

At its 221st session on 17 November 2025, the Council of the Slovenian Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education, on the basis of paragraph one of Article 68 and point three of paragraph fourteen of Article 70 of the Higher Education Act (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia [Uradni list RS], No 56/25; hereinafter: ZViS-1), adopted the following

## **CRITERIA FOR EXPERTS OF THE SLOVENIAN QUALITY ASSURANCE AGENCY FOR HIGHER EDUCATION**

### **I. GENERAL PROVISIONS**

#### **Article 1**

##### **(Content and purpose)**

These Criteria lay down the conditions for experts of the Slovenian Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (hereinafter: the Agency) entered in the register of the Agency experts (hereinafter: the Agency experts) and appointed to groups of experts.

The groups of experts shall carry out a professional and independent assessment of higher education institutions (hereinafter: institution(s)) and their study programmes, and higher vocational colleges (hereinafter: college(s)) in accreditation and evaluation procedures according to the Agency's quality standards and criteria.

These Criteria also define the composition of groups of experts in accreditation and evaluation procedures, as well as the responsibilities and duties of the experts appointed to these groups.

### **II. CONDITIONS TO BE MET BY CANDIDATES FOR AGENCY EXPERTS**

#### **Article 2**

##### **(Candidates for Agency experts)**

Those who may apply for the position of Agency experts shall be higher education teachers, college lecturers and students.

A student shall be a person as defined by the act governing higher education and/or the act governing higher vocational education. Notwithstanding the preceding sentence, in the context of external evaluation procedures for higher vocational colleges, a person who has completed higher vocational education but for whom three years have not yet elapsed since the completion of their education shall be also considered a student.

Other persons who are involved in the quality assessment in higher education and higher vocational education and have completed at least a second-cycle higher education degree may also apply for the position of Agency experts. These candidates may not be

appointed experts in the procedures of accreditation and/or external evaluation of study programmes.

Candidates for the Agency experts (hereinafter: candidates) must meet all general conditions and at least four specific conditions under Articles 4 and/or 5 of these Criteria, including the mandatory requirement specified in indent one of Article 5 of these Criteria. Exceptions shall be student candidates and candidates referred to in paragraph three of this Article.

Compliance with the specific conditions set forth in Articles 4 and 5 of these Criteria shall also be taken into account when appointing experts to groups of experts for accreditations and evaluations, depending on the type of procedure.

### **Article 3**

#### **(General conditions)**

The general conditions that candidates must comply with are the following:

- knowledge of the Slovenian higher and/or higher vocational education (legal regulation, organisation, characteristics and operation);
- knowledge of the accreditation and external evaluation criteria, other criteria and standards of the Agency, and Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area – ESG (hereinafter: European Standards);
- communicative oral and written competence in the Slovenian language;
- proficiency in English at least at the B2 level or an equivalent international certificate.

### **Article 4**

#### **(Specific conditions for accreditation and external evaluation of institutions/colleges)**

The specific conditions that candidates must comply with are the following:

- management experience in an institution/college;
- management experience in teaching, scientific, professional, research and/or artistic work;
- experience in evaluating educational, scientific, professional, research and/or artistic achievements;
- references of several years as to teaching work in an institution/college;
- professional work (cooperation) in the development, design and preparation of study programmes;
- professional work in the evaluation or self-evaluation of institutions/colleges and/or study programmes;
- references as to the design and development of quality assurance systems;

- relevant international experience in at least three of the abovementioned areas.

The candidate shall demonstrate appropriate professional, teaching, research and/or artistic achievements during the five years preceding the application.

## **Article 5**

### **(Specific conditions for accreditation and external evaluation of study programmes)**

The specific conditions that candidates must comply with shall be the following:

- academic qualifications and scientific, professional, research and/or artistic achievements in the field of the relevant study programme;
- experience in evaluating educational, scientific, professional, research and/or artistic achievements in the field of the relevant study programme;
- references of several years as to teaching work in an institution/college;
- professional work (cooperation) in the development, design and preparation of study programmes;
- professional work in the evaluation and/or self-evaluation of study programmes;
- relevant international experience in at least three of the areas listed in the present paragraph.

