for students, etc.
  - HI 6.2.4.** The higher education institution criteria for obtaining the title "associate professor" require that the candidate has **experience and outputs in the area of research, artistic and other activities**, such as: carrying out development, research, artistic and other activities and publishing the results in the form of scientific works or artistic outputs or performances or other outputs of research, artistic and other activities in number, structure, extent, intensity, the rate of author's contribution and the quality that corresponds to international practices and specificities in the given field of study of the habilitation and inauguration proceedings.
  - HI 6.2.5.** The higher education institution criteria for obtaining the title "associate professor" **require that the candidate demonstrates that he/she is considered a significant scholar in professional circles or a significant artist in artistic circles in the given field** of habilitation and inauguration proceedings, mainly by: demonstrating responses to

<sup>26</sup> The evaluation of the criterion follows the Methodology for the Evaluation of Research, Artistic and Other Activities set out in Part V of this Methodology.

published scientific works or artistic output or performances or other outputs of research, artistic and other activities in number, structure etc. that correspond to international practices and specificities of the given field of study of the habilitation and inauguration proceedings. Autocitations are excluded.

- HI 6.3.1.** The higher education criteria for obtaining the title “associate professor” **contain measurable indicators with determined minimum threshold values** that serve as one of the bases for evaluating 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 given field of habilitation and inauguration proceedings.
  - HI 6.3.2.** The higher education criteria for obtaining the title “associate professor” **contain measurable indicators with determined minimum threshold values that meet the requirements of HI 6.5.1.**
  - HI 6.4.1.** The higher education criteria for obtaining the title “associate professor” **ensure that by meeting the requirements the candidate demonstrates that his/her scientific or artistic work makes up comprehensive scientific or artistic work in the given field of study of the habilitation and inauguration proceedings.**
  - HI 6.4.2.** The higher education criteria for obtaining the title “associate professor” **ensure that the candidate meets other qualification requirements, if required by the nature of the given field of study** of the habilitation and inauguration proceedings.
  - HI 6.5.1.** The level of higher education institution criteria for obtaining the title “associate professor” **ensures that the level of extent, intensity, quality, and recognition of scientific, artistic, and other activities required of the candidates** for the title “associate professor” in the given field of study of the habilitation and inauguration proceedings is at least of the same level as before the date these standards came into force. If the institution has not yet been granted the right to carry out habilitation and inauguration proceedings in the given field of study, then as a benchmark to meet this requirement, the institution will use criteria of another higher education institution in the Slovak Republic in the given field of study of the habilitation and inauguration proceedings or a related field of study of the habilitation and inauguration proceedings or another similar field assigned to the given field of study.
7. Criteria for evaluating HI 7 standard, The level of higher education criteria for reviewing the compliance of conditions for obtaining the title “professor” (Article 7, Standards for Habilitation Proceedings and Inauguration Proceedings)
- HI 7.1.1.** The institution **has adopted criteria** for evaluating the compliance of the conditions for obtaining a scientific-pedagogical title or an artistic-pedagogical title "professor". These criteria **comply with generally binding regulations and are accessible to the public.**
  - HI 7.2.1.** The higher education institution criteria for obtaining the title “professor” require that the candidate **has the scientific-pedagogical degree or an artistic-pedagogical degree “associate professor”.**
  - HI 7.3.1.** The higher education institution criteria for obtaining the title “professor” require that the candidate **has up-to-date scientific-pedagogical or artistic-pedagogical experience at an institution in the relevant field of study** of the habilitation and inauguration proceedings.
  - HI 7.3.2.** The higher education criteria for obtaining the title “professor” require that the candidate **has experience and outputs in fulfilling tasks within the higher education to the extent, structure, and quality corresponding to international practices and specificities of the given field of study** of the habilitation and inauguration proceedings, such as: giving lectures, seminars and training, student assessment including final exams, supervising and reviewing final theses, designing study materials.
  - HI 7.3.3.** The higher education institution criteria for obtaining the title “professor” require that the candidate **has experience and outputs in the area of research, artistic and other activities,**

such as: carrying out development, research, artistic and other activities and publishing the results in the form of scientific works or artistic outputs or performances or other outputs of research, artistic and other activities in number, structure, extent, intensity, rate of author's contribution and quality that corresponds to international practices and specificities in the given field of study of the habilitation and inauguration proceedings.

- HI 7.4.1.** The higher education institution criteria for obtaining the title “professor” **ensure that by meeting the requirements the candidate demonstrates that he/she has contributed to the development of the relevant field of study** of the habilitation and inauguration proceedings by setting up a scientific or an art school or an original generally recognized group following his/her outputs of research, artistic and other activities. The candidate demonstrates these criteria mainly by the fact that he/she has trained at least one PhD. and that he/she has at least one PhD candidate after a dissertation examination in the field of study to which the field of the habilitation and inauguration proceedings is assigned.
- HI 7.4.2.** The higher education institution criteria for obtaining the title “professor” **ensure that the candidate demonstrates that he/she is considered a significant scholar or a significant artist in the given field of study** of the habilitation and inauguration proceedings, mainly by: demonstration of responses to published scientific works or artistic output or performances or other outputs of research, artistic and other activities in number, structure etc. that correspond to international practices and specificities of the given field of study of the habilitation and inauguration proceedings. These include responses from abroad. Autocitations are excluded.
- HI 7.4.3.** The higher education institution criteria for obtaining the title “professor” **require written references to the candidate's outputs from at least three eminent foreign experts from three different countries outside Slovakia.** These references will confirm that the candidate meets the requirements for the position of a professor in an international context.
- HI 7.4.4.** The higher education institution criteria for obtaining the title “professor” **ensure that the candidate meets other qualification requirements, if required by the nature of the given field of study** of the habilitation and inauguration proceedings.
- HI 7.5.1.** The higher education institution criteria for obtaining the title “professor” **contain measurable indicators with determined minimum threshold values. The indicators serve as one of the bases for evaluating the fulfilment of requirements (HI 7.3.2 and HI 7.4.2). The minimum threshold values of measurable indicators are based on international practices in the given field of study** of the habilitation and inauguration proceedings.
- HI 7.5.2.** The higher education institution criteria for obtaining the title “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 higher education institution criteria for obtaining the title “professor” **ensures that the level of extent, intensity, quality, and recognition of scientific, artistic, and other activities required of the candidates** for the title “professor” in the given field of study of the habilitation and inauguration proceedings is **at least of the same level as before the date these standards came into force.** If the institution has not yet been granted the right to carry out habilitation and inauguration proceedings in the given field of study, then as a benchmark to meet this requirement, the institution will use criteria of another higher education institution in the Slovak Republic in the given field of study of the habilitation and inauguration proceedings or a related field of study of the habilitation and inauguration proceedings or another similar field assigned to the given field of study.
8. Criteria for evaluating HI 8 standard, Rules and procedures of the habilitation and inauguration proceedings (Article 8, Standards for Habilitation Proceedings and Inauguration Proceedings)

