



APPROVED BY
Resolution of the Senate of the Lithuanian Academy of
Music and Theatre of 27 May 2015 (Minutes No 4-SE)
(Revised version as of 24 September 2025)

LITHUANIAN ACADEMY OF MUSIC AND THEATRE

QUALITY MANUAL

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1. INFORMATION ABOUT THE LITHUANIAN ACADEMY OF MUSIC AND THEATRE

The Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre (hereinafter referred to as the ‘Academy’, ‘LAMT’) is a state higher education institution/university. The founder of the Academy is the Parliament of the Republic of Lithuania. The Academy has academic, administrative, economic and financial management autonomy and is governed by the principles of self-governance, academic freedom and respect to human rights as defined in the *Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania*, the *Law on Higher Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania* and the *Statute of the Academy*.

The Academy delivers first, second and third cycle study programmes, non-formal education for children, adults and continuous training programmes by taking into account the needs of society and individuals for continuous development, as well as the pursuit for the required qualification in line with universally recognised standards.

The Academy trains top-qualified music, theatre, film and dance art specialists; creates conditions for an individual to acquire background in university higher education based on professionalism, art and creative work traditions, the unity of art and science, international quality standards and the priority for Lithuanian studies, which provide opportunities for successful integration into the life of the state and society; undertakes and publishes scientific and artistic research based on the principles of freedom of artistic expression and scientific research, integrity, fair competition, assurance of intellectual property rights, and publicity of artistic and scientific output; actively participates in the processes pertaining to dissemination of academic and contemporary art; takes an active part in shaping of the national policy for artistic education and culture.

The history of the Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre dates back to 1919, when composer Juozas Naujalis founded Kaunas Music School. In 1933, the school was acknowledged as a higher education institution and reorganised into Kaunas Conservatoire. Vilnius Conservatoire was established in 1944. In 1949, both conservatoires were merged and the Lithuanian State Conservatoire was founded in Vilnius. In 1952, along with music professionals, the Lithuanian State Conservatoire started training drama theatre specialists. In 1989, Kaunas Faculty of the Lithuanian State Conservatoire was set up and started training music performers and music teachers. On the grounds of Resolution No. 1-2577 of 20 May 1992 of the Presidium of the Supreme Council-Reconstituent Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania, the Lithuanian State Conservatoire was renamed into the Lithuanian Academy of Music, and by virtue of Resolution No. IX-2291 of 22 June 2004 of the Parliament of the Republic of Lithuania, the latter’s name was changed into the Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre.

With a view of delivering quality studies and conducting quality artistic and research activities, the Academy created, implements, monitors and constantly improves the internal quality assurance system which is based on the *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education*.

2. QUALITY ASSURANCE PRINCIPLES IN THE LITHUANIAN ACADEMY OF MUSIC AND THEATRE

For LAMT, quality assurance is the ability to meet expectations associated with the Academy, as well as individual and public needs. The LAMT management is committed to implementing an internal quality assurance system which is in line with the *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area*, as well as to continuous improvement of its effectiveness. These commitments are fulfilled through active involvement of all LAMT employees in the internal quality assurance system.

The following are the general principles of LAMT quality assurance:

Universality – all members of the Academy's community are involved in quality assurance; it is aimed at engaging all stakeholders;

Progressiveness – promotion of innovation and positive change by choosing quality assurance methods and tools;

Internationalization – promotion of international cooperation and exchange of best practice;

Consistency – coherence of quality assurance objectives, principles and measures.

The development of the LAMT quality concept is based on the following principles:

Dialogue – all stakeholders have a right to participate in defining study, art and research requirements;

Consensus – coordination of different perspectives and the pursuit of a vision on the delivery of studies, artistic and research activities that is acceptable for all stakeholders;

Concreteness – accomplishment of a vision and aims through specific and measurable goals.

The following are the principles of the LAMT quality assessment:

Transparency – explicitness and public availability of the objectives, criteria and procedures of external evaluation, accessibility of conclusions;

Versatility – matching the different sources of information, evaluation methods and perspectives such as external and internal, qualitative and quantitative assessment for the purposes of accurate conclusions;

Benefit – suitability and use of evaluation conclusions for performance improvement, management of processes and design of change strategies;

Moderation – selection of the necessary and sufficient quality assessment instruments with regard to their costs.

The following are the quality improvement principles applied to LAMT activities:

Validity – process management and decision making based on the available monitoring evidence and conclusions of evaluations;

Continuity – maintaining a balanced relationship between innovations, established successful practices and experience gained;

Capacity building – training and supporting employees to facilitate the achievement of higher standards and new goals;

Value added – creation of added value for all stakeholders.

3. INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM

The Internal Quality Assurance System of the Academy is based on the *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area* and the principles of the Quality Management System. Its purpose is to ensure quality operational processes in the Academy. The owners of operational processes, who organise and control the activities, are in charge of appropriate maintenance of operational processes, appropriate performance of functions or their improvement.

3.1. System of Operational Processes

With a view of developing a process approach at the Academy, the following aims are important:

- **Clarity of the Academy's activities.** A clear scheme of activities is an effective tool for organisation management;
- **Perception of the Academy as a system.** Identification of interrelated operational processes shows how individual employees and units are involved in the activities of the organization;
- **Optimization of process sequence.** Processes are analysed according to the benefit they bring by eliminating the stages with no value and searching for possibilities to boost process efficacy;
- **Coordination of employees' actions.** Collaboration of different units and functions is optimized;
- **Evaluation and continuous improvement of the efficacy of processes.** The efficacy of processes is evaluated and improved on a regular basis in accordance with the established indicators.

The Academy identified the following operational processes and appointed the responsible units and/or employees of the Academy (the owners of processes):

Table 1.