The candidate shall demonstrate appropriate professional, teaching, research and/or artistic achievements during the five years preceding the application.

## **Article 6**

### **(Conditions relating to student candidates)**

Student candidates must meet the general conditions under Article 3 of these Criteria and demonstrate participation in the evaluation and/or self-evaluation of institutions/colleges and/or study programmes.

## **Article 7**

### **(Conditions relating to candidates under paragraph three of Article 2 of the Criteria)**

Candidates referred to in paragraph three of Article 2 of the Criteria must meet the general conditions under Article 3 and at least four specific conditions under Article 4 of the Criteria, including at least one of the conditions listed in indents one or two of Article 4 of the Criteria.

## **III. PUBLIC CALL, APPLICATION AND SELECTION OF CANDIDATES**

## **Article 8**

### **(Public call)**

The Agency shall select candidates based on a public call for applications, which is permanently available on the Agency's website.

A public call shall, in addition to general information, include the following:

- the subject of the public call containing information on the profile of experts needed by the Agency and the study, scientific, professional, research and/or artistic fields they should be active in;
- conditions to be met by candidates, and
- data on the application to the public call and the application's deadline.

Where candidates who do not comply with the conditions set out in the public call apply to the public call, the Commission referred to in Article 10 of the Criteria shall notify them thereof.

## **Article 9**

### **(Application to a public call)**

An application to a public call shall be submitted electronically, i.e. on an electronic form which is attached to the Criteria. If the application is not submitted on this form, it shall not be considered by the Commission referred to in Article 10 of the Criteria.

The application shall be accompanied by the following:

- CV in Slovenian language;
- evidence of participation in the evaluation and/or self-evaluation of institutions/colleges and/or study programmes referred to in Article 6 of the Criteria, in the case of a student candidate, and
- evidence of compliance with specific conditions indicated by the candidate in the application.

## **Article 10**

### **(Selection of candidates for compulsory training)**

The selection of candidates for compulsory training for Agency experts, based on their fulfillment of the conditions set forth in Articles 3, 4, and 5 of the Criteria shall be carried out by the commission for the selection of candidates and experts (hereinafter: the Commission), which shall be appointed by the Agency Council and consist of at least three members of the Agency Council.

The Commission shall propose selected candidates for compulsory training to the Agency Council for approval.

#### IV. COMPULSORY TRAINING

##### **Article 11**

##### **(Content of compulsory training)**

The compulsory training shall consist of two parts: training at the Agency and practical training.

Training at the Agency shall be intended for teaching candidates about accreditation and evaluation procedures. After the completed training, candidates shall be invited to practical training.

During practical training, candidates shall be involved in accreditation or evaluation procedures conducted by the Agency.

##### **Article 12**

##### **(Invitation to practical training)**

The Agency shall invite candidates to practical training in the order of accreditations and/or evaluations of institutions/colleges and study programmes. It shall further inform in writing the candidates about the training in a specific accreditation and/or evaluation procedure.

Where a candidate twice declines an invitation to a practical training, the Agency shall no longer invite them to the aforementioned training.

##### **Article 13**

##### **(Preparation for work in a group of experts)**

A candidate shall be prepared for the preparatory meeting of a group of experts and the work in a group of experts by the Agency staff authorised by the Agency Council to conduct accreditation and evaluation procedures (hereinafter: the staff).

##### **Article 14**

##### **(Tasks of a candidate in a group of experts)**

A candidate shall, in accordance with the instructions by the chair of the group of experts and the staff conducting an accreditation and/or evaluation procedure, perform all tasks of an expert in the group except for conducting interviews during the site visit.