- HI 8.1.1.** The institution **has adopted criteria** for habilitation and inauguration proceedings. These criteria **comply with generally binding regulations and are accessible to the public.**
- HI 8.2.1.** The rules and procedures of the habilitation and inauguration proceedings **ensure transparency and openness of the proceeding for all candidates.** The rules and procedures are known to the candidates in advance.
- HI 8.2.2.** The rules and procedures of the habilitation and inauguration proceedings **ensure that proven plagiarism of a candidate is a reason for not awarding the title** of “associate professor” or “professor”.
- HI 8.2.3.** The rules and procedures of the habilitation and inauguration proceedings **ensure impartial, objective, professional, consistent, and unambiguous verification of a candidate’s compliance with the given requirements and criteria.**
- HI 8.2.4.** The rules and procedures of the habilitation and inauguration proceedings **ensure that the selection and composition of opponents of habilitation and inauguration proceedings, the members of a habilitation committee, and inauguration 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 study of the habilitation and inauguration proceedings or, in justified cases, in the field of science, technology, and art according to the candidate's research, artistic and other activities.
- HI 8.3.1.** **The higher education institution shall in its procedures consistently and without exception adhere to generally binding regulations, valid and effective rules and procedures of the habilitation and inauguration proceedings, and its criteria** for the evaluation of the fulfilment of the conditions for obtaining the scientific-pedagogical or artistic -pedagogical title “associate professor” and the scientific-pedagogical or artistic-pedagogical title “professor”, which were the basis for decision-making in the previous accreditation proceeding for the given habilitation and inauguration proceedings.

## **Part IV**

### **Indicators for the evaluation of standards**

#### **Article 15**

##### **Use of indicators for the evaluation of standards**

1. When evaluating compliance with the standards, the review panels of the Agency shall rely on a set of indicators.
2. The review panels assess the indicator values in the context of a particular higher education institution and a particular field of study. They are mainly used for:
  - a) evaluation of the indicators' development over time in the context of the mission and goals of the institution,
  - b) demonstration of continuous improvement,
  - c) comparison with typical measurement values (e.g. field of study, size of a higher education institution, levels of higher education, etc.).
3. The institutions shall design indicators, collection of necessary data, the method and frequency of measurement in accordance with their internal quality assurance system procedures.
4. Within the internal system, the institution uses also other indicators supporting its mission and goals.
5. The institutions demonstrate the 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**

##### **Educational process input indicators**

1. The results and development of input indicators indicate the compliance of the offer with the interest in the study programmes offered by a higher education institution. In particular, these indicators are:
  - a) number of offered study programmes in the 1st, 2nd, 3rd level of higher education;
  - b) proportion of unopened study programmes in an academic year to the total offer;
  - c) number of offered study programmes in other than the Slovak language;
  - d) proportion of unopened study programmes in other than the Slovak language in an academic year to the total offer;
  - e) number of applicants in the relevant academic year;
  - f) number of applicants in the relevant academic year with other than the Slovak citizenship;
  - g) proportion of enrolled students to all the applicants in the relevant academic year;
  - h) proportion of students admitted from other institutions in the 2nd and 3rd level of higher education.

#### **Article 17**

##### **Higher education indicators**

- 1. Student admission, progression and study completion**

The results and development of indicators are used to monitor the suitability of methods for selecting and assessing eligibility for study; to evaluate the state and students' progression in the educational process and the rates of untimely study completion. These are in particular:

- a) number of students of a higher education institution/study programme in individual years of study;
- b) proportion of the first-year students who completed their studies untimely, structured according to the reason (expulsion due to study results, dropping out of study, change of study programme);
- c) untimely study completion rate in the subsequent years of study;
- d) proportion of foreign students to the total number of students;
- e) proportion of students with other than the Slovak citizenship studying in other than the Slovak language to the total number of students;
- f) proportion of students exceeding the standard length of study;
- g) average length of the above-standard length of study;
- h) number of detected academic frauds, out of which the number of plagiarisms;
- i) number of disciplinary actions (expulsion from studies, reprimand, without consequences, etc.);
- j) number of graduates.

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

The indicators are used to evaluate the state and perception of student-centered learning and student support. These are in particular:

- a) ratio of the number of students and teaching staff;
- b) number of the supervised final theses (average and maximum number);
- c) proportion of face-to-face teaching (including student support) to the total work capacity of teaching staff of the institution/study programme (in hours per week);
- d) proportion of students posted for mobility abroad to the total number of students;
- e) average number of credits for the profile courses of the study programme;
- f) number of students admitted for mobility from abroad in a particular academic year;
- g) extent of student support and career guidance (estimated in hours per student);
- h) number of employees focusing on student support (study and career guidance);
- i) proportion of students who took part in the quality evaluation of teaching and teaching staff to the total number of students and the degree of student satisfaction;
- j) degree of student satisfaction with the quality of teaching and teaching staff;
- k) degree of satisfaction of students with special needs;
- l) number of claims submitted by students.