Title of process	Scope of process	Process owner
GOVERNANCE PROCESSES		
Strategic planning	The process includes the formation of the working group for strategic planning, development and approval of the long-term (10-year) strategy, development and approval of the (3- and 1-year) strategic plan, ensuring the compatibility of the (10-, 3- and 1-year) plans and making sure that planning takes place at all levels of the Academy (institution, departments, employees).	Rectorate
Financial management	The process includes the establishment, monitoring, and adjustment of the Academy's budget.	Finance Directorate
Management of powers and responsibility	The process includes the establishment, monitoring, and improvement of the Academy's organizational structure, as well as power and responsibility granting.	Rector
Monitoring and improvement	The process includes the following: 1) Submission of activity reports by the Academy's units, the Rector's annual report ¹ , 2) SWOT analysis and planning of improvement actions, 3) Internal auditing of the Academy,	Heads of units, Rectorate, Internal Audit Division

¹ Available online at <https://lmta.lt/lt/veiklos-ataskaitos/>

	4) Submission of the reports required by the third parties (the Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Lithuania, the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, the Ministry of Culture, the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher education (SKVC), the Lithuanian Research Council (LMT) and others).	
Risk management	The process includes the identification, analysis and management of the main risk factors pertaining to the continuity of activities.	Rector
Project management	The process includes initiation of projects (including introduction of innovations, international cooperation projects), planning of project activities, appointment of responsible persons, supervision of project implementation, replanning, completion and evaluation.	Project Management Division, Head of Project Management Division
CORE PROCESSES		
Studies and lifelong learning	The process includes the following: 1) Design, monitoring and updating of first and second cycle study programmes, internal and external evaluation; 2) Publicity and marketing of study programmes; 3) Admission of students to the first and second cycle study programmes; 4) Organisation of the study process in the first and second cycles; 5) Design, monitoring and updating of third cycle study programmes, internal and external evaluation; publicity and marketing of third cycle study programmes; admission of students to the third cycle study programmes; organisation of the study process in the third cycle; 6) Non-formal education of children and adults and continuous training.	Vice-Rector for Studies, Study Quality and Development Division, Study Division, Faculties, Career and Competence Centre
Art activities	The process includes the development of the programme for art activities; coordination and management of implementation of art projects/events.	Vice-Rector for Art and Research, Head of Art Centre
Research activities	The process includes the development of the programme for research activities; coordination and management of implementation of research projects/events; organisation and execution of publishing.	Vice-Rector for Art and Research, Research Centre, Head of Publishing Centre
ASSURANCE PROCESSES		
Support for studies	The process includes the provision of material, social, psychological, financial, academic support to students, the development of students' career management skills and career tracking.	Study Division, Deans of Faculties, Career and Competence Centre
Document management	The process includes keeping records of incoming and outgoing documents, drafting, coordination, initialling, approval and presentation of internal documents, keeping records of internal documents, the development of the Academy's documentation	Document Management Specialist, Administrator of the Rector's Office

	plan, and ensuring the circulation of relevant documents in the Academy.	
Human resources management	The process includes the establishment of qualification requirements for the teaching, artistic/research and administrative staff (hereinafter referred to as the staff), staff selection, recruitment and adaptation, staff training (professional development) and evaluation of their performance, setting of objectives for the staff, establishment of the workload for the teaching and artistic/research staff and its record keeping, staff motivation and evaluation, dismissal.	Rector, Human Resources and Legal Division, Head of Human Resource and Legal Division, Vice-Rector for Studies, Vice-Rector for Research
Communication management	The process includes the management of the Academy's internal and external communication, timely dissemination of relevant information related to all the processes in the Academy among the Academy's units using a variety of communication channels (including information technology).	Rector, Communication Division, Document Management Specialist
Management of facilities and learning resources	The process includes the following: 1) Management of purchase, renewal, storage and use of the Academy's infrastructure (buildings, vehicles), tangible assets located in the premises (furniture, musical instruments, sound, video recording equipment, etc.); rational use of energy resources (electricity, water, gas, heat) and the means of communication; assurance of safety at work; 2) Management of purchase, renewal and use of information technologies and software; 3) Management of library resources and folk music archives; 4) Management of the resources in the Academy's museum and audio recording repository; 5) Resourcing (public procurement).	Infrastructure Directorate (Asset Management Division, Technology Division, student residence), Infrastructure Director, Public Procurement Division, Library, Finance Directorate
Coordination of international relations	The process includes the coordination of international mobility of incoming and outgoing students and teachers, international mobility of scholars and artists, international cooperation (international partnerships) of the Academy.	International Relations Division, Head of International Relations Division
Accounting and reporting	The process includes the management of financial accounting and reporting.	Finance Directorate

At the Academy, the process approach is implemented in the following sequence:

- identification of operational processes;
- appointment of operational process owners;
- development of the operational process chart;
- optimization of operational processes;
- determination of efficacy indicators for operational process;
- targets for operational processes;
- control and improvement of reaching targets.

The chart of the Academy's operational processes is provided in the figure below:

