# **Internal QA. Problems, practices, suggestions**

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*This report is based on studies of internal quality assurance in the HEIs of Latvia, discussions in the Faculty of Chemistry and some general knowlegde of HE in other countries gained in cooperation projects.*

**Introduction**

# Basic facts

# Latvia is situated in Northern Europe, on the coast of Baltic Sea. Capital city is Riga.

## Latvia as a National state was founded on November 18, 1918; between 1940 and 1991 it was incorporated in the USSR; since 1991 it is again an independent country. It joined the European Union in 2004 and Eurozone in 2014.

## The main exports: logistics, high-tech, chemicals, pharmacy, agriculture, woodwork

## Its population is 1 984 887 in 2016. Ethnic composition: Latvians 61.4%, Russians 26%, Belarusians 3.4%, Ukrainians 2.3%.

## Students: 85.9 thsd in 2015; Higher education institutions (including colleges): 60, out of which 1/3 is state founded. Since 1992 Latvian HEIs participate in European programmes in the field of education. Since 1999 Latvia is participating in Bologna process, and since 2011 its internal quality assurance systems have been developing along the lines of ESG.

# University of Latvia was founded on September 28, 1919. It is the largest HEI in Latvia, with over 13 thousand students in 2016

## QS World University Rankings 15/16: 651-700

## It is a comprehensive type of HEI, containing 13 faculties of all study domains except for engineering (those have been split off in 1958 and form Riga Technical University), it contains also 15 research institutes.

## Total number of study programmes is 130 (undergraduate 53, postgraduate 53, doctoral 24). Staff: 2283 (academic 1151, other 1132). Since 2015 it started a new campus, the first faculties to be placed there were Chemistry, Biology and Geography.

# What do we mean by quality in HE?

## Definition of quality usually referes to either fitness for purpose (for products) or meeting the needs/requirements of client (for services). Why can we can apply the definitions to HE at all? The fact is that academic process just as any production process has certain source (raw) material that is developed (processed) into some product. The process itself can be considered as a service provided to those who benefit from the ‘product’. What makes HE (and education in general) different is that students are not only connected with the ‘source material’ but also are actors and the main beneficiaries. This should be born in mind when one speaks about students’ role in QA

Both for the product and for the service there are many customers, therefore the product and the service must be standardised, so that the standard takes into account the variety of purposes the product is meant to be used and clients that have to be satisfied with the service.

And here we come to a paradox. On one hand, it would be necessary that each product is precisely targeted at the place that it would be used. On the other hand, the place should not be fixed precisely, bearing in mind that the graduates will be changing their position (and possibly the profession) several times in his life. So the standards have to be elaborated for a multipurpose use, and as with many manufactured goods, it will not serve perfectly to any of the purposes. For this reason, National professional standards will differ from each other, except for regulated professions where it is expected that the specialists will be doing basically the same work. One of such professions is medicine, and it is reasonable to suppose that caring for the health of a human being will be the same throughout Europe or the wide world (although, as we know, even here the different culture bacground of patients can impose different requirements). National educational standards will also be different from country to country, because customers of the educational process will also have diverse cultural background and therefore their needs and requirements will differ.

Now it is understandable why Education in EU is left in the competence of Member states, and Bologna process – while aspiring to find common solutions to all EHEA countries, nevertheless produces only recommendations not regulations. EQF has only generalized descriptors for any given level of education not only because it has to cover whole totality of subject areas, but also because it cannot take into account all the national peculiarities of technology and culture. ESG, much as though some involved parties would like them to be more prescriptive, never step out of the boundaries of recommendations.

Since the requirements will differ and the standards will not be imposed like a regulation, the comparison of quality will necessarily have to be restricted to institutions (or study programmes) in one country (or region). It is not much use to compare HE quality in a country like LV with KZ or UZ and say it is higher or lower, even if we try to establish free movement of labour and free movement of goods. Lists of rankings, even if we forget they are based on a very limited set of parameters that characterise each HEI, are of very little value for the truth that the world is not uniform and neither specialists nor universities can substitute each other. And bless the Lord it is so or else it would be uninteresting to go and see other places and meet other people.