The tasks and actions performed by a candidate in accreditation and evaluation procedures shall not affect the final assessment and the report submitted by the group of experts.

## **Article 15**

### **(Candidate evaluation)**

The work of a candidate shall be evaluated by the chair of a group of experts in cooperation with other appointed members of the group and by the staff conducting the accreditation and/or evaluation procedure in which the candidate participates.

Following the completion of the accreditation and/or evaluation procedure, the group of experts and staff shall draw up a written evaluation (hereinafter: evaluation) of the candidate. This evaluation shall include findings on:

- proper application of laws, criteria and other regulations in accreditation and evaluation procedures;
- ability to work in a group of experts;
- quality of the assessment of the actual situation;
- quality of report writing, and
- the candidate's attitude toward the participants in the procedure.

The staff shall not evaluate the candidate's substantive assessment of compliance with the quality standards set out for accreditations and evaluations of institutions/colleges and/or study programmes.

The candidate's evaluation shall be submitted to the Commission along with the candidate's application, and the Commission shall then recommend to the Agency Council whether or not to enter the candidate in the register of experts.

## **V. REGISTER OF AGENCY EXPERTS**

## **Article 16**

### **(Register of Agency experts)**

Through the entry in the Register of the Agency experts (hereinafter: the Register), the candidate shall become an expert of the Agency. All Slovenian experts must be entered in the Register.

In performing their duties and making decisions in accreditation and evaluation procedures, experts shall observe the principles of conflict of interest prevention and impartiality as set forth in labour legislation. To this end, they shall sign a special declaration binding them to respect the principles determined in the preceding sentence.

Experts must also sign a special statement confirming their awareness of the rules governing the protection of personal data, and they may not disclose information related to the procedures to unauthorised persons. In their work, they shall be required to avoid undue pressure and conflicts of interest, and shall report any undue pressure to a staff member in

accordance with the Protocol on conduct in cases of undue pressure and/or attempts to influence Agency experts.

## **Article 17**

### **(Entry in the Register)**

The Council shall decide on the entry of the candidate in the Register and inform the candidate accordingly.

An expert shall be entered in the Register for a period of five years. If during this period they fulfilled obligations and tasks referred to in Chapter VII of the Criteria, their entry shall be renewed for the same period.

Notwithstanding the preceding paragraph, the entry of an Agency expert in the Register shall not be renewed if, upon reviewing the conditions for renewal of the entry, the Agency Council determines that:

- the Agency expert referred to in paragraph one of Article 2 (except for students) and the Agency expert referred to in Articles 24 and 25 has not been active in the scientific research, professional and/or artistic field in the last ten years;
- the Agency expert has not demonstrated competence in their work and/or has not complied with the provisions of the copyright agreement with the Agency (e.g., failed to follow the recommendations of a staff member in accordance with Article 29 of the Criteria, failed to assess the validity of the applicant's timely comments on the report of a group of experts, was unresponsive, etc.).

The Agency Council shall decide on the renewal of the entry into the Register upon the recommendation of the Commission and notify the Agency experts of the renewal of the entry.

At the start of each academic year, students must submit proof of their student status to the Agency. If their status expires during the academic year, they must notify the Agency as soon as possible.

A person participating in external evaluation procedures for higher vocational colleges as a student, in accordance with the second sentence of paragraph two of Article 2 of the Criteria, must submit proof to the Agency, prior to being appointed to the group of experts, that less than three years have elapsed since the completion of their higher vocational education.

## **Article 18**

### **(Removal from the Register)**

An Agency expert whose entry in the Register has not been renewed in accordance with the preceding Article shall be removed from the Register.