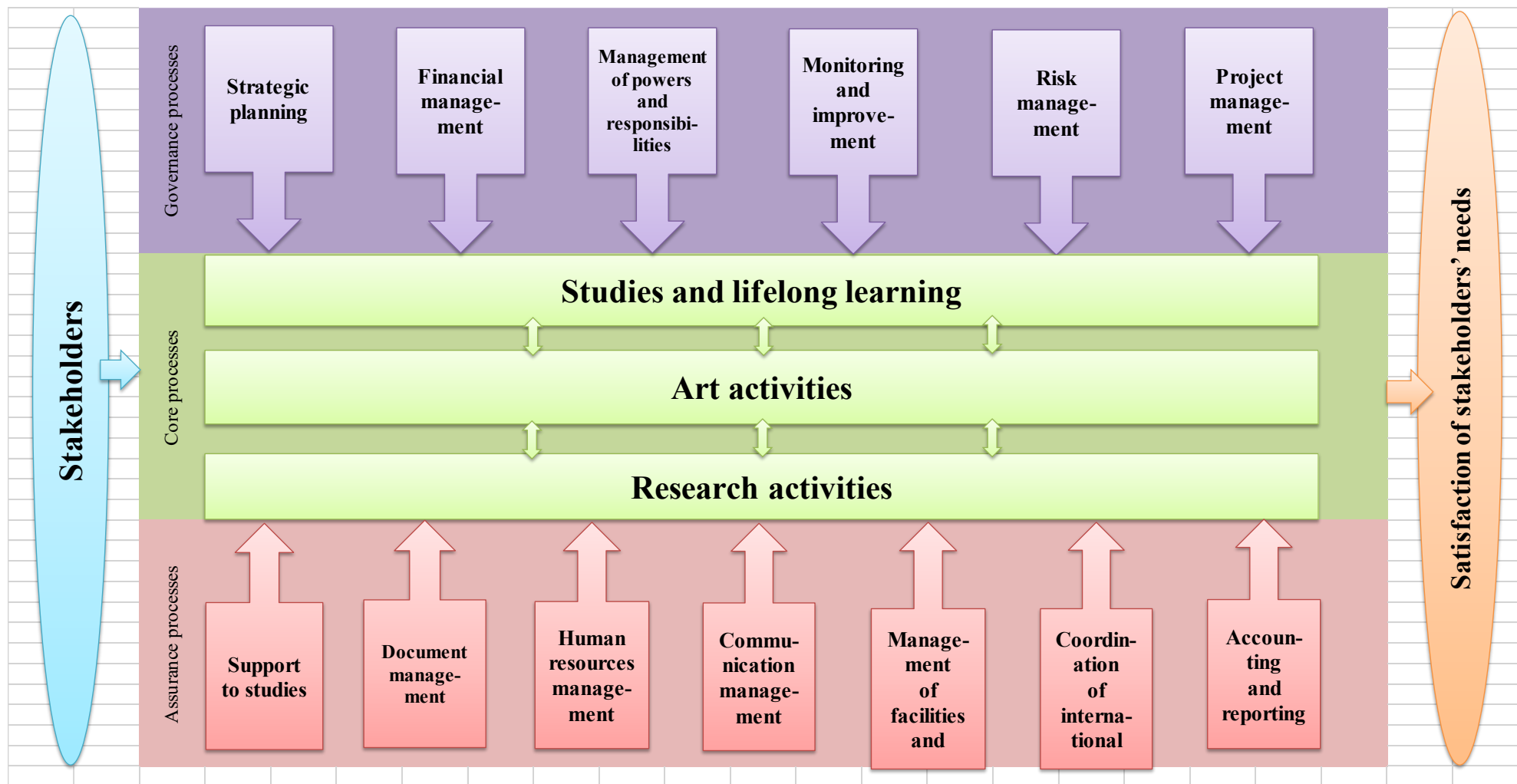


Fig. 1. Chart of LAMT operational processes

3.2. Responsibility for the Internal Quality Assurance System and its Elements

The ***Head of the Study Quality and Development Division*** is responsible for the preparation, review, update and publicity of the *Quality Manual*. He/she is not only also responsible for the storage, maintenance and update of the document but also ensures that suggestions and observations submitted with regard to the improvement of the *Quality Manual* are considered at least once a year and the *Quality Manual* is improved taking them into consideration. He is also responsible for the initiation and organisation of the quality improvement processes, and their oversight.

At least once a year, the ***LAMT Rectorate*** considers the suggestions or observations submitted with regard to the improvement of the *Quality Manual*, drafts the performance improvement plan, oversees its implementation.

Each ***unit of the Academy*** is responsible for quality implementation of the processes assigned to it, oversight, monitoring of performance results (indicators) and their submission, improvement of processes, and their publicity, where necessary.

Study field committees are responsible for quality assurance of the content of study programmes in the field, the compliance of the content of study programmes with the needs of students and labour/art market, as well as with the provisions of the policy of studies of the Academy.

Responsibility for the teaching content and quality of individual study subjects, methodological aids is born by the ***teachers*** of the Academy.

Students participate in the improvement and evaluation of the quality of studies both individually and together with the staff of the Academy. Student representatives participate in the activities of all LAMT governance bodies, most commissions and working groups; tackle problems in the Student Representation and meetings of year group representatives; individually approach the administration, teachers, and heads of departments. The Academy aims to ensure that students become fully involved in the evaluation and improvement of the quality of studies and assist in the introduction of required changes. Students have a possibility to express their opinion and submit requests on all issues related to the quality of studies. The Academy aims to ensure that participation of students in this process is not be limited to formal decision-making.

LAMT employees' responsibility and areas of authority are set out in the following documents:

- *LAMT Statute*;
- LAMT organisational structure, regulations of LAMT units and job descriptions;
- Resolutions of the LAMT Council, resolutions of the Senate, orders of the Rector and decrees of deans;
- LAMT regulations, descriptors of procedures;
- LAMT project plans;
- *LAMT Quality Manual*.

3.3. Performance Evaluation and Improvement System

Continuous performance evaluation and improvement starts from all employees' (teaching, administrative staff and other's) perception of the quality policy and objectives. The management of the Academy is constantly looking for opportunities to improve the internal quality assurance system and efficacy of operational processes.

Continuous improvement is implemented in the Academy by means of the following measures:

- measurement of performance efficacy;
- self-evaluation of and reports on performance;
- objectives of performance quality improvement;
- stakeholder surveys;

- external quality review.

Taking into account constant changes that take place on the labour market and its needs, quality evaluation and improvement is a continuous process and an integral part of the Academy's activities.

While taking quality improvement actions, LAMT develops relations with *social stakeholders*, is open for changes, follows innovations in research, art and technological advances, is able to monitor and evaluate changes on the labour market and improve its internal quality assurance system respectively.

3.3.1. Performance Measurement

Performance measurement outcomes are used in the management of daily activities, evaluation and improvement of operational processes, quality of services in accordance with the quality policy and objectives of the Academy.

The Academy's hierarchical structure of objectives, tasks, activities and indicators is reflected in the LAMT system of indicators: indicators for the measurement of institutional objectives, goals, activities, indicators for the measurement of objectives, goals, activities of units, as well as indicators for performance measurement attributed to individual employees respectively.

3.3.2. Performance Self-evaluation and Reports

Self-evaluations are performed and reports are produced at the following levels of the Academy:

- main activities (studies, lifelong learning, art activity, research activity);
- activities of faculties;
- activities of departments;
- activities of the units of the Academy.

Activity reports are the final self-evaluation documents the results whereof are presented in the *Annual Report* of the Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre. A standard form of the report is used where the results of the main activities and the achievement of objectives are evaluated.

The aim of the activity report is to summarise the information collected about the quality of LAMT performance and develop the action plan for quality improvement, evaluate the strengths/weaknesses of the Academy's activity, provide potential solutions of problems, and thus project the Academy's future.

3.3.3. Objectives of Quality Improvement

While organising their activities and monitoring them, process owners establish the areas and objectives of quality improvement. Quality improvement objectives are in line with the *Strategy of the Academy* and the standards of the European Higher Education Area.

The feedback and stakeholders' constant cooperation form the basis for quality improvement in the Academy.

3.3.4. Stakeholder Surveys

Satisfaction of needs and expectations of the Academy's stakeholders is monitored through the analysis of information which includes data on the studies and other services.

The Academy has identified the following sources for information collection:

- surveys of first, second and third cycle students about the quality of study subject instruction, the selected study programme, the reasons for terminating the studies, the quality of the studies;
- graduate surveys about the programme studied and competences acquired, as well as employment possibilities;
- staff surveys about their satisfaction with the working environment, facilities and resources;
- social partner surveys intended for the analysis of employers' opinion about LAMT graduates' readiness for professional activities.

The results of surveys are stored in the Academy and used for improving performance and the quality of studies, as well as for the purposes of strategic planning.

