

Criteria and Procedures on Accreditation of Study Programs and Higher Education Institutions

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(Unofficial translation)

In compliance with Article 49 of the Higher Education Act (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia No. 67/1993) the Council for Higher Education of the Republic of Slovenia adopted at its 4th meeting held on May 20, 1994, the following

CRITERIA AND PROCEDURES ON ACCREDITATION OF STUDY PROGRAMS AND HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

I. GENERAL PROVISIONS

Article 1 (Scope)

The Criteria and Procedures on Accreditation of Study Programs and Higher Education Institutions (hereinafter called "this Act") shall be applied by the Council for Higher Education of the Republic of Slovenia (hereinafter called "the Council") in performing its tasks defined by the Higher Education Act (hereinafter called "HEA"), and in particular in

- forming its judgement on whether the requirements for the establishment and operation of higher education institutions are met (HEA, Articles 14 and 49, Point 6);
- forming its judgement on introduction of new study programs (HEA, Article 49, Point 6), which serves as a basis for the approval of the announcement and allocation of state-approved study programs by the Government of the Republic of Slovenia (HEA, Articles 40 and 46);
- approving study, research and art programs of free-standing higher education institutions (HEA, Article 32 and paragraph 2 of Article 42) and proposed awards of teaching and research faculty titles at such institutions (HEA, paragraph 5 of Article 56).

In addition to the criteria stipulated by this Act, the criteria on transferring from one study program to the other as well as the criteria on monitoring and assessing the quality and efficiency of teaching, research, artistic and expert work (HEA, Article 49, Points 4 and 5) to be separately adopted by the Council shall also apply in forming judgements and granting approvals.

Article 2 (Initiation of Procedure)

The Council shall begin with the procedure to form its judgements and grant approvals of paragraph 1 of Article 1 of this Act on the basis of an application submitted in writing by the Government of the Republic of Slovenia, the Ministry having jurisdiction over higher education, a higher education institution or a higher education institution to be established and other promoters (hereinafter called "promoters").

The Secretary of the Council shall collect the applications, check them for their completeness and regularly forward the information thereon to the President of the Council. If not stipulated otherwise by this Act, the President of the Council shall, on the first working day in a month as a rule, inform the promoters on the omissions found in their applications, forward the complete applications to the Council's Commissions (hereinafter called "Commissions") and Groups of Experts and include them in the agenda of the Council's meetings.

II CRITERIA

Article 3 (Criteria for Accreditation of Higher Education Institutions)

The following criteria shall apply in forming the judgement on whether the requirements for establishment and operation of an institution of higher education are met:

1. Appropriateness of the definition of study and research fields and art disciplines which shall be offered by the higher education institution to be established as well as the appropriateness of study programs proposed.
2. Appropriateness of teaching and research faculty and faculty assistants responsible for study, research and art programs (hereinafter called "faculty members") of a higher education institution shall be demonstrated by the validity of their titles or estimated on the basis of the judgement given by the Group of Experts of paragraph 2 of this Point. Participation in carrying out the programs is proven with a statement in which the anticipated faculty member declares that (s)he can accept and perform the tasks at the higher education institution in a responsible manner.

The titles awarded to the faculty members shall meet the requirements of the law (HEA, Chapter VI, Articles 52 - 64) and the constitution of the higher education institution; they shall be awarded in compliance with the criteria for the award of titles to teaching and research faculty and faculty assistants of a university or a free-standing institution of higher education for which a prior positive judgement has been obtained from the Council on the basis of Point 8 of paragraph 1 of Article 49 of HEA. If it is planned that a faculty member shall be awarded an appropriate title on the basis of sentence 2 of paragraph 5 of Article 56 of HEA, the Council shall decide upon approving the award of the title to the proposed faculty member on the basis of an expertise submitted by a specially assigned group of experts who have reviewed his curriculum vitae and bibliography whereby they have correspondingly applied the criteria for awarding titles mentioned in the first preceding sentence.

3. Appropriateness and accessibility of university libraries, laboratories, teaching media and other equipment needed in carrying out study programs, research, creative and expert activities shall be evaluated according to the standards in force or on the basis of an expertise submitted by a group of experts.

4. Premises shall be evaluated according to the standards valid in education.
5. The composition of the faculty listed in the application as core faculty shall ensure that the senate is formed in compliance with the law (HEA, Article 21). It is regarded that successful academic governance of a higher education institution can be provided by a senate consisting of at least 9 members.
6. The anticipated higher education institution self-evaluation procedures shall guarantee ongoing monitoring and assessment of quality and performance. The procedures shall include students as well.
7. Approximate estimation of financial resources needed for the establishment of a higher education institution and anticipated funding sources.