Having said that, we, of course, use both national and international standards in education, only we do not assume them as standards for weight and size limited from beneath and above, but rather as a common set of requirements to fulfil. In Latvia, as in many other countries NQF has been adopted, including standards on bachelor, master and doctor studies as well as 1st and 2nd level professional studies between 2000 and 2014. ESG have been adopted by the Education Council of EU in 2005 and revised in 2014, and in Latvia they have been included in the National legislation in 2011. And our reasoning is that having conformity with common standards for the academic process, we stand a high chance to produce a ‘product’ that will be considered ‘quality’ not only in National sense, but also in European one.

We very much concentrate on ESG for the process of teaching and learning, bearing in mind, of course, that the goal is the set of learning outcomes of the educated persons (graduates). This is done both in internal QA and in external QA (accreditation process).

## **How do we comply with ESG**

# 1.1. **Policy and procedures for QA**

ESG do not prescribe any specific model for the policy and procedures, and each university develops it to its own liking. The main point is there has to be certain Quality Management system, because in it the structural problems have been solved, and one can focus on the contents

Quality policy of UL defines continuous development towards excellence in research-based studies as the aim of Quality assurance system [of studies]. Study processes are clearly structured and there are responsibles for each of them. Collective responsibility belongs to the decision-making bodies - Constitutional assembly, Senate, Committee of assessment of quality of study programmes (CAQSP), Faculty boards un Study programme councils (SPC); they evaluate study quality and decide on measures for ensuring the quality of studies in UL. Administration of UL is responsible for functioning of the QMS and performs monitoring and audits of study process. Several internal regulations have been adopted on this. UL process management module includes all the processes and structural units, which makes its structure difficult to present visually. It is organized as submodules with several levels, the first level submodules being UL management, Strategic planning, Internal audit, Quality management, Administration reports, SCIENCE, STUDIES, INTERACTION WITH SOCIETY, International cooperation. Procurement, Staff management, Project management, Filing, Maintenance of infrastructure, IT management, Fiscal management.

The module of STUDIES consists of 7 submodules: Development and administration of study programmes, Planning and allocation of resources for studies, Admission, Teaching and learning, Filing concerning studies, Support of studies, and Further education.

The submodule of Teaching and learning in turn includes 9 submodules of the next level: 1st and 2nd cycle studies, Doctoral studies, Residential training (for medical specialties), Studies started at later stages, hosting of students from other Latvian HEIs, Recognition of study periods and study results, Making chnges in student’s status, Prevention of offenses to academic honesty, Accumulation and analysis of study results. Altogether there are more than 100 internal regulations concerning academic process, and most of them are directly or indirectly following the ESG, although not specifically referring to it.

# A few persons in central services of UL (likewise in other institutions) can explain the system in detail. Higher management staff have a general knowledge of the system. Middle-level management has a good knowledge of the processes directly concerning study programmes. Rank and file teaching staff mostly rely upon requests of action initiated by responsible persons of the system, but are very reluctant to talk about the structure and functionality of the system. As it will be shown below the point 1.1 has rather low result of knowledge among faculty.

The situation is different in smaller institutions where QMS is based on an ISO 9001 type approach, but nevertheless the knowledge of the entire system is rather limited (and perhaps it is not realistic to make impressive expectations on this).

## 1.2 **Design and approval of programmes**:

There are some regulations that define requirements to study programmes at National level. In LV these are:

Regulation on standard of 1st level professional HE (Cabinet of Ministers)

Regulation on standard of 2nd level professional HE (Cabinet of Ministers)

Regulation on standard of 2nd level professional HE (Cabinet of Ministers)

Also, all the responsibilities and processes are regulated internally (by close to a dozen by-laws). Algorithm of the process of evaluation and adoption of a study programme, starting with preparation of the self-evaluation report and ending with implementation or closure of the study programme (depending on the results of evaluation and accreditation) is rather complicated and involves many actors. Faculty is involved in all the stages to a various degree, and thus the knowledge is also of a varying character.

Creating and modification of a Study course is more straitforward; apart from the lecturer it involves the Branch Council of Study Programmes (academic staff, students and representative of employers are included).