3.3.5. External Quality Review

An external quality review is perceived by the Academy as a continuous activity encompassing a systematic collection, analysis and assessment of information. On the basis of the recommendations of the review, the Academy develops improvement plans for respective activities and implements them.

4. ASSURANCE OF QUALITY IN STUDIES AND LIFELONG LEARNING

4.1. Policy for Quality Assurance

STANDARD: Institutions should have a policy for quality assurance that is made public and forms part of their strategic management. Internal stakeholders should develop and implement this policy through appropriate structures and processes, while involving external stakeholders.
GUIDELINES: Policies and processes are the main pillars of a coherent institutional quality assurance system that forms a cycle for continuous improvement and contributes to the accountability of the institution. It supports the development of quality culture in which all internal stakeholders assume responsibility for quality and engage in quality assurance at all levels of the institution. In order to facilitate this, the policy has a formal status and is publicly available. Quality assurance policies are most effective when they reflect the relationship between research and learning & teaching and take account of both the national context in which the institution operates, the institutional context and its strategic approach. Such a policy supports: • the organisation of the quality assurance system; • departments, schools, faculties and other organisational units as well as those of institutional leadership, individual staff members and students to take on their responsibilities in quality assurance; • academic integrity and freedom and is vigilant against academic fraud; • guarding against intolerance of any kind or discrimination against the students or staff; • the involvement of external stakeholders in quality assurance. The policy translates into practice through a variety of internal quality assurance processes that allow participation across the institution. How the policy is implemented, monitored and revised is the institution's decision. The quality assurance policy also covers any elements of an institution's activities that are subcontracted to or carried out by other parties.

The *Policy for Quality Assurance*² of the Academy is developed in accordance with the legislation of the Republic of Lithuania governing studies, art and research activities, the European standards and guidelines for internal quality assurance in higher education, the Bologna process documents and the *Statute of the Academy*.

The Academy implements the *Policy for Quality Assurance* and develops activities that help to assure the quality of studies, art and research. The culture of quality is fostered in the Academy. The Academy develops and implements the *Continuous Quality Improvement Strategy*. The *Strategy*, as well as the *Policy for Quality Assurance*, defines students and other stakeholders' roles. The management of the Academy reviews the *Policy for Quality Assurance* for its conformity to the aims of the Academy and stakeholders' expectations on a regular basis.

4.2. Design and Approval of Study Programmes

STANDARD: Institutions should have processes for the design and approval of their programmes. The programmes should be designed so that they meet the objectives set for them, including the intended learning outcomes. The qualification resulting from a programme should be clearly specified and communicated, and refer to the correct level of the national qualifications framework for higher education and, consequently, to the <i>Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area</i>.
GUIDELINES: Study programmes are at the core of the higher education institutions' teaching mission. They provide students with both academic knowledge and skills including those that are transferable, which may influence their personal development and may be applied in their future careers. Programmes

² Available online at https://lmta.lt/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/LMTA_policy_for_quality_assurance_20201223.pdf

- are designed with overall programme objectives that are in line with the institutional strategy and have explicit intended learning outcomes;
- are designed by involving students and other stakeholders in the work;
- benefit from external expertise and reference points;
- reflect the four purposes of higher education of the Council of Europe (cf. Scope and Concepts);
- are designed so that they enable smooth student progression;
- define the expected student workload, e. g. in ECTS;
- include well-structured placement opportunities where appropriate;
- are subject to a formal institutional approval process.

The procedure for the design and approval of intended first, second and third study cycle study programmes of the Academy is governed by the legislation of the Republic of Lithuania and the *LAMT Regulations on Studies*, *LAMT Regulations on Doctoral Art Studies*, *LAMT Regulations on Doctoral Studies*.

A study programme is designed having considered the following:

- the need for specialists trained in the intended study programme in the country or region, the employability of graduates;
- the artistic, scientific and professional capacities to deliver studies in the intended field;
- the existing or planned resources (human, material and methodological) for the delivery of studies of the intended study forms (researchers and teachers, properly equipped classrooms, spaces for artistic creation and activities, laboratories, computers with the required software, scientific and professional publications, new literature and/or art works, respective communication equipment, etc.).

All LAMT study programmes have been designed to incorporate the general aims of the programme that are in line with the strategy of the Academy and have explicit intended learning outcomes upon achievement of which the qualification referring to the national qualifications framework for higher education and the *Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area* is awarded.

The same quality assurance principles are applied to all study programmes. The ratio of individual and contact work, and structured organisation of these hours are clearly defined in the LAMT study programme plans.

The quality of study programmes is assured in accordance with the legislation of the Republic of Lithuania and resolutions of the LAMT Senate (*LAMT Regulations on Studies*; *LAMT Regulations on Study Programmes*; *LAMT Regulations on Study Field Committees*) and is maintained through active involvement of all employees.

Improvement of study programmes is based on the feedback from students, teachers or interested labour market participants (employers, graduates, etc.).

Students evaluate the quality of study programmes and their delivery by participating in the process of the self-evaluation of programmes, annual student surveys, meetings with LAMT representatives; they always can express their opinion about the study programmes and submit their observations about the processes taking place in the Academy (*an online questionnaire used for the purposes of achieving the aims related to the improvement of studies in the Academy*).

Proposals for the improvement of study programmes may be submitted by students, study field committees, academic units, administration of the Academy and faculty. The obtained information is used for the improvement of the study programme or its parts.

The process of study programme improvement is coordinated by the *Study Quality and Development Division* (SQDD). The recommendations of the external review of studies in the field are included in the plans for the improvement of study programmes. The SQDD monitors the process of implementation of recommendations and provides the necessary assistance to those in charge of the fulfilment of tasks. All information related to the delivery of the study programme is stored by the SQDD. The documents of external review of studies in the field are stored in the SQDD.

The design and approval of non-formal adult and children education and continuous learning programmes are governed by the legislation of the Republic of Lithuania and the *LAMT Procedure for Organization of Non-Formal Adult Education and Continuous Teaching/Learning*.

4.3. Student-Centred Learning, Teaching and Assessment

STANDARD:

Institutions should ensure that the programmes are delivered in a way that encourages students to take an active role in creating the learning process, and that the assessment of students reflects this approach.

GUIDELINES:

Student-centred learning and teaching play an important role in stimulating students' motivation, self-reflection and engagement in the learning process. This means careful consideration of the design and delivery of study programmes and the assessment of outcomes.

