

APPROVED

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of the Senate of Vilnius University

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROCEDURE FOR THE RECOGNITION OF COMPETENCIES ACQUIRED BY VILNIUS UNIVERSITY STUDENTS THROUGH NON-FORMAL OR SELF-EDUCATION AND THE CREDITING OF STUDY SUBJECTS/MODULES

CHAPTER I GENERAL PROVISIONS

1. The Description of the Procedure for the Recognition of Competencies Acquired by Vilnius University Students through Non-formal or Self-Education and the Crediting of Study Subjects/Modules (hereinafter referred to as the Description) establishes the procedure for recognising competencies acquired by Vilnius University (hereinafter referred to as the University) students through non-formal and/or self-education (hereinafter referred to as the recognition of competencies) and for crediting the study subjects/modules on the basis of this recognition (hereinafter referred to as the crediting of study subjects/modules).

2. The Description has been prepared in accordance with the Republic of Lithuania Law on Higher Education and Research, the Republic of Lithuania Law on Non-Formal Adult Education and Continuing Learning, the Republic of Lithuania Law on Education, and the and the General Principles for the Assessment and Recognition of Competencies Related to Higher Education Acquired through Non-formal or Self-Education approved by Order No. V-289 as of 24 April 2017 of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania on Approval of the General Principles for the Assessment and Recognition of Competencies Related to Higher Education Acquired through Non-formal or Self-Education.

3. The purpose of the recognition of competencies and the crediting of study subjects/modules is to expand self-directed learning opportunities for students and satisfy individual learning needs by implementing the principles of lifelong learning.

4. Key terms used in the Description:

4.1. **Candidate** – a student who would like the competencies he or she has acquired through non-formal and/or self-education to be recognised and the study subject/module to be credited on the basis thereof.

4.2. **Consultant** – the responsible employee from the study department (hereinafter referred to as the Study Department) of the core academic unit or *sui generis* academic unit of the University (hereinafter referred to as the Unit) who performs the functions of the Academic Consultant. The Consultant advises candidates on the recognition of competencies and the crediting of study subjects/modules.

4.3. **Learning achievements folder** – a set of evidence supporting the competencies acquired by a candidate pursuing the recognition of competencies and the crediting of study subjects/modules, consisting of the candidate's curriculum vitae and documents and/or work examples that make it possible to objectively and comprehensively assess the competencies acquired by the candidate and take a decision on the crediting of the study subject/module.

4.4. **Non-formal education** – education according to various programmes for satisfying educational needs, improving qualifications, and acquiring additional competencies, except for formal education programmes.

4.5. **Request** – the request submitted by the candidate to the Unit through the University Study Information System (hereinafter referred to as the VUSIS) to recognise the competencies acquired through non-formal and/or self-education and credit the study subject/module on the basis thereof. The request must specify the one or more study subjects/modules that the candidate would like to be credited.

4.6. **Self-education** – self-directed learning based on a person’s knowledge from a variety of sources and his or her practical experience.

5. Other terms used in the Description shall be understood as they are defined in the legislation listed in Paragraph 2 of the Description.

6. The following principles shall apply in the recognition of competencies and the crediting of study subjects/modules:

6.1. **Principle of accessibility.** Candidates may seek recognition of the competencies they have acquired through non-formal and/or self-education, regardless of how they are acquired.

6.2. **Principle of flexibility.** The evaluation methodology used makes it possible to assess the competencies acquired by the candidate through non-formal and/or self-education and take a decision on the crediting of study subjects/modules on the basis of the recognition of these competencies regardless of where and how they were acquired; an opportunity shall be created to individualise study paths for candidates who have entered the higher education system from various environments, such as practical environments or institutions providing non-formal education.

6.3. **Principle of transparency and objectivity.** The recognition of a candidate’s competencies and the crediting of study subjects/modules shall be performed avoiding the assessor’s subjective view of the competencies acquired through non-formal and/or self-education as well as of the procedures for recognising them and crediting the study subjects/modules on the basis of this recognition. The candidate shall be provided with feedback on the decision taken and given the opportunity to appeal.

6.4. **Principle of comparability.** The recognition of competencies and the crediting of study subjects/modules shall be performed in accordance with the study objectives specified in the respective study programme offered by the University and the course/module description.

6.5. **Principle of voluntariness.** When voluntarily deciding to participate in the process for the recognition of competencies and the crediting of study subjects/modules, the candidate is responsible for the learning achievements folder submitted for assessment, is motivated to be assessed, and is prepared for the recognition and crediting procedure.

CHAPTER II RECOGNITION OF COMPETENCIES

7. Candidates may seek recognition of the competencies they acquired:

7.1. in the course of their work;

7.2. through unpaid and/or voluntary work or practice;

7.3. during short-term or long-term internships, courses, seminars, projects, exhibitions, etc.;

7.4. while learning independently;

7.5. in other activities.