## **3. Teaching staff**

The indicators are used to monitor the structure of teaching staff with a focus on the qualifications, age and teacher mobility. These are in particular:

- a) number of all teachers in the position of professor, associate professor, assistant professor, assistant, lecturer, others;
- b) number of senior researchers with a second level of higher education (together with the number of teachers = number of research, artistic and other staff);
- c) number of senior teachers with the scientific-pedagogical degree, scientific title and scientific qualification (prof. doc., DrSc., scientific qualification I., scientific qualification IIa);
- d) proportion of teachers with at least a Ph.D. degree to the total number of teachers;
- e) age of teachers of the study programme providing profile courses (average age and range);
- f) proportion of teachers – graduates of another higher education institution;

- g) proportion of teachers who obtained a Ph.D. degree (or equivalent) at a higher education institution other than the one at which they work;
- h) proportion of teachers with more than 1 year of experience at a foreign higher education institution or a research institution abroad;
- i) number of teachers admitted for mobility from abroad in a particular academic year;
- j) proportion of teachers posted for mobility abroad in a particular academic year.

#### **4. Research, artistic and other activities, habilitation proceedings and inauguration proceedings**

The indicators are used to evaluate the research, artistic and other activities in connection with the education provided at a particular level of higher education and in a particular field of study, or to evaluate the fulfilment of Standards for Habilitation Proceedings and Inauguration proceedings. These are in particular:

- a) number of publication outputs of the teaching staff over the last 6 years in a particular field of study and output categories;
- b) number of publication outputs of the teaching staff over the last 6 years in a particular field of study and output categories that are registered in the Web of Science or Scopus databases (or equivalent, e.g in art);
- c) number of publication outputs of doctoral students over the last 6 years in a particular field of study and output categories that are registered in the Web of Science or Scopus databases (or equivalent, e.g in art);
- d) number of citations to teachers' publication outputs over the last 6 years;
- e) number of citations to teachers' publications that are registered in the Web of Science and Scopus databases over the last 6 years;
- f) number of research, artistic and other outputs of excellent international quality according to practice in the field;
- g) evaluation of the level of research, artistic and other activity of a particular higher education institution workplace;
- h) the amount of financial support gained from domestic and international grant schemes and other competitive funding sources in the field;
- i) number of doctoral students (Ph.D.) per supervisor (average and maximum number);
- j) number of doctoral students (Ph.D.) in the relevant field of habilitation proceedings and inauguration proceedings;
- k) number of supervisors in the field of habilitation proceedings and inauguration proceedings (natural persons and FTE<sup>27</sup>);
- l) number of proposals for the title of professor approved by the Scientific Board of a higher education institution in the calendar year;
- m) number of proposals for the title of associate professor approved by the Scientific Board of a higher education institution in the calendar year;
- n) number of halted habilitation proceedings and inauguration proceedings (commenced proceedings which were not approved by the Scientific Board, withdrawn by the candidate or otherwise halted) in the calendar year.

### **Article 18**

#### **Educational process output indicators**

The output indicators indicate the compliance of the achieved education with the requirements of the labor market, the perception of learning outcomes by employers and the related trends. These are in particular:

<sup>27</sup> FTE (Full-time equivalent) – equivalent of the full-time employment.

- a) employability rate of the graduates of a higher education institution/study programme;
- b) degree of employers' satisfaction with the achieved learning outcomes of a study programme.

## Part V

### Methodology for the Evaluation of Research, Artistic and Other Activities

#### Article 19

##### Purpose and principles for the evaluation of research, artistic and other activities

1. The Methodology for the Evaluation of Research, Artistic and Other Activities regulates the evaluation of the level of research, artistic and other activities in relation to the relevant parts of the Standards for Study Programmes<sup>28</sup> and the Standards for Habilitation Proceedings and Inauguration Proceedings<sup>29</sup>.
2. Research, artistic and other activities are research activities, development activities, artistic activities or other activities of a higher education institution that are relevant to its mission, mostly to learning objectives and learning outcomes.
3. Research, artistic and other activities are evaluated by reviewing:
  - a) the level of research, artistic and other activities of the teachers who provide profile courses of the study programme in the relevant field(s) of study in which the study programme is delivered, or
  - b) the level of research, artistic and other activities of the teachers who are responsible for the development and quality assurance of the field of habilitation proceedings and inauguration proceedings.
4. The higher education institution demonstrates its research, artistic and other activities through the most important research, artistic and other outputs of the teachers providing profile courses of the study programme or the outputs of the persons responsible for the development and quality assurance of the field of habilitation proceedings and inauguration proceedings.
5. When evaluating the level of research, artistic and other activities, a holistic peer review of research, artistic and other outputs is applied by the relevant members of a review panel of the Agency's Executive Board.
6. The evaluation of the level of research, artistic and other activities shall take into account the specificities of the nature of research, artistic and other activities across scientific disciplines and different forms of art, which may justify differences in the detailed approach to evaluation.
7. The underpinning principle is that all types and forms of research, artistic and other activities and their outputs are evaluated appropriately to each discipline on a fair and equal basis. The reviewers shall apply such evaluation procedures that enable them to identify the levels of research, artistic and other activities across the whole spectrum of applied, practical, fundamental and strategic research, artistic and other activities and treat them on an equal basis, regardless of where the research, artistic and other activity was delivered.
8. The result of the evaluation of each research, artistic and other 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" used in the evaluation of research, artistic and other activities refer to the

<sup>28</sup> Art. 7 of the Standards for Study Programmes.

<sup>29</sup> Art. 5 of the Standards for Habilitation Proceedings and Inauguration Proceedings.

level of quality. They do not relate to the nature or geographical scope of the particular studies, nor to the place where the research is carried out or the place where its results are disseminated.

## **Article 20**

### **Defining areas and periods covered by the evaluation**

1. The area of evaluation is indicated by a higher education institution in its application.
2. The areas of evaluation are defined by:
  - a) the study programme<sup>30</sup> in the relevant field of study in which the study programme is or is to be delivered, or
  - b) the individually evaluated specialization<sup>31</sup>, translation studies foundations<sup>32</sup> or teacher training foundations<sup>33</sup>, or
  - c) the field of habilitation proceedings and inauguration proceedings which is assigned to one or two fields of study.<sup>34</sup>
3. The area of evaluation is assigned to the field(s) of study in which the relevant study programme, specialization, teacher training foundations, translation studies foundations are or are to be delivered or to which the field of habilitation proceedings and inauguration proceedings is assigned.
4. The period of evaluation is 6 years before the year in which the application for accreditation was submitted.