An Agency expert shall be also removed from the Register if:

- they request so;
- they fail to submit proof of their student status in accordance with paragraph five of Article 17 of the Criteria and/or fail to notify the Agency that their status has expired;
- a person referred to in the second sentence of paragraph two of Article 2 of the Criteria fails to submit the required proof in accordance with paragraph six of Article 17 of the Criteria prior to appointment to the group of experts, and/or fails to disclose that more than three years have elapsed since the completion of their higher vocational education;
- the Agency Council determines that they have violated the provisions of the rules governing the protection of dignity at the Agency;
- the Agency Council determines that they failed to observe the due avoidance of conflicts of interest.

The Agency Council shall decide on the removal of an Agency expert from the Register referred to in the preceding paragraph and shall also notify the removed expert thereof.

## **Article 19**

### **(Suspension of entry)**

If an Agency expert is appointed to the Agency bodies or as the Agency Director, their entry in the Register shall be suspended for the duration of the appointment.

## **VI. COMPOSITION OF A GROUP OF EXPERTS**

## **Article 20**

### **(Group of experts)**

The Agency Council must appoint at least three independent experts to a group of experts, of which one shall be a student and one a foreign expert. A foreign expert shall not be compulsory in external evaluations of higher vocational colleges.

Experts appointed to a group shall not be associated with the institution/college and study programme they are assessing.

Foreign experts shall be evaluators from foreign agencies entered in the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR) or experts from the field of quality assessment in higher education. Before participating in their first accreditation and/or evaluation procedure, they shall undergo tailored individual training organised by the Agency. The training shall include a presentation of the characteristics of the Slovenian higher education area, key legislation and regulations governing higher education, and the procedures carried out by the Agency.

Experts shall be proposed for a group of experts by the Commission referred to in Article 10 of the Criteria.

## **Article 21**

### **(Accreditation and/or external evaluation of institution/college)**

A group of experts must be composed in such a way that:

- at least one of the experts has management experience in an institution/college of at least the same type as the institution/college under the accreditation and/or evaluation procedure;
- the majority of members of the group of experts have the title of a full or associate professor, where a university or an independent faculty is being accredited;
- at least one member of the group of experts has the title of an assistant professor, where a professional college is being accredited;
- at least one member of the group of experts has the title of lecturer of a higher vocational college, where a higher vocational college is being evaluated; a representative of employers may also be appointed.

The group of experts must include:

- a) for an initial accreditation of an institution: experts in the fields of all draft study programmes that the institution intends to deliver;
- b) for a reaccreditation of an institution: experts in the fields of all study programmes assessed as part of the institution's reaccreditation;
- c) for college evaluation: most experts in the fields of study programmes delivered by the college.

## **Article 22**

### **(Accreditation/evaluation of a study programme)**

All members of a group of experts must be from the field of the study programme and be appropriately appointed to the title; these titles shall be the following:

- a) for the accreditation/evaluation of a higher education professional study programme: a lecturer, a senior lecturer and at least one associate professor or assistant professor;
- b) for the accreditation/evaluation of a university study programme, second-cycle study programme and third-cycle study programme: full and associate professor and assistant professor.

## **Article 23**

### **(Appropriateness of experts in terms of fields)**

The study, scientific and research fields of an expert must comply with the KLASIUS and Frascati classifications. The suitability of experts for particular fields shall be assessed by the Commission referred to in Article 10 of the Criteria on the basis of bibliographic and

biographical references connected with the education level and the scientific, professional, research, artistic and/or teaching work of the expert.

## **Article 24**

### **(Chair of a group of experts)**

The chair of a group of experts must be a higher education teacher or college lecturer and must, in terms of the relevant field, correspond to the dominant field or at least one of the fields of the study programme and/or institution/college, typically according to the first two digits of the KLASIUS-P-16 classification.

If the experts in the Register suitable for the chair of the group do not include an expert meeting the conditions referred to in paragraph one of this Article, these conditions must be met by a foreign expert. The foreign expert shall participate in the assessment as member of the group, whereas the presidency shall be entrusted to an expert from the register.

If a study programme is interdisciplinary and the conditions from paragraph one are met, the foreign expert must be, as a rule, from one of the remaining fields according to the two-digit KLASIUS-P-16 classification.