8. The recognition of competencies and the crediting of study subjects/modules is carried out by the committee for the study programme applicable to the study subject/module that the candidate would like to have credited (hereinafter referred to as the Committee). An assessor or a commission of assessors appointed in accordance with the procedure established by the legislation of the University and this Description may also participate in the competency assessment procedure.

9. Various assessment methods may be used to assess the competencies acquired through non-formal and/or self-education, including: analysis of the documents and/or work examples submitted in the learning achievements folder, tests, interviews, case studies, knowledge/mind maps, essays, reflection (self-analysis), activity monitoring, on-the-job evaluation, or other assessment methods proposed by the Committee that are suitable for assessing the competencies acquired by the candidate.

10. No more than 50 per cent of the scope of the study programme may be credited. Final examinations, theses, and other written work provided for in the study programme as a separate study subject/module cannot be credited.

11. The Study Department is responsible for organising the procedure for the assessment of knowledge and abilities acquired through non-formal or self-education and the recognition of competencies.

CHAPTER III ORGANISATION AND OFFICIAL REGISTRATION OF THE RECOGNITION OF COMPETENCIES AND THE CREDITING OF STUDY SUBJECTS/MODULES

12. Candidates pursuing the recognition of competencies and the crediting of study subjects/modules must submit their request and learning achievements folder to the Study Department by 15 May for study subjects/modules offered during the autumn semester, and by 15 December for study subjects/modules offered during the spring semester. Candidates pursuing the crediting of study subjects/modules offered in the first semester of studies may submit their request and learning achievements folder to the Unit during the first two weeks of the semester.

13. When preparing the learning achievement folder, candidates may consult with the Consultant on the assessment procedure, assessment principles, criteria and other issues related to preparation of the learning achievement folder.

14. The Study Department shall forward the request and learning achievements folder submitted by the candidate to the Committee within five working days of the date of submission of the request.

15. Within two weeks of the new semester, or within one month of the new semester in the case of first-year students, the Committee shall take a decision that:

15.1. the evidence provided by the candidate makes it possible to recognise that the student has acquired competencies corresponding to at least the threshold level for achievements in the study subject/module and to credit the study subject/module;

15.2. the evidence provided by the candidate makes it possible to recognise that the student has not acquired competencies corresponding to at least the threshold level for achievements in the study subject/module and to not credit the study subject/module; or

15.3. the evidence provided by the candidate is not sufficient to objectively and comprehensively assess and recognise that the student has acquired competencies corresponding to at least the threshold level for achievements in the study subject/module; in this case, it shall also assign additional assessment methods (tests, practical tasks, monitoring of practical activities, etc.). The coordinating subject/module teacher provided in the course/module description is responsible for performing the assessment assigned by the Committee and submitting a recommendation on the decision to the Committee within 10 working days of the assessment being assigned;

15.4. the evidence provided by the candidate cannot be objectively and fully assessed by the members of the Committee; in this case, it shall ask the deputy head of the Unit responsible for the organisation of studies to form an assessment commission, which must conduct an additional assessment within 10 working days of its formation and make a recommendation to the Committee regarding the recognition of the competencies acquired by the candidate through non-formal and/or self-education and the crediting of the study subject/module.

16. After additional assessment is conducted in the cases specified in Paragraphs 15.3 and 15.4 of the Description, the Committee must take a final decision on the recognition of the candidate's competencies and the crediting of the study subject/module within 10 working days of receipt of the recommendation.

17. Candidates must be informed of the time and place of the Committee meeting via the VUSIS, and are entitled to attend the Committee meeting and present their learning achievements folders to the Committee members and answer their questions.

18. The decision taken by the Committee on the recognition of the candidate's competencies and the crediting of study subjects/modules shall be recorded in the minutes of the meeting, which are forwarded to the Study Department to officially register the decision.

19. Upon the Committee taking the decision to recognise the candidate's acquired competencies and credit the study subject/module, the student's achievements are assigned to one of the study achievement levels specified in the provisional description of the Vilnius University student ranking and rotation procedure and the credited study subject/module is graded as:

19.1. 10 if the student's achievements were assigned to the excellent study achievement level;

19.2. 7 if the student's achievements were assigned to the typical study achievement level;

19.3. 5 if the student's achievements were assigned to the threshold study achievement level.

20. In cases when the first parts of a continuing study subject/module are graded as pass/fail in accordance with the procedure established by the Vilnius University Study Regulations and other legislation of the University, these parts of the study subject/module are credited as passed.

21. Within five working days of receipt of the minutes of the Committee's decision, the Study Department shall inform the candidate about the decision taken by the Committee and shall organise official registration of the study subject/module grade in the VUSIS, in the student's recognition of competencies and crediting of study subjects/modules acquired through non-formal or self-education card.

22. Candidates who do not agree with the grade provided by the Committee may appeal the decision of the Committee to the to the Unit's dispute resolution commission in accordance with the regulations of the Unit's dispute resolution commission.

23. The candidate's request and learning achievements folder, as well as the student's recognition of competencies and crediting of study subjects/modules acquired through non-formal or self-education card, shall be stored in accordance with the procedure established by the legislation of the University.