## **Article 21**

### **Evaluated persons**

1. The higher education institution shall identify persons who provide profile courses of the study programme or are responsible for the development and quality assurance of the field of habilitation proceedings and inauguration proceedings in the relevant area of evaluation.
2. Only the persons employed at a higher education institution for fixed weekly working hours at the time of application's submission may be included in the selection. In the areas of evaluation related to the professionally oriented study programmes and the study programmes with a focus on training of health professionals, members of the armed forces and artists, it is permissible to include also the professional experts with a part-time employment at a higher education institution at the time of application's submission.
3. One person may only be included in one area of evaluation defined by the study programme and in one area of evaluation defined by the field of habilitation proceedings and inauguration proceedings.
4. One person may only be included in the evaluation at one higher education institution.

## **Article 22**

### **Submission of research, artistic and other outputs and other documentation for the evaluation**

1. The higher education institution shall ensure the availability of records of submitted research, artistic and other outputs and corresponding citations in bibliometric and citation databases, registers of

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<sup>30</sup> It may apply also to several study programmes that meet some of the provisions in Art. 7 (3) letters a – h) of the Standards for Study Programmes.

<sup>31</sup> According to Art. 12 (3) of the Standards for Study Programmes.

<sup>32</sup> According to Art. 12 (23) of the Standards for Study Programmes.

<sup>33</sup> According to Art. 12 (26) of the Standards for Study Programmes.

<sup>34</sup> The list of fields of study is given in Decree No. 244/2019 Coll. of the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sports of the Slovak Republic on the system of study branches in the Slovak Republic.

- publication and artistic activities or in other search systems that are accepted as relevant in the particular field.
2. The higher education institution shall submit 5 outputs for each evaluated person, i.e. a total of 25 outputs for each area of evaluation, or 15 outputs if the area of evaluation is defined by the individually evaluated specialization, translation studies foundations, teacher training foundations or in another specific case<sup>35</sup>.
  3. The higher education institution shall submit only such research, artistic and other outputs that relate to learning outcomes or research activities within the relevant area of evaluation, while their justified interdisciplinary overlaps are permissible.
  4. In the case of outputs with several authors, the output can be attributed to a person who demonstrably and substantially contributed to its creation. In the case of outputs with several authors, the institution shall also attach the characteristics of author's contribution to the submitted documentation.
  5. The higher education institution shall submit the same output within the relevant area of evaluation only once.
  6. In the case of outputs with several authors, the same output may be submitted and attributed to other persons in other evaluations of research, artistic and other activities, however, at most three times.
  7. If a higher education institution delivers more than one study programme in the relevant field of study, it shall demonstrate the level of research, artistic and other outputs referred to in paragraphs 1 and 4 separately for each study programme. This does not apply in the case of the study programmes or parts of the study programmes with similar profile courses:
    - a) the content-related follow-up study programme in the relevant field of the study delivered at the same part of a higher education institution;
    - b) other form or language mutation of the identical study programme delivered at the same part of a higher education institution;
    - c) a part of the joint study programme based in terms of content on the relevant field of study and delivered at the same part of a higher education institution;
    - d) a part of the study programme in a combination of two fields of study based in terms of content on the relevant field of study and delivered at the same part of a higher education institution;
    - e) a specialization of the teacher training combination study programme based in terms of content on the relevant field of study and delivered at the same part of a higher education institution;
    - f) a specialization of the translation combination study programme based in terms of content on the relevant language and delivered at the same part of a higher education institution;
    - g) the conversion study programme based in terms of content on the study programme in the relevant field of study and degree and delivered at the same part of a higher education institution;
    - h) a part of the study programme of the first degree delivered as interdisciplinary studies based in terms of content on the relevant field of study.
  8. If a higher education institution delivers several study programmes in the relevant field of study at several seats or at several parts, it ensures the demonstration of the results of research, artistic and other activities for each seat and each part separately. Exceptions are the teacher training foundations and the translation studies foundations which can be jointly provided for several parts, as long as they are located at the same seat.

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<sup>35</sup> Another specific case is the area of evaluation defined by the study programme in the field of study whose content definition is related to the preparation of experts for some of the regulated professions with the coordination of education listed in Annex No. 2 to Decree No. 16/2016 Coll. of the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sports of the Slovak Republic and based on the fields of study assigned to regulated professions according to Government Regulation No. 296/2010 Coll.

9. The higher education institution shall provide sufficient information on each of the submitted outputs. The information enables to specify the type of the output, its authorship (whether it is authored solely or co-authored by several persons), form and location.
10. The outputs are presented in full, i.e. so that they can undergo the holistic expert evaluation. In justified cases, particularly if the nature of the output does not allow the distant evaluation, the higher education institution shall ensure access to the output during the site visit of the review panel.
11. The publication date of at least 2 research, artistic and other outputs of each evaluated person shall fall within the evaluation period.
12. If the submitted output is published in a language other than the state language or English, a short abstract in English which characterizes the content, nature and main results of the output should be provided by the higher education institution.
13. The higher education institution provides a list of citations for each output. If considered necessary, the higher education institution attaches a brief annotation with the contextual information on the impact of the output on socio-economic practice. The annotation shall include factual information serving as the evidence of how the output has gained the recognition, influenced the state of science, art, technology, led to further development or has been used. This evidence should be concise, verifiable and, where necessary, externally cited. If 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. If a non-textual or other practical output (including patents, software and standards documents) is submitted, an annotation with the contextual information, in particular a description of the creative process and the content of the research, artistic and other activity, shall be attached, in case it is not apparent from the output.
15. If a higher education institution decides to submit an output containing classified information or sensitive data, it is its responsibility to obtain the approval of the relevant authority or stakeholder in order to submit it for evaluation. The institution is obliged to make such output available to the review panel for evaluation. The reviewers of this output are bound by confidentiality.