The Faculty Board responsible for the implementation of study course is formally accepting the study course application and the content of the study course is electronically saved in the LUIS by academic staff and its the conformity assessed by LUIS.

When the study course form is accepted by Study Department the person of academic staff responsible for the subject area electronically activates study course in the LUIS

The next step is entering the studies supporting information in the MOODLE[[1]](#footnote-1) by the academic staff.

The study course runs during a defined number of semesters and the evaluation of students’ knowledge, skills and competence – examination (including examinations during the study course) are provided.

As the list of expected learning outcomes is defined in the course description, on the basis of results the academic staff achieved in exams is able to determine whether the result is achieved. In addition, the LO are evaluated independently in academic seminars organized by faculties.

## 1.3 **Student-centered learning, teaching and assessment**:

Student-centered learning is a rather recent trend in QAS, but nevertheless the best teachers have been exploiting it as an approach in their classes for decades. The main diference (as compared to the period in UL before 1990) is student involvement both in the process (to make it interactive), and in decision-making at all levels. It is firmly embedded in laws and internal regulations of HEIs, including UL.

The main result is the variety of study forms and forms of assessment, chosen so as to suit the acquisition of Learning outcomes.

As concerns the performance of staff during lectures and practical classes, this cannot be taught by description of procedures; it depends fully on previous pedagogical training gained in specialized courses (such courses are offered to beginners in a compulsory way and to other staff under their discretion) or else on intuition (talent). Usually the faculties having definite advantage in this respect are the ones that deal with teacher training. These are teaching the students certain small gadgets how to capture the attention of the audience; how to make sure if your message reaches the understanding of each student; how to help students to remember the main points. Another group is Economy and Management – there certain skills are acquired for managing any processes, and that can be applied also to the academic process.

One example of a lecturer who was recently re-elected to his second term. (I was among the team who attended his open class.) The student group (of 21 person) is divided in teams of 3 persons by means of playing cards (A to 8, leaving 3 in each nomination). Thsi prevents them making permanent teams (separating good from bad or following personal sympathies). If needed, each suit can be assigned a specific role (e.g., spade as team-leader, heart as the registrator, club as the presenter). Tables are organized in a way that permits the lecturer to reach each of them easily and to watch the progress. Each team can also easily draw the lecturer’s attention and ask for his explanations or assistance. At the end of the class each team fills in a small questionnaire (1 to 3 questions asked, with a pre-processed answers), just making his choice out of 3 (e.g., level of ability to reach the result with or without the lecturer’s help).

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## 1.4 **Student admission, progression, recognition and certification***:*

This chapter deals with a wide range of activities throughout the full cycle from application to studies until issue of graduation papers, and its steps involve a range of responsible persons or units, therefore we also find an extensive list of regulations (around 20), starting with the Law on HEIs (Parliament) and ending with the one on collecting of questionnaires from those who proposed to interrupt their studies (Rector’s order).

## This usually does not constitute any problem from scientific point of view. The problems can arise from misuse of the regulations (e.g., diploma mills).

# 1.5 **Teaching staff***:*

Teaching staff is one of the crucial things in the academic process, and certain requirements are established at the National level. In Latvia, there are certain requirements for proportion of staff having academic and scientific degrees, according to National typology of HEIs. Apart from that there are internal regulations on staff.

The problems that arise, are usually coming from lack of financial resources. For that reason one can notice the aging of staff (the young people are not choosing the academic carreer because in other professions they can get higher salaries).

One global problem is the bias towards scientific degrees and the scientific papers. Sure, it is important that a lecturer is appointed in a field where he/she has some reserach experience. I must say, however, that the the approach is higly disputable.

We shall return to teachers once again a little later.

# 1.6 **Learning resources and student support***:*

The main resource is the forms of teaching and learning provided at the SP and individual level. At he institutional level we have many support forms that are maintained adminstratively and financially from the institutional budget.

# One of very important – centrally managed – support forms is the institutional library. There is several branches of the library, because the new university campus has just started, and we have the faculties scattered around the city. However, the catalogues can be approached remotely, and the books can be ordered from any branch and delivered to the nearest one to the student. Apart from books and magazines there are vast electronic resources. There are a few internal regulatory acts concerning resources.