The implementation of student-centred learning and teaching:

- respects and attends to the diversity of students and their needs, enabling flexible learning paths;
- considers and uses different modes of delivery, where appropriate;
- flexibly uses a variety of pedagogical methods;
- regularly evaluates and adjusts the modes of delivery and pedagogical methods;
- encourages a sense of autonomy in the learner, while ensuring adequate guidance and support from the teacher;
- promotes mutual respect within the learner-teacher relationship;
- has appropriate procedures for dealing with students' complaints.

Considering the importance of assessment for the students' progression and their future careers, quality assurance processes for assessment take into account the following:

- Assessors are familiar with existing testing and examination methods and receive support in developing their own skills in this field;
- The criteria for and method of assessment as well as criteria for marking are published in advance;
- The assessment allows students to demonstrate the extent to which the intended learning outcomes have been achieved. Students are given feedback, which, if necessary, is linked to advice on the learning process;
- Where possible, assessment is carried out by more than one examiner;
- The regulations for assessment take into account mitigating circumstances;
- Assessment is consistent, fairly applied to all students and carried out in accordance with the stated procedures;
- A formal procedure for student appeals is in place.

The Academy takes the view, that student-centred learning is a system of higher education and its culture based on innovative teaching/learning methods, closer communication between the teacher and the student which encourages students' independence and involvement in the learning process.

The Academy developed and implements the *Strategy for Student-Centred Studies*. The following student-centred teaching/learning principles are fostered at the Academy:

- Students have different needs and expectations, their learning style;
- There is no single right path: every faculty and department of the Academy makes its own decision;
- The key is to allow the student to choose while studying, so that they become more responsible and have a greater interest;
- Active learning replaces passive learning;
- Superficial absorption of information is replaced with in-depth perception;
- Closer cooperation between students and teachers: the dialogue is the core of studies;
- Mutual respect between students and teachers;
- The teacher's work is focussed on empowerment rather than instructions;

- The process should be constantly reviewed and evaluated by all the participating parties.

By implementing the strategy for student-centred studies, the Academy encourages students to take an active role in the teaching/learning process: conditions are created for choosing learning paths flexibly (an individual timetable, distance learning, possibilities for suspension of studies are foreseen), different teaching modes and methods are used which are evaluated on a regular basis (by means of surveys).

LAMT organises joint events which promote mutual respect between the student and teacher. Students are ensured adequate guidance and support by teachers (consultation timetables are publicly available, feedback is provided, meetings with students, representatives from the Student Representation take place).

To foster the culture of quality art, research activities and studies, socially responsible behaviour, integrity, transparency and responsibility, LAMT drew up the *Code of Academic Ethics*.

The principles of academic integrity, the assessment system, criteria and methods have been discussed with teachers and students in advance and are publicly available on the LAMT website.

A formal procedure for students' appeals related to assessment (*LAMT Descriptor of the Procedure for Submission and Evaluation of Appeals Related to Learning Outcomes*) is in place at LAMT.

4.4. Student Admission, Progression, Recognition and Certification

STANDARD:

Institutions should consistently apply pre-defined and published regulations covering all phases of the student "life cycle", e. g. student admission, progression, recognition and certification.

GUIDELINES:

Providing conditions and support that are necessary for students to make progress in their academic career is in the best interest of the individual students, programmes, institutions and systems. It is vital to have fit-for-purpose admission, recognition and completion procedures, particularly when students are mobile within and across higher education systems.

It is important that access policies, admission processes and criteria are implemented consistently and in a transparent manner. Induction to the institution and the programme is provided.

Institutions need to put in place both processes and tools to collect, monitor and act on information on student progression.

Fair recognition of higher education qualifications, periods of study and prior learning, including the recognition of non-formal and informal learning, are essential components for ensuring the students' progress in their studies, while promoting mobility. Appropriate recognition procedures rely on:

- institutional practice for recognition being in line with the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention;
- cooperation with other institutions, quality assurance agencies and the national ENIC/NARIC centre with a view to ensuring coherent recognition across the country.

Graduation represents the culmination of the students' period of study. Students need to receive documentation explaining the qualification gained, including achieved learning outcomes and the context, level, content and status of the studies that were pursued and successfully completed.

An individual intending to study in the first cycle study programme of the Academy participates in the joint admission organised by the Association of Lithuanian Higher Education Institutions for Organisation of Joint Admission³ (LAMA BPO). The minimum indicators of learning outcomes of candidates to state-funded first cycle study places and the procedure for compiling the list of secondary school leavers with the best results, the procedure for organisation and assessment

³ Available online at <https://lamabpo.lt/en/>

of entrance examinations into the study programmes in the area of arts and art pedagogy are established by the Minister of Education, Science and Sport of the Republic of Lithuania.

Individuals intending to study in the second cycle study programme participate in the admission organised by the Academy. The requirements for the admission to the second cycle study programmes are established by the Minister of Education, Science and Sport of the Republic of Lithuania and the LAMT Senate.

The system of studies at the Academy, the organisation of studies, assessment and recognition of achieved learning outcomes, graduation conditions, rights and responsibilities of first cycle students and auditors, their relations with the Academy are governed by the *LAMT Regulations on Studies*.

The LAMT Senate approves and publishes annually the *Rules for Admission of Students*.

Admission of art doctoral students, their rights and responsibilities, relations with the Academy, the procedure for organisation and delivery of doctoral studies are governed by the *LAMT Regulation on Art Doctoral Studies*.

Admission of research doctoral students in the field of Ethnology, their rights and responsibilities, relations with the Academy, the procedure for organisation and delivery of doctoral studies are governed by the *Regulation on Doctoral Studies in the Field of Ethnology (07 H) of Vilnius University, the Institute of Lithuanian Literature and Folklore and the Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre*.

Admission of research doctoral students in the field of History and Theory of Art, their rights and responsibilities, relations with the Academy, the procedure for organisation and delivery of doctoral studies are governed by the *Regulation on Doctoral Studies of History and Theory of Art of Vilnius Academy of Arts, the Lithuanian Culture Research Institute and the Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre*.

Where an individual intending to study at the Academy has a foreign qualification, its recognition is carried out in accordance with the *Procedure for Academic Recognition of Education and Qualifications Related to Higher Education and Acquired Under the Educational Programmes of Foreign Countries and International Organisations in the Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre*⁴.

Recognition of non-formal competences is governed by the *Procedure for Assessment of Competences Acquired by Means of Non-Formal or Informal Learning and their Recognition as Learning Outcomes*.

LAMT international activity, international long- and short-term mobility of the administrative staff, teachers and students is coordinated by the International Relations Division. Information about the possibilities and conditions to participate in the international exchange programmes is published on the website of the Academy⁵.