The Council shall form its judgement on the fulfilment of requirements for the establishment and operation of a higher education institution on the basis of all the criteria of the above paragraph and conclude it with one of the following ratings: highly recommended, recommended, not recommended, recommendation denied.

The stipulations of this Article shall be applied accordingly also in issuing judgement on whether the research organisations meet the requirements to participate in the implementation of the Master Plan for Higher Education (HEA, Article 49, Point 7).

Article 4 (Criteria on Forming Judgement on Criteria for Awarding Titles)

When forming judgement on the criteria on awarding titles to teaching and research faculty and faculty assistants of a university or a free-standing higher education institution, especially the inclusion of following criteria shall be considered:

1. number and quality of publications at home and abroad (monographs, treatise, articles, papers),
2. number and quality of Slovene and international basic and applied research and development projects accomplished,
3. number and quality of Slovene and international art exhibitions, performances, concerts and other forms of artistic presentation,
4. number and quality of patents, innovations and other applied professional achievements,
5. certified teaching ability (e.g. faculty development courses attended, introductory lecture),
6. number and quality of textbooks published and other instructional media,
7. number of graduates supervised when preparing bachelor's, specialist, master's and doctoral degrees,
8. number of graduates (with bachelor's, specialist, master's and doctoral degrees) supervised who received awards,
9. invited lectures at home and abroad and visiting professor positions at foreign higher education institutions,
10. international citations of the faculty member (e.g. SCI),

11. prizes and awards for scientific, artistic and professional achievements.

The criteria on awarding titles shall explicitly specify which of the above listed criteria shall be considered in awarding specific titles and in awarding titles in specific fields as well as the manner of their quantification. These criteria shall serve as a basis for a peer review of the scientific, artistic and professional opera of the candidate for the title and for the evaluation of his teaching ability.

The Council may include specific recommendations in its judgement of the criteria for awarding titles to teaching and research faculty and faculty assistants, asses whether they comply with the criteria of other higher education institutions in the Republic of Slovenia and conclude the opinion with one of the following ratings: recommended, changes proposed, not recommended.

Article 5

(Criteria on Evaluation of Study Programs with Regard to their International Comparability and Duration of Studies)

The following criteria shall be applied in assessing whether a study program and its duration are internationally comparable:

1. formal structure of the institution's study program compared with the foreign ones,
2. institution's study program structure with regard to its content compared with the foreign ones,
3. accessibility of and admission requirements for a study program,
4. duration of studies,
5. completion of studies and professional titles awarded
6. manners and forms of studies (organisation of the study process and practica, the credit system, tutorials, etc.)
7. possibilities for including the study program into international co-operation (mobility),
8. reasons for differences between the institution's and foreign programs with regard to specific needs and conditions of Slovene and foreign economy as well as public services.

The evaluation shall be based on a comparison of the institution's study program with two or three recognised foreign programs included in the appendix. The foreign programs must be properly accredited or recognised in the state where they are carried out. The Council may ask that the comparison be completed with additional foreign programs.

The Council shall grade the international comparability of a program with one of the following ratings: highly recommended, recommended, not recommended, recommendation denied.

Article 6

(Criteria on Study Program Accreditation)

The following criteria shall be applied in forming judgement on introducing a new study program at a higher education institution which is a member or an affiliated member of a university and at a free-standing higher education institution:

1. appropriateness of research foundations of a study program (basic and applied research and development) as well as human and material resources for its implementation,
2. appropriateness of the program's formal structure,
3. appropriateness of the program's composition with regard to its content (especially its consistency with the disciplinary principles, up-to-date content and conformity of the content with the program objectives),
4. appropriateness of the manner and form of studies,
5. appropriateness of learning resources,
6. appropriateness of student assessment and grading methods,
7. appropriateness of requirements for academic progress toward and graduation,
8. appropriateness of the professional, academic and scientific title, respectively,
9. appropriateness of the program evaluation procedures,
10. appropriateness of the program to provide the knowledge demanded by the economy and employers, respectively,
11. employment opportunities of graduates,
12. approximate estimation of financial resources needed for program implementation and anticipated sources.

In its judgement upon the introduction of a study program, the Council shall give one of the following ratings: highly recommended, recommended, not recommended, recommendation denied.

The Council shall give or deny its approval; in addition, it shall give one of the following ratings on the program: highly recommended, recommended, not recommended, recommendation denied.