If the chair of a group of experts cannot be appointed even in accordance with paragraph two of this article, the Agency may exceptionally find a suitable expert for the relevant field and enter them in the Register of experts at the Council's invitation. In the assessment, such expert shall participate as member of the group, whereas the chairmanship shall be entrusted to an expert from the register whose competences are as related to the relevant field as possible.

## **Article 25**

### **(Entry in the Register of experts upon invitation)**

If there is no expert with the appropriate field of expertise in the Register of experts, the Agency may, on an exceptional basis in a specific procedure, invite an expert with the appropriate field of expertise who meets the registration requirements set forth in the Criteria. Compliance with the requirements shall be first assessed by the Commission referred to in Article 10 of the Criteria, which shall then propose to the Agency Council that the expert be entered in the Register. The expert shall participate in the assessment as a member of a group of experts.

## **Article 26**

### **(Student expert)**

A student expert must, as a rule, be enrolled in a study programme of at least the same cycle as the study programme being assessed by them. The study programme in which they are enrolled or the study programme they have previously completed must, as a rule, be as related to the relevant field as possible.

If, during the evaluation, a student-expert's student status expires, and/or if the three-year period specified in paragraph two of Article 2 of the Criteria expires for a student-expert since completing their higher vocational education, they must perform work in accordance with a copyright contract and remain registered pending a final and/or definitive decision on accreditation and/or evaluation.

## VII. OBLIGATIONS AND TASKS OF EXPERTS

### **Article 27**

#### **(Continuous education)**

The obligation of the Agency's experts shall be:

- to follow changes in legislation and regulations in higher vocational and higher education;
- to take into account in their work any change in the Criteria and other regulations of the Agency;
- to attend compulsory training courses organised by the Agency;
- to attend consultations of experts organised by the Agency (participation on at least one event in the last two years).

The Agency shall verify compliance with the conditions set forth in the preceding paragraph when renewing an entry in the Register of experts.

### **Article 28**

#### **(Tasks of experts)**

Experts shall sign a contract with the Agency stipulating their tasks. In accreditation and evaluation procedures they shall, as a rule, perform a visit of an institution/college which shall take place in accordance with the Higher Education Act, the Accreditation and External Evaluation Criteria and the protocol of the visit determined by the Agency. The work of the group of experts shall be monitored by the staff.

### **Article 29**

#### **(Reports by a group of experts)**

All members of a group of experts must participate in the drawing up (determination of content) of these reports, while the chair of the group of expert shall be responsible for the coordination of work and the finalisation of the report.

The reports must be linguistically appropriate, completed by deadlines and written according to instructions and on forms determined by the Agency. If the reports are not appropriate, the Agency staff shall return them to the chair of the group of experts and

set a deadline for their correction. Non-compliance with the Agency's instructions and deadlines shall affect the remuneration under the contract.

## VIII. TRANSITIONAL AND FINAL PROVISIONS

### **Article 30**

#### **(Candidates registered prior to the entry into force of the Criteria)**

Candidates registered prior to the entry into force of the Criteria shall be trained and appointed as experts under the Criteria.

### **Article 31**

#### **(Experts entered in the register according to the previous Criteria)**

Experts who have been entered in the Register according to the Criteria for Experts of the Slovenian Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, Nos 21/18, 74/22, 79/22 – corr.), shall be subject to the provisions of the Criteria in the event of the re-entry in and removal from the Register.

### **Article 32**

#### **(Entry into force)**

The Criteria shall enter into force on the fifteenth day following their publication in the Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia.

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Ljubljana, 17 November 2025

Dr Boris Dular  
president of the Council  
of the Slovenian Quality Assurance Agency  
for Higher Education

Annex 1: [Application for the entry in the Register of Agency Experts](#)

Annex 2: [Application of a student candidate for the entry in the Register of Agency Experts](#)