The preparation of the final thesis is governed by the *Descriptor of the Procedure for Organisation of Assessment of Final Theses*.

The recognition of learning outcomes achieved during periods of studies is carried out in accordance with the *Descriptor of the Procedure for Recognition of Learning Outcomes Achieved During Periods of Study in the Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre*.

Upon successful completion of the studies in the Academy, graduates are issued the documents confirming graduation the form and content whereof is established by the Government of

⁴ The right to carry out academic recognition of education and qualifications of individuals intending to study related to higher education and acquired under the educational programmes of foreign countries and international organisations was granted to the Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre by the Order No V-753 of the Minister of Education, Science and Sport of 13 May 2021. Available online at <https://www.e-tar.lt/portal/lt/legalAct/ad7599b0b3b511eb890af12ff8a859f9>

⁵ Available online <https://lmta.lt/en/english-international-relations/>

the Republic of Lithuania and the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport. In the diploma supplement⁶ accompanying the diploma, studied subjects, their scope and assessment are specified, the nature of completed studies, their level and content, the Lithuanian system of higher education are described.

Students who studied at LAMT and did not complete studies are *issued an academic certificate and descriptors of subjects studied*.

LAMT constantly monitors the process of studies, collects information on the progression and uses this information for the improvement of the quality of studies.

4.5. Teaching staff

STANDARD:
Institutions should assure themselves of the competence of their teachers. They should apply fair and transparent processes for the recruitment and development of the staff.
GUIDELINES:
The teacher's role is essential in creating a high-quality student experience and enabling the acquisition of knowledge, competences and skills. The diversifying student population and stronger focus on learning outcomes require student-centred learning and teaching and the role of the teacher is, therefore, also changing (cf. Standard 1.3).
Higher education institutions have primary responsibility for the quality of their staff and for providing them with a supportive environment that allows them to carry out their work effectively.
Such an environment
• sets up and follows clear, transparent and fair processes for staff recruitment and conditions of employment that recognise the importance of teaching; • offers opportunities for and promotes the professional development of teaching staff; • encourages scholarly activity to strengthen the link between education and research; • encourages innovation in teaching methods and the use of new technologies.

The Academy considers teachers to be one of the most important learning resources which is readily available to the majority of students, therefore, it takes special care that those who teach have enough knowledge and experience in the study subject taught and skills necessary for conveying knowledge to students, as well as experience in the study subject taught; are able to receive feedback on their work. The system for selection and appointment of teachers used by the Academy includes the measures ensuring that the competence level of appointed teachers is appropriate.

Qualification requirements for the LAMT academic staff, organisation a public competition to teaching positions and accreditation, business trips and professional development are governed by the following LAMT documents:

- *Descriptor of Minimum Qualification Requirements for the Positions of Teachers and Research Associates at LAMT;*
- *Descriptor of the Procedure for the Organisation of Public Competition to the Positions of Teachers and Research Associates at LAMT and Their Accreditation;*
- *Descriptor of the Procedure for Admission to the Main Positions of Teachers and Research Associates at LAMT and Formation of the Accreditation Commission and its Rules of Procedure;*
- *Descriptor of the Procedure for Formalisation, Payment and Reporting of Business Trips of LAMT Staff;*
- *Descriptor of the Procedure for Professional Development of LAMT Staff.*

In the Academy, individuals are appointed to the positions of teachers and research associates (except for trainee scholars, visiting teachers and research associates, as well as teachers and research associates with whom non-fixed-term employment contracts have been concluded) by

⁶ In December 2013, the European Commission awarded the Diploma Supplement Label to the Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre which is a quality mark of an institution that fosters internationalisation.

means of a public competition for a five-year term. A non-fixed-term employment contract is concluded with a person who wins the competition to the same position of a teacher or research associate for the second consecutive time. This person is accredited every five years. A non-accredited person is dismissed. Promotion to a higher position of a teacher or research associate takes place by means of a public competition.

Teachers are provided with possibilities for development and improvement of their pedagogical abilities; they are also encouraged to evaluate their skills. The Academy takes care of its teachers' research/art, communication, educational and subject-specific competences. Research/art competences consist of, but are not limited to, the knowledge of the methodology of scientific/art research; the ability to use information systems in scientific/art research; the ability to present scientific/art results, etc. Communication competences consist of, but are not limited to, the ability to work in a team; command of foreign languages; computer skills; the ability to communicate and cooperate with fellow teachers, students, social partners; the ability to initiate and prepare projects, programmes and participate in their implementation, etc. Educational competences consist of, but are not limited to, the ability to apply contemporary teaching, learning and assessment methods, ways and other means; the ability to motivate students and support them; knowledge of education management, etc. Subject-specific competences consist of, but are not limited to, the ability to apply theoretical knowledge of the study subject taught in practice; the ability to constantly update the knowledge of the study subject taught, etc.

The Academy has a *Career and Competence Centre*⁷ which organises and/or holds inhouse competence development training for the teachers of the Academy, provides information about analogous external training. The staff is involved in professional development by taking part in traineeships (*Erasmus, Nordplus, etc.*), excellence courses/lectures given by visiting teachers. LAMT publishes information about the possibilities for traineeships, participation in an international teaching staff exchange programme, scientific and methodological conferences. Teachers' professional development also takes place and is promoted by creating conditions for formal and non-formal improvement without interrupting pedagogical work for a longer period of time. A flexible timetable of work is drawn for teachers during the period of their professional development. Data on teachers' professional development is collected and analysed by the *departments, Human Resources and Legal Division and Career and Competence Centre*.

4.6. Learning Resources and Student Support

STANDARD:

Institutions should have appropriate funding for learning and teaching activities and ensure that adequate and readily accessible learning resources and student support are provided.

GUIDELINES:

For a good higher education experience, institutions provide a range of resources to assist student learning. These vary from physical resources such as libraries, study facilities and IT infrastructure to human support in the form of tutors, counsellors and other advisers. The role of support services is of particular importance in facilitating the mobility of students within and across higher education systems.

The needs of a diverse student population (such as mature, part-time, employed and international students as well as students with disabilities), and the shift towards student-centred learning and flexible modes of learning and teaching, are taken into account when allocating, planning and providing the learning resources and student support.

Support activities and facilities may be organised in a variety of ways depending on the institutional context. However, the internal quality assurance ensures that all resources are fit for purpose, accessible, and that students are informed about the services available to them.