### **Article 23**

#### **Criteria and procedures for the evaluation of the level of research, artistic and other outputs**

1. The documentation for the evaluation generally includes:
  - a) the research, artistic and other output,
  - b) other documentation provided by the higher education institution,
  - c) other publicly available contextual information and information from bibliometric and citation databases, registers of publication and artistic activities, repositories, full-text, bibliographic and bibliometric electronic information sources or from other search systems that are accepted as relevant in the particular field,
  - d) talks with the authors of the outputs during the site visit of the review panel.
2. When evaluating the quality level of the research, artistic and other outputs, the reviewers evaluate the originality, rigour and impact of each output, taking into account the specificities of research, artistic and other activities and their evaluation in the particular field.
3. Originality is the extent to which the output significantly contributes to understanding and knowledge in the particular field. The outputs demonstrate originality, in particular, by:
  - a) producing and interpreting new empirical findings and/or new material;
  - b) dealing with new and/or complex research problems;
  - c) developing innovative research methods, methodologies and/or analytical techniques;
  - d) pointing out imaginative and creative solutions;

- e) providing new arguments and/or new forms of expression, formal innovations, interpretations and information;
  - f) collecting new types of data on which they elaborate and/or develop theoretical knowledge or the analyses of doctrines, policies or practice and new forms of expression.
4. Rigour is the extent to which the output demonstrates intellectual coherence and integrity, and adopts robust and appropriate concepts, analyses, sources, theories and/or methodologies.
  5. Impact of the output is the beneficial effect of the output on the external environment outside the higher education institution, as well as on its education activities and on 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. The impact includes, for example, effect, change, or benefit in activities, attitudes, awareness, behaviour, opportunities, capacities, performance, policies, practices and understanding processes. It can manifest itself in relation to different categories of recipients – clients, voters, communities, students, organizations, society or individuals. The impact may also mean limiting or preventing risks, damages, costs or other adverse effects. A part of the evaluation of output's impact is the assessment of the impact on the development of a scientific or artistic discipline, scientific and artistic thinking and the impact on students, education and other activities. The impact will be evaluated in terms of the extent to which potential categories of recipients have been reached – clients, voters, communities, organizations, society, students or individuals. The impact will not be evaluated from a purely geographical point of view or from the absolute number of recipients. The criteria will be applied regardless of where the impact occurred, regardless of the geographical location of a recipient. The impact evaluation 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, awareness or quality of life and saturation of recipients' needs.
  6. When evaluating outputs, the reviewers will holistically consider the evidence of the output quality in terms of its originality, rigour and impact and will apply the following general definitions of quality levels indicated by the letters **A +**, **A**, **A-**, **B** and **C**.
    - a) **A+**: internationally excellent level in terms of originality, rigour and impact of the research, artistic and other output – the output brings a new agenda within the relevant research, artistic and other activity or has a crucial contribution to the development of relevant research, artistic and other activity in the global context;
    - b) **A**: internationally significant level in terms of originality, rigour and impact of the research, artistic and other output – the output significantly contributes to the development of the relevant research, artistic and other activity in the wider international context;
    - c) **A-**: internationally recognized level in terms of originality, rigour and impact of the research, artistic and other output – the output represents a certain contribution to the development of the relevant research, artistic and other activity in the international context;
    - d) **B**: nationally recognized level in terms of originality, rigour and impact of the research, artistic and other output – the output represents a certain contribution to the development of the relevant research, artistic and other activity in the national context;
    - e) **C**: a level below the nationally recognized quality standard of the research, artistic and other activity in terms of originality, rigour and impact of the research, artistic and other output, or unclassified output.
  7. Reviewers shall classify the research, artistic and other output as „unclassified“ (**C**) if the output is not submitted according to the requirements under Art. 21 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 corresponding area of evaluation.

8. When reviewing the outputs, the reviewers shall take into account the specificities of the evaluation of the level of research, artistic and other activity according to the fields of study to which the corresponding area of evaluation is assigned.
9. The specificities of the evaluation of the level of research, artistic and other outputs are taken into account within the groups of fields of study to which the area of evaluation 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 Therapeutic Education, Media and Communication Studies, Political Sciences, Law, Psychology, Social Work, Sociology and Social Anthropology, Theology, Teacher Training and Pedagogical Sciences, Arts and Culture Sciences, Sports Sciences;
  - c) group of Medical and Health 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, Wood Sciences and Technology, Electrical Engineering, Geodesy and Cartography, Chemical Engineering and Technology, Cybernetics, Forestry, Defense and Military, Agriculture and Landscaping, Food, Spatial Planning, Civil Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, Acquisition and Processing of Earth Resources;
  - e) group of Arts: Art.

#### **Article 24**

##### **Specificities of the level of research, artistic and other outputs evaluation according to the groups of fields of study**

1. When evaluating the outputs from the group of Exact and Natural Sciences, the reviewers shall focus on reviewing 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 concerning the theoretical framework, methodological design, selection and use of research 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 research methods and techniques;
  - d) academic relevance of the research and its significant contribution to building theory, enriching scientific thinking or developing a new paradigm in the field;
  - e) social relevance of the research;
  - f) application benefits of the output for the development of knowledge, skills, social and economic practice, new materials and technologies, management and/or policy;
  - g) difficulty of the research challenge in terms of scale, labor intensity, material and infrastructure needs, data collection and research logistics.
2. When evaluating the outputs from the group of Exact and Natural Sciences, the reviewers shall welcome and appreciate research practices that promote reproducible science and the application of best practices. The examples include registered reports, the publication of data and data sets, experimental materials, analytical code and the use of report checklists for publication and those related to the use of animals in research. They contribute to the rigour evaluation of the submitted outputs. Replication studies may be submitted as outputs. They will be evaluated on the extent to which they contribute to significant new knowledge, improved methods or theory or practice.