MOODLE platform is providing students with the necessary information for the study process on-line – study course content, texts, lecture presentations, description and forms of laboratory works, questions for self-control etc.). During the study process discussion (chat) groups can be developed. The academic staff is responsible for updates of this information.

The study support at the University of Latvia includes the Academic Library, Online study courses (for registered teachers and students, UL provides free software during the studies: Microsoft Office 365, Wolfram Mathematica, SPSS, Gaussian, Autodesk.

The feedback is provided by an online questionnaire for study courses and study programmes quality.

The problems usually come not so much of lack of resources, but of insufficient information concerning them. Also sometimes we do not realize that students appreciate all the niceties that show welcoming and support. In this respect the small institutions (although much criticized by finance people as ineffective) are usuall much better placed. The students feel and appreciate the presence of personal attitude.

## 1.7 **Information management**

As concerns the information systems, they are maintained centrally and used by students and academic and administrative staff to store, manage and use the relevant information. The information system of UL (LUIS) contains all the personal data on students and staff (accessible only in an authorised way to meet the requirements of the law on protection of personal data. It also contains all the records concerning the academic process, and the student can always find out what tasks or tests he must perform and what is his/her situation with the academic progress. Here also the students can approach centrally organized questionnaires to leave their opinion on programmes, courses and their staff. Nowadays information management is usually at a reasonable level, and it is rather rare that decisions concerning the academic process are taken without an adequate information backup.

## 1.8 **Public information***:*

# The universities make the information meant to be public mostly electronically (via internet), but there also regularly renewable leaflets on faculties and programmes distributed in information events. In our institution, there are also periodical publications about faculties and the university in a format of books, also containing quantitative data about the programmes and awards. (Thus, 2 years ago we completed and published a book about 50 years of Chemistry Faculty, containing inter alias a chapter on currently running study programmes).

# In the internet, one has special pages for those who would like to study in our university, and theses pages have concise information on programmes and courses

What is problematic – is the information and knowlege level ot the society at large. There is – and in our country especially – a gap between what society expecty from HE and what it knows about it in detail. Another drawback – lecturers are not encouraged to provide information to general public on the content of their teaching and research, as the formal requirements are more and more oriented towards scientific papers that are referenced in prestigious databases. As a result, public at large is not well informed about what is going on in science and develops not a very favourable opinion of academic world, with all the other unpleasant consequences.

## 1.9 **On-going monitoring and periodic review of programmes***:*

There are several internal regulations containing reference to the annual monitoring and reviev of study programmes. In our university this has become a routine, and right now certain procedures are executed (triggered by the Academic Department) and the faculty is actively involved in the process.

## 1.10 **Cyclic external quality assurance:**

## HEIs in Latvia undergo external quality assurance in line with the ESG on a cyclic basis (every 6 years). This is regulated on National level by Regulation on accreditation (Cabinet of Ministers)

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Accordingly, each study domain (including each study programme) must prepare a self-evaluation report (like annual reports, but taking into consideration specific requirements put forward by the Accreditation agency (at present this function is delegated to Academic Information Center), and also providing specific information on the issues pointed out during previous accreditation round. Self-evaluation reports of study domains are published in internet sites of faculties. Internal self assessment covers all the necessary activities, and lecturers are actively involved in them.

**Some results of teacher self-evaluation**

Teaching staff is a crucial actor of the academic process. It is true, that students’ involvement and motivation is also very important. However, to my understanding it is the teaching staff who must also see to the students’ role, not leave it “for the market to decide”.

Some time ago we organized a self-evaluation exercise of teaching staff in our faculty on a broad variety of issues covering practically all the aspects of the academic process considered in ESG and beyond. Questions to be answered were covering knowledge, involvement and attitude, and the staff had to put their answers to certain statements in a range from -2 (entirely disagree) to +2 (entirely agree).

The first group of statements concern **QA policy and system**. As it was mentioned earlier, the system is rather complicated and difficult to understand. The results show that the staff is not very confident of their knowledge: the average mark is +0.52, and the highest ones (close to +1) concern the knowledge of institutional strategy and the obligations of lower managerial staff, while the lowest (close to 0) is the knowledge ofdetails of how the system is organized.