Pursuant to the stipulations of Article 6 of this Act, the approval or denied approval of the first preceding paragraph shall be regarded as the judgement on implementation of new programs of a higher education institution which is not a member of a university.

III. APPLICATIONS AND PROCEDURES

Article 7

(Application for Obtaining Judgement on Establishment of Higher Education Institution)

The application for judgement on the fulfilment of requirements for the establishment of a higher education institution shall consist of:

- data on the promoter and a concise statement of reasons for the application,
- a definition of fields of study and research and art disciplines to be offered by the higher education institution as well as a proposal of anticipated study, research and art programs,
- data on and proof of the way in which suitable premises and equipment for carrying out the higher education institution's program are provided,
- data on and proof of securing teaching and research faculty and faculty assistants required for program implementation and professional administration of a higher education institution,
- a program of including the higher education institution into international co-operation,
- a description of anticipated self-evaluation procedures of a higher education institution (monitoring and assessment of quality and efficiency)

- in case of establishing a higher education institution which shall be a member of a university, the opinion of the university senate,
- an approximate estimation of financial resources needed for the establishment of a higher education institution and the anticipated funding sources.

Article 8

(Application for Obtaining Judgement on New Programs of University Members)

The application for obtaining judgement on implementation of new programs which, with the consent of the university senate, have previously been adopted by the senates of higher education institutions, members or affiliated members of the university, shall comprise:

- data on the promoter and a concise statement of reasons for the application,
- a study program adopted in compliance with the law and the university constitution, and the additional data on study program components of Article 10 of this Act,
- elements for the evaluation of the study program with regard to its international comparability and duration of studies in compliance with the criteria of Article 5 of this Act,
- proof of fulfilling the requirements for practical training,
- opinion of the appropriate chapter of the Chamber of Commerce or other relevant employer associations on the study program proposed; such opinion is compulsory for programs leading to a degree of a professional higher education institution and recommended for other programs,
- approximate estimation of financial resources needed for the implementation of a study program and anticipated sources.

Article 9

(Application for Approval of Free-Standing Higher Education Institution Programs)

The application for approval of study programs of higher education institutions which are not university members shall comprise:

- data on the promoter and a concise statement of reasons for the application,
- a study program formed in compliance with the law and the constitution of the free-standing higher education institution, and the additional data on study program components of Article 10 of this Act,
- elements for the evaluation of the study program with regard to its international comparability and duration of studies in compliance with the criteria of Article 5 of this Act,
- proof of fulfilling the requirements for practical training,
- opinion of the appropriate chapter of the Chamber of Commerce or other relevant employer associations on the study program proposed; such opinion is compulsory for programs leading to a degree of a professional higher education institution and recommended for other programs,
- approximate estimation of financial resources needed for the implementation of a study program and anticipated sources.

Stipulations of this Article shall be applied accordingly when applications for approval for research and art programs of higher education institution which are not university members (HEA, Article 42, paragraph 2) are processed.

Article 10
(Study Program Components)

Pursuant to the law (HEA, Article 35) and the constitution of a higher education institution, the study program of line 2 of Article 8 or the study program proposal of line 2 of Article 9 of this Act shall include:

1. general data on the program, such as:

- title and type of the program (undergraduate, graduate, a program leading to a university degree, a program leading to a professional higher education institution degree) and areas of concentration, if any;
- definition of basic program objectives;
- definition of the duration of studies in accordance with the regulations in force;
- definition of linkages with other programs;
- how it can be included into a credit system;
- how it can be included into international co-operation;
- self-evaluation procedures;
- authors of the program and the higher education institution, member or affiliated member of a university which has adopted the program;
- research and professional foundations for program implementation (references of the higher education institution and faculty members responsible for the program);
- human resources required for carrying out the program and anticipated faculty members;
- material resources required for carrying out the program;
- sources of funding;
- anticipated enrolment in the program;
- employment opportunities for graduates;
- a university senate's approval of the program of the higher education institution which is a member or affiliated member of a university;

2. data on the syllabus, such as:

- number of courses in compliance with the regulations,
- annual and total number of contact hours of the program in compliance with the regulations,
- type of courses with regard to their incorporation into the program structure: common subjects for the whole program, common subjects for the area of concentration, groups of electives, electives (the program can be designed on the principle of a credit system or as an individual study program);
- ratio among lectures, seminars and practica;
- the proportion of practical training in the program and how it shall be performed (to be stated obligatory for programs leading to a professional higher education institution degree);
- vertical and horizontal linkages among the courses of the program;
- skeleton curriculum of individual subjects (course title and scope in hours; how it is included into the program, area of concentration, class; objectives and content of the course; basic textbooks, etc.)