3. When evaluating the outputs from the group of Exact and Natural Sciences, the reviewers shall, as standard, take into account the information from reputable international databases, in particular, in order to evaluate the academic relevance and impact of the output.
4. When evaluating the outputs from the group of Social Sciences and Humanities, the reviewers shall focus on reviewing 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 concerning the theoretical framework, epistemological anchoring, methodological design, selection and use of research methods and techniques, presentation and interpretation of results;
  - b) a significant contribution and dissemination of empirical knowledge and conceptual framework of the field;
  - c) creativity of the solution and a significant contribution to building theory and enriching scientific thinking and paradigms of the field;
  - d) social relevance of the research;
  - e) application benefits of the output for the development of knowledge, skills, social and economic practice, civil society and national community development, preservation of cultural heritage, management and/or policy;
  - f) difficulty of the research challenge in terms of scale, labor intensity, material and infrastructure needs, data collection and research logistics.
5. When evaluating the outputs from the group of Social Sciences and Humanities, the reviewers may, if relevant in the given field, take into account the information from reputable international databases, in particular, in order to evaluate the academic relevance and impact of the output.
6. When evaluating the outputs from the group of Medical and Health Sciences, the reviewers shall focus on reviewing 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 concerning the theoretical framework, methodological design, selection and use of research 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 research methods and techniques, diagnostic, medical and nursing procedures;
  - d) academic relevance of the research and its significant contribution to building theory, enriching the scientific thinking of the field;
  - e) social relevance of the research;
  - f) application benefits of the output for the development of knowledge, skills, social and economic practice, new medications, management and/or policy;
  - g) difficulty of the research challenge in terms of scale, labor intensity, material and infrastructure needs, data collection and research logistics.
7. When evaluating the outputs from the group of Medical and Health Sciences, the reviewers shall welcome and appreciate research practices that promote reproducible science and the application of best practices. The examples include registered reports, the publication of data and data sets, experimental materials, analytical code and the use of report checklists for publication and those related to the use of animals in research. They contribute to the rigour evaluation of the submitted outputs. Replication studies are taken into consideration as outputs. They will be evaluated on the extent to which they contribute to significant new knowledge, improved methods or theory or practice.
8. When evaluating the outputs from the group of Medical and Health Sciences, the reviewers shall, if relevant in the given field, take into account the information from reputable international databases,

- in particular, in order to evaluate the academic relevance and impact of the output to the extent appropriate to international practice in the relevant field of study.
9. When evaluating the outputs from the group of Technical and Technological Sciences, the reviewers shall focus on reviewing 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 concerning the theoretical framework, methodological design, selection and use of research 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) social, technological, and economic relevance of the research;
    - e) application benefits of the output for the development of knowledge, skills, social and economic practice, new materials, new technical and technological solutions, management and/or policy;
    - f) difficulty of the research challenge in terms of scale, labor intensity, material and infrastructure needs, data collection and research logistics.
  10. When evaluating the outputs from the group of Technical and Technological Sciences, the reviewers shall take into account the information from reputable international databases, in particular, in order to evaluate the academic relevance and impact of the output.
  11. When evaluating the outputs from the group of Arts, the outputs are evaluated within the following types of artistic activity: architecture, audiovisual arts, theater, design, music, curatorial work, restoration, dance, fine arts.
  12. For the purposes of evaluating artistic activities from the group of Arts, the institutions or events are considered reputable when on the basis of their long-term programmes they are reckoned by professional reflection (responses, reviews, research) as a quality criterion from the viewpoint of the current state of thinking in the given field of art.
  13. When evaluating the outputs from the group of Arts, the reviewers shall focus on reviewing evidence of any of the following quality characteristics which are appropriate for each of the quality levels indicated by letters:
    - a) an excellent artistic output which owing to its inventiveness and originality brings new development tendencies within the relevant type of art in the international context,
    - b) a significant artistic output which brings new creative solutions, ideas or approaches enriching contemporary artistic tendencies within the relevant type of art,
    - c) a standard output which takes into account current artistic trends within the relevant type of art, has creative potential and has been realized or presented abroad or presented at reputable foreign institutions or events considered as opinion-forming by the professional community,
    - d) a standard output which takes into account current artistic trends within the relevant type of art, has creative potential and has been realized at home or presented at reputable home institutions or home events considered as opinion-forming by the professional community.
  14. For the purposes of evaluating research outputs related to art, specificities of Social Sciences and Humanities shall be applied.
  15. When evaluating the impact of the outputs from the group of Arts, the reviewers shall focus on reviewing evidence of any of the following characteristics which are appropriate for each of the levels. These include:
    - a) recognition of the output,
    - b) prizes awarded at festivals and competitions,
    - c) reproduction of the work,
    - d) inclusion of the work in a significant collection,
    - e) inclusion of the work in a significant international database,
    - f) professional nomination of the work/performance for the top international jury award,

- g) responses, citations/reproductions, reviews in reputable professional journals and publications,
- h) monographs on the author's work and catalogues published by reputable publishing houses,
- i) invited participation in home artistic symposia.

## Article 25

### Procedure for determining the overall quality profile for the area of evaluation

1. The overall quality profile of outputs shall be made by calculating the percentage of the outputs that are assigned to the individual quality levels, with each output contributing equally. Percentage values are rounded to an integer.  
As an example, the proportions can be given: A+ (20 %), A (36 %), A- (32 %), B (12 %), C (0%).
2. The total score is calculated by successively assigning weights from **5 to 1** to the individual levels **A+ to C**. The resulting research, artistic and other activities level score for the area of evaluation is calculated according to the example as follows:  $(20 \times 5 + 36 \times 4 + 32 \times 3 + 12 \times 2 + 0 \times 1)/100 = 3.64$ .
3. The lower boundary values for categorization of research, artistic and other activities quality levels are as follows:
  - a) internationally excellent quality  
**A+: 4,20**
  - b) internationally significant quality  
**A: 3,20**
  - c) internationally recognized quality  
**A-: 2,50**
  - d) nationally recognized quality  
**B: 1,50**
  - e) inadequate quality  
**C: less than 1,50.**

## Part VI

### Glossary of terms

#### Article 26

##### Purpose of the glossary

1. For the purposes of evaluating the Standards for the Internal System, the Standards for Study Programmes and the Standards for Habilitation Proceedings and Inauguration Proceedings, the following system of terms is defined. This would ensure a common understanding of the requirements for the internal system, for study programmes and for habilitation and inauguration proceedings by the staff and review panels of the Slovak Accreditation Agency for Higher Education, higher education institutions and other stakeholders in the process of granting accreditation and reviewing the compliance according to Act No. 269/2018 Coll. on Quality Assurance of Higher Education and on the amendment to Act No. 343/2015 Coll. on Public Procurement and on the amendment to certain acts, as amended.
2. There is no requirement to replace the terms used by a higher education institution with the terms used in the Standards if the higher education institution explains any significant differences in the application or in the annex to the application or in other document of its internal system.