The second group – **study programmes and awards** show considerably higher confidence (average mark 1.29), claiming good knowledge and active participation in issues concerning the updating of study programme (between 1.5 and 2.0), but the lowest – in issues concerning opinions of external stakeholders (between 0 and 1).

The 3rd group of statements show knowledge and participation in issues concerning **student assessment**; the average mark is 1.37, with most marks above 1.5; the lowest result is marked with forms of control of the assessment by heads of chairs or deans (e.g., the managerial persons do not admit they have a special plan of such controls and regular checks).

The next group is the recognition of roles of middle and higher-level **management in QA**; the results show that the staff is rather uncertain of what the roles and influence of the managerial staff is. The average mark is 0.51, with marks varying from 0 to 1 (the lowest one concerns explanation of QA and QM issues by managerial staff to rank and file staff.

**Involvement of other stakeholders in QA** is the next group. Average mark 0.67, the lowest (close to 0) concerns knowledge of involvement of external stakeholders in decision-taking bodies of the institution).

The group of statements concerning **teacher’s profile** return rather high level of confidence both towards the qualification of staff and their activities (between 1.5 and 2.0). The lowest marks have been chosen for mutual visits and mutual evaluation of pedagogical performance (between 0 and 0.5), as well as for development of pedagogical performance in general. The average mark is 1.36

Results concerning work with **information** (both for internal use and for publication) have an average mark of 0.96, which is rather high. The lowest self-evaluation mark concerns preparation and publication of information concerning the academic and research work for general public (0.38); this corresponds to my own judgement of how well this work is done (see before).

The last chapter we had addressed is **relations with the secondary school**. This is the only group of statements where the marks were in many cases below 0 (except those lecturers that are involved in teacher-training programmes. The average mark is 0.05.

In general, I should admit, the self-evaluation seems rather fair, and it can be used for identifying the strong and weak points in QA practice in general.

## 

Annex

**Can I assure my academic work answers to ESG 1?**

*Self-assessment of our faculty*

***Each statement is evaluated according to the following scale:***

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Entirely disagree | Mostly disagree | Neutral/ can’t tell | Mostly agree | Entirely agree |
| -2 | -1 | 0 | 1 | 2 |

**I. Understanding of policy of academic quality of the institution and the internal QA system 0.52**

I know what the quality policy of our institution is and how it is formulated. I can explain how it reflects the National HE policy and ESG 0.50

I know what is QA strategy of our institution and our faculty 0.81

I know what is the QA system of our institution, who is responsible for it and where I can get consultation on unclesr issues 0.31

I know, what is responsiblity of the dean, head of chair, director of study programme in this system and what other units are involved in it 0.75

I know, in what way students are involved in QA system, their competence and responsibilities 0.63

I can explain, in what way relationship between teaching and research is evaluated in this system and how the link between teaching and research is stimulated 0.69

I know when and in what way quality policy is discussed in our institution and how it is corrected. 0.1875

I know how implementation of quality policy is monitored and stimulated 0

I know, how cooperation with schools is foreseen in the policy of our institution, and how teachers should be involved in this cooperation 0.81

**II. Study programmes and awards 1.29**

I have participated in formulation and publicising of learning outcomes for the programme I am involved in. 1.63

I can explain the structure and content of the study programme and curriculum 1.69

I can explain what study forms are present in our study programme (including what opportunities are available to take ithe course or its parts as distance learning or e-learning) 1.69

I can explain what type our SP is (academic, professional, short cycle) and in what way it differs from similar programmes in other universities 1.69

I know what learning resources are available for our SP and I participate regularly in evaluation of them from the point of view of the necessary support for my courses 1.56

I know in what way the SP is evaluated and adopted before its implementation 1.38

I know by what means student progress in learning of the programme is supervised and I have taken part in updating of these means 1.06

I participate regularly in discussions about the programme or its parts at the level of chair, faculty and institution 1.00

I know results of evaluation of the programme outside the university – in present or prospective employer organizations, and other stakeholder institutions 0.38