In delivering support services the role of support and administrative staff is crucial and therefore they need to be qualified and have opportunities to develop their competences.

⁷ Available online at <http://kkc.lmta.lt/>

The Academy aims at ensuring that resources necessary for students in each study programme are appropriate and sufficient, readily accessible to students, match their needs and are improved taking account of the results of student surveys. The processes *Management of facilities and learning resources* and *Support to studies* (see. Table 1 of the *Quality Manual*) are identified in the system of operational processes of the Academy.

The Academy aims at ensuring that the organisation and implementation of academic and social support to students is appropriate, the dissemination of all information is consistent and timely. Information on the study modes, funding, the aim of studies, learning outcomes, assessment of achievements, optional study subjects, timetables, possibilities for mobility, etc., as well as its changes is provided to students by the following means:

- in the *Rules for Admission of Students* which are publicly available on the website of the Academy, exhibitions of studies held in different Lithuanian towns and abroad, etc.;
- first-year students receive information during the *Information Days* (introduction into studies);
- in different documents governing the studies at the Academy which are published on the website of the Academy⁸;
- to the email address provided by the Academy;
- during open-door days organised at LAMT every spring.

Students are consulted on study-related issues by the *Study Division*⁹ the administrators of the faculties and department coordinators, the heads of departments in charge of the delivery of respective study programmes. All students have a possibility to consult teachers.

Consultations and assistance related to the search for required information in different Lithuanian and international catalogues and databases is provided to students in the *library* of the Academy¹⁰.

The *Career and Competence Centre* of the Academy informs students about the possibilities for professional career, develops students' career management competences.

Students of the Academy receive the following financial support:

- The *Regulations on Grants of the Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre* govern the allocation of the grant fund, the procedure for grant awarding conditions and their payment to students;
- The *Descriptor of the Procedure for Payment, Repayment and Recovery of Tuition Fees at the Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre* stipulates tuition fee discounts for students who pay for their studies;
- Students engaged in additional creative activities (participation in contests, festivals, conferences) have a possibility to receive financial support from the Academy or recommendations to state, public and/or private foundations to cover their travel expenses and participation fees. The types of support to students, supporters, the procedure for the allocation and use of the financial resources of the Academy intended for incentivising students is governed by the *LAMT Descriptor of the Procedure for Student Support*;
- Students may use LAMT classrooms for their self-study in accordance with the *Description of the Procedure for the Use of Classrooms by Students and Teachers of the Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre for Self-Study*;

⁸ Available online at <https://lmta.lt/en/english-about-lmta/english-documents/english-documents-related-to-studies/>

⁹ Available online at <https://lmta.lt/en/kontaktai/>

¹⁰ Available online at <https://biblioteka.lmta.lt/en/home/>

➤ Students of the Academy are entitled to different forms of financial support administered by the *State Studies Foundation*¹¹.

Students may stay in the LAMT student residence (Giedraičių g. 57, Vilnius).

4.7. Information management

STANDARD:

Institutions should ensure that they collect, analyse and use relevant information for the effective management of their programmes and other activities.

GUIDELINES:

Reliable data is crucial for informed decision-making and for knowing what is working well and what needs attention. Effective processes to collect and analyse information about study programmes and other activities feed into the internal quality assurance system. The information gathered depends, to some extent, on the type and mission of the institution. The following are of interest:

- Key performance indicators;
- Profile of the student population;
- Student progression, success and drop-out rates;
- Students' satisfaction with their programmes;
- Learning resources and student support available;
- Career paths of graduates.

Various methods of collecting information may be used. It is important that students and staff are involved in providing and analysing information and planning follow-up activities.

LAMT collects, organises and analyses information about its performance. Quality-related information includes, but is not limited to:

- student progress indicators and learning outcome indicators;
- graduate employment indicators;
- students' opinion about the content and structure of programmes;
- teacher qualification indicators;
- different data about students;
- facilities and learning resources indicators and student support indicators;
- other LAMT performance indicators.

LAMT collects, analyses and uses adequate information which helps to manage its operational processes effectively. The module *Studies* (STUD) of the Lithuanian Information System for Research, Studies, Activities and Processes Management EDINA¹², the LAMT document management system, LAMT accounting software STEKAS, office software *Office 365*, etc., are used for information collection, analysis and storage.

In accordance with the procedure established by the legislation of the Republic of Lithuania, LAMT submits information to the following external systems and databases:

- Student Register;
- Teacher Register;
- Register of Higher Education, Study Programmes and Qualifications;
- Diploma, Certificate and Qualification Certificate Register;
- Education Management Information System;
- Information systems PARAMA and PASKOLA of the State Studies Foundation;
- E-report on research/art activities by Lithuanian scientific and higher education institutions (data provision and evaluation system) and others.

¹¹ Available online at <https://vsf.lrv.lt/en/>

¹² Available online at <https://edina.lt/studijos-stud/>

The *Communication management process* (see Table 1 of the *Quality Manual*) responsibility for which is born by the Rector, Communication Division and Document Management Specialist has been identified in the system of LAMT operational processes.

4.8. Public information

STANDARD:
Institutions should publish information about their activities, including programmes, which is clear, accurate, objective, up-to date and readily accessible.
GUIDELINES:
Information on institutions' activities is useful for prospective and current students as well as for graduates, other stakeholders and the public.
Therefore, institutions provide information about their activities, including the programmes they offer and the selection criteria for them, the intended learning outcomes of these programmes, the qualifications they award, the teaching, learning and assessment procedures used the pass rates and the learning opportunities available to their students as well as graduate employment information.

Quantitative and qualitative information about study programmes, higher education qualifications awarded, students, graduates and other stakeholders' opinion about the quality of the studies, the results of the review of the performance and study programmes of the higher education institution, its art and research activities, indicators of graduates' career and other data necessary for informing society about the studies is available on the website of the Academy – www.lmta.lt. The Academy created and manages an account *Lietuvos muzikos ir teatro akademija* on the social network *Facebook*¹³.

LAMT also publishes information about its activities in the following sources:

Source	Responsible unit
Website in English https://lmta.lt/en/	Communication Division together with the owner of published information
Annual journal <i>Kur stoti</i> http://www.kurstoti.lt/	Communication Division Study Division
Repertoire of LAMT events (prepared every month)	Art Centre
Accounts on the social network <i>Facebook</i>	Account administrators
<i>YouTube</i> channel	Communication Division

The *Communication management process* (see Table 1 of the *Quality Manual*) identified in the system of operational processes of the Academy includes public information as well. Public information activities are coordinated by the *Communication Division*¹⁴.