#### Article 27

##### Glossary

1. **(A) criterion** is a specific requirement of a standard or a partial aspect thereof. Its fulfillment is a prerequisite for the overall evaluation of the fulfillment of the given standard.
2. **(The) parts of a higher education institution** are faculties and other pedagogical, research, technological development, arts, economics and information centres located at the seat of the higher education institution or its faculties, special facilities, detached workplaces and consulting centres outside the higher education institution or outside its faculties.
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 given study programme.
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 the work, presentation and artistic performance, review or artistic criticism of the work, presentation or artistic performance, reproduction of the work with a clear designation of the author in a foreign or domestic publication or medium.
5. **Academic fraud** is a dishonest action that is contrary to academic integrity and moral standards. It includes plagiarism, cheating on tests, fabrication of research results, recording of fictitious data, omitting unsuitable facts and data, forgery of research, dishonest practices in publishing research results, not declaring conflicts of interest, misusing information gathered during reviewal, fictitious authorship, superficial and poor quality review, systematic and conscious publishing in journals and publishing houses showing signs of dishonest practices (journals and publishing houses showing signs of predatory practices).
6. **Accompanying persons** are responsible persons with sufficient competence, designated by the higher education institution to accompany the review panel on the premises of the workplace, to provide sufficient evidence and support during a site visit.
7. **Accreditation of habilitation proceedings and inauguration proceedings** is the right to conduct habilitation proceedings and inauguration proceedings in the field of habilitation proceedings and inauguration proceedings.

8. **Accreditation of the study programme** is the right to deliver a study programme and award its graduates a corresponding academic degree.
9. **Specialization** in teacher training combination study programmes is a set of courses and rules related to a single subject; specialization in translation combination study programmes is a set of courses and rules related to one language<sup>36</sup>.
10. **Autocitation** is the concurrence of an author or several authors in the cited and the citing document.
11. **Competence** is the authority, capacity, effect or impact of a person in relation to a given task, procedure, process or activity for which such person is responsible.
12. **Competency**<sup>37</sup> is the proven ability of a person to perform a certain professional activity. Competencies, together with knowledge and skills, serve as structural characteristics of learning outcomes.
13. **Research, artistic and other activities** are activities<sup>38</sup> of a higher education institution that are relevant to its mission, mainly to its learning objectives and outcomes.
14. **Effectiveness** is the extent of the implementation of planned activities and the achievement of planned objectives, results.
15. **Efficiency** is the relationship between the results obtained and the resources, inputs and outputs of the process used.
16. **Evaluation of compliance with a standard** is a systematic, independent and documented process of providing and obtaining the evidence of compliance with the criteria of a standard and objectively evaluating the degree of compliance. It is a cooperation between the higher education institution and the review panel of the Agency, whose common interest is to provide sufficient confidence in the quality of the provided education.
17. **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.
18. **(A) final thesis** is a bachelor's thesis in first level study programmes, a diploma thesis in second level study programmes and a dissertation thesis in third level study programmes. It is a part of every study programme and together with its viva forms one course. The final thesis viva is one of the state exams.
19. **Informal education** is the lifelong process of acquiring knowledge, skills and attitudes from day-to-day experience, from our environment and through contacts with other people.
20. **Internal system processes** are flows of necessary interrelated activities that according to the internal system policy a higher education institution identifies, plans, implements, monitors and improves while fulfilling the mission and strategic goals of the institution (educational processes, research, artistic and other processes, other institution processes).
21. **Learning objectives of a study programme** identify students' abilities at the end of their studies and express what is expected of the study programme graduates. The objectives are implemented in the programme through verifiable/measurable learning outcomes.
22. **(A) learning outcome**<sup>39</sup> is a detailed description of what a learner knows, understands and can do at the end of the learning process to ensure that the individual learning objectives of the programme are fulfilled. It is stated in the content of knowledge, skills and competencies.<sup>40</sup> In

<sup>36</sup> According to Sec. 53a) Art. 3 of the Higher Education Act.

<sup>37</sup> "Competency" in the terminology of the Quality Assurance Act [§ 3 (3), letter a) 4] or "skill" in the terminology used in the professional literature on education.

<sup>38</sup> According to Sec. 3 Art. 2, letter a) of the Quality Assurance Act.

<sup>39</sup> "Outcome of higher education" in the terminology of the Quality Assurance Act [§ 3 (3), letter a) 4] or "learning outcomes" in the terminology of Decree No. 614/2002 Coll. of the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic on the study credit system.

<sup>40</sup> Competencies in terms of the Act, skills in terms of professional pedagogical literature discourse.