I know in what way the programme and its parts are asessed by students and what is their feedback 0.88

**III. Student-centered learning 1.37**

I have participated in formulation of student assessment policy and development of regulation for assessment (only for dean, heads of chairs and directors of SP) 0.31

I regularly take part in explaining assessment procedure and criteria to students 1.56

During the 1st class I usually ask students to fill in a test of my own to get the first impression on their previous knowledge in this discipline 1.13

I have a strategy how to develop students’ knowledge, skills and competencies in the context of learning outcome for the SP and I apply it during the semester to get a feedback from students 1.81

In the assessments, I am aware how my exercises and tests correspond to objectives of the programme and to the qualification the students should obtain 1.94

I seek to develop students’ self-assessment and mutual assessment concerning parts of the course or specific issues 1.56

During the final exam of the course I aim at getting a well-grounded opinion on the student’s achievement as the result of studies and assessments in learning the course 1.69

Learning outcomes described for the course matched to learning outcomes of the SP are the main criterion in all my tests 1.81

There are a few additional measures set to make the students records not depending only on my opinion 1.50

During the exam, I am fully aware of all the consequences that result from regulations on exams 1.56

I follow carefully the rules established in the institution on confidentiality of data 1.75

I explain every time all that concerns their assessment in my course (*answers must be put at each point*):

* + scale of marks 1.69
  + action in the case of absence 1.56
  + type, method and criteria of the assessment 1.81
  + influence of non-attendance to classes on the mark 1.18
  + arranging the date of the exam 1.38

I check regularly how other teachers follow the regulations on exams (*only for heads of chairs and the dean*) 0.25

For this purpose, I have a special plan according to which I inspect a definite number of lecturers (*only for heads of chairs and the dean*) 0

I strive to permanently improve the process of student assessment to make it more effective and objective 1.56

**IV. Q and management (Most of the issues in this chapter concern only managerial staff heads of chairs, chairman of the board, dean, vice-deans, directors of study programmes. Rank and file lecturers fill in this chapter to test their readiness to take a managerial position 0.51**

I know what are the latest changes in national legislation and in by-laws of the institution concerning my job position 0.81

I can explain how decision making and taking concerning academic quality is done in our institution 0.37

I have an opinion about strengths and weaknesses of management of our institution and I can formulate and substantiate it 0.62

I know and can explain in what relation our managerial structures are with ESG for internal QA (each of the points must be evaluated separately):

* how managerial structures and processes influence the quality culture in my structural unit 0.13
* in what way, the system of monitoring and review of our SP provides me an opportunity to check the work of my subordinates in QA 0.38
* how often and in what way I can influence the quality of study programmes 0.56
* what are the authorities, responsibilities and freedom of choice of other staff and students involved in development and improvement of study programmes 0.25

I am aware of my duties and I try to contribute to (each of the points must be evaluated separately):

* Formulation and publishing the learning outcomes 1.06
* Updating and developing the learning resources and all sorts of student support (teaching aids, equipment, computers and software) 1.31
* Regular review of the SP, including feedback from employers and alumni 1.00

I devote my time and energy to explain (both formally and informally) the principles of academic quality (including ESG) to rank and file teaching staff 0.25

I strive to clarify how well the teaching staff understands the linkage between ESG and the quality culture in their structural unit (*dean and heads of chairs*) -0.06

I have a clear idea on the level of implementation of ESG in our faculty and institution 0.25

I have a clear opinion about barriers that prevent implementation of ESG and development of quality culture in our faculty and institution 0.19

**V. Involvement of other stakeholders in QA**

I am aware what other stakeholders (apart from the ones being responsible in our institution for academic process) in issues of academic quality are and I can substantiate their interest 0.44

I know in which decision-taking bodies of our institution external stakeholders must be represented and which regulatory papers define that 0.00

I know who in each decision-taking bodies of our faculty represent other stakeholders and with what authority 0.06

I know which recommendations or demands of other stakeholders have been considered in defining the study programmes and awards for our faculty, learning outcomes of programmes and courses, requirements of teacher qualifications 0.69