4.9. On-going monitoring and periodic review of programmes

STANDARD:
Institutions should monitor and periodically review their programmes to ensure that they achieve the objectives set for them and respond to the needs of students and society. These reviews should lead to continuous improvement of the programme. Any action planned or taken as a result should be communicated to all those concerned.
GUIDELINES:
Regular monitoring, review and revision of study programmes aim to ensure that the provision remains appropriate and to create a supportive and effective learning environment for students.
They include the evaluation of:

¹³ Available online at <https://www.facebook.com/lmta.lt>

¹⁴ Available online at <https://lmta.lt/en/kontaktai/>

- The content of the programme in the light of the latest research in the given discipline thus ensuring that the programme is up to date;
- The changing needs of society;
- The students' workload, progression and completion;
- The effectiveness of procedures for assessment of students;
- The student expectations, needs and satisfaction in relation to the programme;
- The learning environment and support services and their fitness for purpose for the programme.

Programmes are reviewed and revised regularly involving students and other stakeholders. The information collected is analysed and the programme is adapted to ensure that it is up-to-date. Revised programme specifications are published.

The procedure for regular monitoring and periodic review of the first and second cycle study programmes delivered by the Academy is governed by the *LAMT Regulation on Studies, LAMT Regulations on Study Field Committees*.

The *Studies and life-long learning process* (see Table 1 of the *Quality Manual*) identified in the system of operational processes of the Academy responsibility for which is born by the *Vice-Rector for Studies* includes the monitoring and updating of the study programmes delivered.

4.10. Cyclical External Quality Assurance

STANDARD:

Institutions should undergo external quality assurance in line with the ESG on a cyclical basis.

GUIDELINES:

External quality assurance in its various forms can verify the effectiveness of institutions' internal quality assurance, act as a catalyst for improvement and offer the institution new perspectives. It will also provide information to assure the institution and the public of the quality of the institution's activities.

Institutions participate in cyclical external quality assurance that takes account, where relevant, of the requirements of the legislative framework in which they operate. Therefore, depending on the framework, this external quality assurance may take different forms and focus at different organisational levels (such as programme, faculty or institution).

Quality assurance is a continuous process that does not end with the external feedback or report or its follow-up process within the institution. Therefore, institutions ensure that the progress made since the last external quality assurance activity is taken into consideration when preparing for the next one.

The *Studies and life-long learning process* (see Table 1 of the *Quality Manual*) identified in the system of operational processes of the Academy responsibility for which is born by the *Vice-Rector for Studies* includes the organisation of the cyclical quality review of the field studies delivered. Self-evaluation of the study fields, study cycles, the production of self-evaluation reports of the Academy, visits by external review experts are coordinated by the *Study Quality and Development Division*¹⁵.

4.10.1. External Quality Review of Study Programmes

The procedure for the periodic external review of intended study fields and programmes, as well as existing first and second cycle study programmes of the Academy is governed by the legislation of the Republic of Lithuania, the *LAMT Regulation on Studies* and *LAMT Regulations on Study Field Committees*.

The following are the aims of the external review of study programmes:

- establish preconditions for the improvement of study programmes, create the culture of quality assurance in higher education;

¹⁵ Available online at <https://lmta.lt/en/kontaktai/>

➤ establish the compliance of the quality of study programme delivery with the legislative requirements, the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area and commitments of the higher education institution and its branch.

An external review of field studies refers to the analysis of the quality of the first and/or second cycle field studies, the study programmes comprising them and their delivery based on the self-evaluation conducted by the Academy with the help of external experts. The evaluation of study fields and cycles is performed by the *Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education*¹⁶ or another agency for quality assurance in higher education which is included in the *European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education* or which is a full member of the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education. The results of the external review of study fields and cycles are publicly available. After the external review of the study field, the Academy, in cooperation with the *Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education*, implements the recommendations received during the external review of study fields.

The accreditation of a study field and cycle refers to the procedure during which the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education confirms in accordance with the procedure established by the Minister of Education, Science and Sport that the studies in the field and cycles comply with the established requirements. The decision on the accreditation of field and cycle studies is based on the report of the external review of the field and cycle studies. The Descriptor of the Procedure for the External Review and Accreditation of the Study Field and Cycle is approved by the Minister of Education, Science and Sport.

The Academy delivers study programmes only in the accredited fields. The study programmes in the non-accredited study field and cycle or the programme with the expired accreditation is removed from the Register of Higher Education, Study Programmes and Qualifications¹⁷. In cases where there are students who studied in the removed programme and did not complete it, the Minister of Education, Science and Sport determines further possibilities for their studies.

The procedure for the periodic external review of intended and existing third cycle study programmes of the Academy is governed by the legislation of Republic of Lithuania, the *LAMT Regulation on Art Doctoral Studies* and *LAMT Regulation on Doctoral Studies*.

4.10.2. External Review of the Academy

The aim of the external review of the Academy is to determine the quality of the Academy's performance on the basis of the report of the external review, create preconditions for the improvement of the Academy's performance, promote its culture of quality, inform the founders, academic community and society about the quality of the Academy's performance. The external review is initiated by the Minister of Education, Science and Sport of the Republic of Lithuania by approving the plan for the external review of higher education institutions. The external review is organised by the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education. The external review is conducted at least once every seven years.

The external review of the Academy is carried out in accordance with the evaluation areas of the higher education institution and indicators established by the Minister of Education, Science and

¹⁶ Available online at <https://www.skvc.lt/default/en/>

¹⁷ Available online at <https://www.aikos.smm.lt/en/StudyProgramm/SitePages/Study%20and%20Learning%20Programmes.aspx?ss=cfbf933b-2756-4ab4-b921-71dccfab0df1>

Sport, as well as the criteria set out in the *Methodology for Conducting Institutional Review of Higher Education Institution*.

The external review is based on the following principles:

- ✓ Quality of performance and its assurance are the responsibility of the higher education institution;
- ✓ The autonomy and identity of the higher education institution are recognised and respected;
- ✓ Stakeholders of the higher education institution are involved in the external review process.

The results of the external review are publicly available¹⁸. The Academy implements the recommendations submitted during the external review.

The accreditation of the Academy is a procedure during which the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education confirms in accordance with the procedure established by the Minister of Education, Science and Sport that the performance of the Academy is compliant with the requirements established in the legislation and no deficiencies have been identified during the external evaluation due to which the Academy is unable to carry on its activities.

¹⁸ Available online at <https://lmta.lt/lt/lmta-institucinis-vertinimas-ir-akreditavimas/>

Review and amendment record sheet

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