3. data on admission requirements in compliance with the law (HEA, Articles 38 and 41)

4. data related to the requirements for normal academic progress (obligations of students and requirements for progress from class to class; requirements for repeating a year and

extended student status; student counselling and guidance, etc.) and **requirements for transferring from one program to the others** in compliance with the law (HEA, Articles 39 and 66) and criteria adopted by the Council;

5. data on manner and types of educational activities (part-time studies; distance studies; double majors, interdisciplinary, individually designed majors; credit system, etc.) in compliance with the law (HEA, Articles 33, 37, 66);

6. data on graduation requirements in compliance with the law (HEA, paragraph 2 and 3 of Article 32),

7. professional, academic in scientific title conferred in compliance with the law.

Article 11

(Procedure for Forming Judgement on Establishing Higher Education Institution and New Study Program)

The Council's President shall forward a complete application stipulated in Article 7 or 8 to the Chair of the respective Commission within a month after the date of its receipt at the latest. Having received the application, the Commission's Chair may propose that the Council appoints a Group of Experts composed of three members at the most and defines their co-operation in discussing individual aspects of the application. The Council may decide that also the chairs or members of other Commissions participate on an equal footing in the discussion of the application, especially when interdisciplinary items are discussed. In such case the decree lists the members by their names (Enlarged Commission).

The Commission or the Enlarged Commission shall study the application and form a proposal of its judgement on the basis of the criteria of Articles 3, 4, 5 and 6 of this Act and possible expert viewpoints of the Group of Experts. It shall justify its opinion in writing and forward it to the Council within two months after having received the application at the latest.

When discussing the application, the Chair of the Commission may propose to the Council to ask the promoter to complete the application. The Commission shall discuss the completed application again, but not more than once. In such case a proposal of the judgement with its explanation in writing shall be forwarded to the Council no later than two months after all supplements to the application have been received.

The Council shall form and adopt the final judgement no later than two months after having received the Commission's proposal.

Article 12

(Procedure for Approving Programs of Free-Standing Higher Education Institutions)

Upon the proposal of the Chair of the appropriate Commission, the Council shall appoint a Group of Experts no later than two months after having received a complete application of Article 9 hereof. The Group of Experts shall consist of 3 or 5 members, one or two thereof being foreign experts as a rule.

On the basis of the criteria of Articles 5 and 6, the Group of Experts shall assess the study program submitted either positively or negatively. It shall give a written justification of its assessment and forward it to the Council no later than two months after its appointment.

The Group of Experts may propose to the Council to ask the promoter to complete the application. The Group of Experts shall re-discuss the completed application, but no more than once. In such case it shall forward its assessment with a justification in writing to the Council no later than two months after it has received all supplements to the application.

Before a decision is taken at the Council's meeting, the assessment by the Group of Experts shall be discussed by the relevant Commission and may also be discussed by other Commissions interested, which shall prepare a proposal for approval or denial of approval.

The Council shall approve or deny the approval of the application no later than two months after having received the assessment by the Group of Experts.

Article 13 (Application Forms)

Applications of Articles 7, 8 and 9 shall be submitted on standardised forms; documents and other enclosures shall be included. The forms can be obtained from the Council's Secretary.

Article 14 (Applications Concerning Changes of Individual Components of Valid Programs)

When the promoter in his application for judgement of Article 8 or the application for approval of Article 9 of this Act states and documents only a change in certain components of a valid study program (e.g. a change in the program's title, a change of a professional title conferred, etc.), the judgement or the approval, respectively, may concern only the component to be changed.

Article 15 (Other Procedures)

The stipulations of Articles 11 and 12 of this Act shall correspondingly apply also to other procedures administered by the Council.

IV. TRANSITIONAL AND FINAL PROVISION

Article 16 (Discussion of Existing Criteria for Awarding Teaching and Research Faculty Titles)

The Council shall not adopt any judgement according to the stipulations of Article 4 of this Act with regard to the criteria for awarding titles to teaching and research faculty which were in force at the University of Ljubljana and the University of Maribor on the day of entry into force of the HEA; in compliance with this Article and no later than six months after this Act is adopted, it may, however, adopt a recommendation that they be changed.

Article 17
(Entry into Force)

This Act shall enter into force on the day of its adoption. It shall be published in the Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia.

Number: 021-1/94
Ljubljana, May 23, 1994

PRESIDENT
OF THE COUNCIL FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

Prof. Dr. Ivan Svetlik