- contrast to a learning objective, a learning outcome is fixed, and the degree of its fulfilment is measurable and verifiable. Learning outcomes are stated for each study programme and its individual parts and for individual courses.
23. **(The) long-term and continuous success rate** is the continuous rate of success over the 10 years prior to the year in which the research, artistic and other activities are evaluated.
  24. **(A) modification of a study programme** is an addition or deletion of compulsory courses or compulsory optional courses, a change in the requirements for the regular completion of study, a modification of the information sheet of a compulsory course or a compulsory optional course, but does not include changes in teacher updates, recommended literature or course evaluations.<sup>41</sup>
  25. **Non-formal education** is systematic education outside the formal education system. It is organised by various institutions providing education for certain groups of the population in selected types, forms and content areas.
  26. **Profile courses** are courses of the study programme that significantly contribute to the achievement of the graduate's profile, i.e. to the learning objectives and learning outcomes of the relevant study programme.
  27. **Quality assurance internal system policies** are a set of principles that guide the activities of higher education institutions and their staff, students and external stakeholders to achieve the continuous quality assurance and development of higher education and related activities.
  28. **Scientific integrity** is a primary prerequisite for quality scientific work; it entails strict adherence to high professional and moral standards, and transparency. It implies conducting research critically, without prejudice, and in the absolute integrity of the practice, teaching, and research administration. It is the opposite of scientific dishonesty and deceit.
  29. **Skill** is the ability or art of easily and accurately applying knowledge and performing a certain cognitive, psychomotor or social activity. Skills, together with knowledge and competencies, serve as the structural characteristics of learning outcomes.
  30. **Stakeholders** are persons, communities or organizations within the higher education institution that may have an influence on or be influenced by the educational process, research, artistic and other activities. 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 society, university graduates, domestic and foreign university partners, etc.).
  31. **(The) Standards for Habilitation Proceedings and Inauguration Proceedings** are a set of requirements which must be fulfilled in order to obtain accreditation of habilitation proceedings and inauguration proceedings.
  32. **(The) Standards for the Higher Education Internal Quality Assurance System** are a set of requirements for the internal system and its implementation.<sup>42</sup>
  33. **(The) Standards for Study Programmes** are a set of requirements which must be fulfilled in order to obtain accreditation of the study programme.
  34. **Teaching staff** are all persons who provide study programmes, whether employed as university teachers, researchers, doctoral candidates or specialists, regardless of their working hours or type of work contract.
  35. **(The) review schedule** is the timetable for the proceedings from receiving the application or acting at the Agency's behest to making the decision or statement by the Executive Board.
  36. **(The) Catalogue of Good Practices** is a continuously updated database of examples of good practice concerning the fulfillment of individual standards and criteria.

<sup>41</sup> According to Sec. 2 letter g) of the Quality Assurance Act.

<sup>42</sup> According to Sec. 2 letter a) of Act No. 269/2018 Coll. on Quality Assurance of Higher Education and the Amendment to Act No. 343/2015 Coll. on Public Procurement and the Amendments to Certain Acts, as amended.

37. **(The) internationally excellent level of research, artistic and other activities** is the highest quality level of outputs; it is defined on the basis of evaluation procedures and criteria set in the Methodology for the Evaluation of Research, Artistic and Other Activities issued by the Agency. The term does not relate to the nature, geographical cover, place of delivery or place of dissemination of the research, artistic and other activities outputs.
38. **(The) findings of the review panel** determine the degree of compliance of the subject matter of the proceedings by the evaluation of the provided evidence quantified by the fulfilment indicator. The findings of the review panel are the basis for processing the conclusions of the review panel in the evaluation report of the review panel.
39. **(The) higher education internal quality assurance system** is a consistently interlinked set of policies, structures and processes through which the higher education institution ensures and develops the quality of the fulfilment of its mission in the spheres of higher education, research, artistic and other activities.
40. **(The) internationally recognized level of research, artistic and other activities** is the third-highest quality level of outputs; it is defined on the basis of evaluation procedures and criteria set in the Methodology for the Evaluation of Research, Artistic and Other Activities issued by the Agency. The term does not relate to the nature, geographical cover, place of delivery or place of dissemination of the outputs of the research, artistic and other activities.
41. **(The) nationally recognized level of research, artistic and other activities** is the fourth-highest quality level of outputs; it is defined on the basis of evaluation procedures and criteria set in the Methodology for the Evaluation of Research, Artistic and Other Activities issued by the Agency. The term does not relate to the nature, geographical cover, place of delivery or place of dissemination of the outputs of the research, artistic and other activities.
42. **(The) site visit review plan** is the time and subject schedule of activities of the review panel, representatives of the applicant and representatives of stakeholders during the review at a specific workplace.
43. **(The) qualifications framework** is the national qualifications framework. The levels of the national qualifications framework correlate with the levels of the qualifications framework in the European Higher Education Area<sup>43</sup> and with the European Qualifications Framework.<sup>44</sup>
44. **(A) "rigorous" thesis** is a thesis that is submitted following the completion of the second level of a higher education study programme; the viva is a part of the "rigorous" examination. Only the institutions which are authorised to provide the second level of higher education in a given field are permitted to provide this kind of examination.
45. **(The) internationally significant level of research, artistic and other activities** is the second-highest quality level of outputs; it is defined on the basis of evaluation procedures and criteria set in the Methodology for the Evaluation of Research, Artistic and Other Activities issued by the Agency. The term does not relate to the nature, geographical cover, place of delivery or place of dissemination of the outputs of the research, artistic and other activities.
46. **(The) structures of the internal system** are authorities, departments of the institution, contracted partners or persons with specified competencies and responsibilities for a defined extent of quality assurance in higher education and other related activities.
47. **Teacher training foundations** in teacher training combination study programmes comprise a set of courses in the fields of pedagogy, psychology, social sciences and didactics. The teacher training foundations together with a combination of two specializations form the teacher training combination study programme.<sup>45</sup>

<sup>43</sup> Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area.

<sup>44</sup> The European Qualifications Framework.

<sup>45</sup> According to Sec. 53a, Art. 4 of the Higher Education Act.

48. **(The) teacher providing the course** is responsible for the course, gives lectures and heads other central educational activities of the course. S/he is responsible for quality assurance activities within the course and development of the course so that the required learning outcomes of the study programme are achieved.
49. **Transferable skills** are skills that are not specifically linked to a particular job or profession but can be used and further developed in a variety of situations and conditions. They include communication skills, mathematical skills, organizational skills, digital skills, analytical skills, interpersonal skills, creativity and abstract thinking, critical thinking, mentoring and supervising skills, business skills, motivation and learning skills, contextual thinking and metacognitive skills.
50. **Translation studies foundations** in translation combination study programmes comprise a set of basic courses related to translation and interpretation. The translation studies foundations, together with a combination of two languages, form a translation combination study programme.<sup>46</sup>
51. **Working in a field of study** is the engagement of a person employed by the higher education institution in the given field of study to provide education, research, artistic and other activities.

## Part VII

### Final provisions

This Methodology was approved by the Agency's Executive Board on 17 September 2020 and shall enter into force on the date of its approval.

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<sup>46</sup> According to Sec. 53a, Art. 4 of the Higher Education Act.