I have proposed or implemented certain changes in my courses or programmes based on feedback from students that have practical placement or job in their profession in parallel to studies 1.06

I have proposed or implemented certain changes in my courses or programmes based on the knowledge acquired in courses of professional development 0.75

I have proposed or implemented certain changes in my courses or programmes based on results of my research projects 1.69

**VI. Teacher's profile 1.36**

I know what requirements have been put forth towards qualification of staff and how that reflects in staff employment rules 1.63

I have a degree responding to requirements for my position and previous experience in academic and scientific work 1.94

I have a good knowledge of the subject I teach and I can deliver it to students in various contexts and react flexibly to their questions or comments 1.86

Direction of my research work is closely related to subject I teach 1.86

I have at least 3 scientific papers during the last 6 years in the direction of my basic occupation 1.38

I have attended courses of professional development at the beginning of my academic career 1.13

During the last 6 years I have developed my pedagogical performance or updated my academic experience abroad or at home 1.44

I have consulted my colleagues and developed my own methodical and tactical methods to cope with students of very different level of previous preparation (from school in bachelor programme or from different direction of bachelor studies in master programme 1.50

I am exploiting modern technical means in teaching my subject (presentation technique, special software, special equipment) 1.50

I provide regular consultations to students on issues of my subject 1.88

I explain to students what other support they can receive for learning the programme (equipment available in the department and faculty, technical staff possessing relevant data or knowledge, information resources available publicly) 1.56

I am aware by what criteria should my professional performance be evaluated by my authorities, colleagues, students 1.44

Student evaluation of my performance collected officially is usually positive and it assures my skills of motivating the students to successful learning the programme 1.00

I have no remarks from my colleagues or authorities concerning content or methodical mistakes in my subject or essential shortcomings 1.31

Sometimes by my own initiative I try and question my students concerning the content of my subject and my performance 1.31

I invite colleagues to attend my classes and provide their opinion on them 0.69

I attend classes of my colleagues to acquire additional experience or provide informal evaluation 0.50

I can explain and substantiate why mutual hospitation is not a widespread practice in our faculty 0.75

I have a clear formulation of the concept „good teacher” and can explain how that corresponds to ESG 1.13

**VII. Collecting, processing, usage and publishing of information 0.96**

As part of my work I collect the information necessary for the academic process from lecturers and stake holders (to be answered by managerial staff of all levels) 1.13

Usually I prepare the necessary information about lessons, tests and plans and submit it to authorities timely 1.19

I review the information on my subjects in the information system of the institution on a regular basis 1.50

I urge students to fill the questionnaires on their satisfaction with the subjects taught and on effectiveness of teaching staff regularly 0.69

I participate in collection of data on relevance of our study programme and learning outcomes from alumni and employers 0.75

I am informed about the profile and previous achievements of our students 1.06

I am informed about available learning resources and their costs 1.31

I know by what criteria the performance of our faculty and institution is assessed and what are respective indicators 0.94

I participate regularly in measures devoted to informing school youth on our study programmes, awards employment perspectives 0.75

I participate in preparation and publication of information about features of our academic process, about forms of assessment, about future career of our graduates, about composition and profile of our students at present 0.38

I participate in accumulation of information for publishing in the internet site of the faculty and institution 0.63

I have a conscientious attitude to truthfulness, objectiveness and accuracy of information and I can separate it from marketing tricks 1.38

I participate actively in popularization of our study field, writing popular scientific articles and giving presentations outside my compulsory classes 0.81

**VIII. Relations with secondary education 0.05**

I am basing my teaching on learning outcomes in our subject area at school (*to be assessed by teachers of I year of bachelor programme*) 0.63

I have had a special training to get prepared to work with I year students (*to be assessed by teachers of I year of bachelor programme*) -0.38

We have a special strategy for work with very talented students coming from schools specialized in our subject area (*managers of all levels*) 0.50

We are involved in projects concerning development of contents and methodology of our subject area in secondary school (*managers of all levels*) -0.31

I participate regularly in measures devoted to professional development of school teachers in our subject area -0.18

1. A robust open-source learning platform ([moodle.org](https://moodle.org/)) used by University of Latvia. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)