

At its 227th session on 29 January 2026, the Council of the Slovenian Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education, on the basis of point three 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 56/2025), adopted the following

CRITERIA FOR THE ACCREDITATION AND EXTERNAL EVALUATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS AND STUDY PROGRAMMES

I. GENERAL PROVISIONS

Article 1

(Purpose)

(1) The Criteria shall lay down the quality standards applied by the Slovenian Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (hereinafter: the Agency) in accreditations and external evaluation procedures to verify the compliance with conditions for establishing a higher education institution and implementing higher education activities (accreditation of a study programme, including a joint study programme of Slovenian higher education institutions) and the quality of higher education institutions and study programmes. The Criteria shall comply with the quality assurance standards and guidelines that apply in the European Higher Education Area.

The purpose of the Criteria shall be to establish, ensure and further improve the quality of higher education institutions and study programmes.

(2) The Criteria shall also define the assessment of quality assurance system of short-term education and training courses for obtaining microcredentials, as well as the quality assurance system of the adoption of state-approved study programmes, targeted review and voluntary standards of excellence.

(3) The Criteria shall also be taken into account by a university reaccredited twice in a row for a full period when adopting state-approved study programmes (including joint study programmes of Slovenian higher education institutions) and other agencies listed in the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (hereinafter: EQAR) when they conduct external evaluations in accordance with the Higher Education Act (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia [Uradni list RS], No 56/2025; hereinafter: ZViS-1).

Article 2

(Types of procedures and areas of assessment)

(1) The Agency shall apply the Criteria in the following procedures:

1. Initial accreditation of a higher education institution: the assessment shall determine whether the higher education institution meets the legal requirements and the quality standards specified in the Criteria in the areas of the operation of a higher education institution, human resources and material conditions.

2. Reaccreditation of a higher education institution: the procedure shall include external evaluation of the entire operation of a higher education institution in the period since the previous accreditation, specifically in the areas of operation of the higher education institution, human resources, students, material conditions and internal quality assurance and improvement, modification, updating and delivery of study programmes. The basis for the assessment shall be a self-evaluation report, which must include an evaluation of the whole set of activities of a higher education institution and an evaluation of the delivery and modifications of study programmes to ensure the quality of the educational, scientific, professional or artistic work in the fields and disciplines of the study programmes. The procedure of reaccreditation of a higher education institution that offers short-term education and training courses for obtaining microcredentials shall also include an assessment of the quality assurance system for short-term education and training courses for obtaining microcredentials. For a university reaccredited twice in a row for a full period, the procedure shall also include the assessment of the quality assurance system of adoption of state-approved study programmes adopted by the university. A higher education institution reaccreditation procedure may also be implemented as a targeted review.

3. Accreditation of change of a higher education institution: the assessment shall determine whether the higher education institution meets the legal requirements and the quality standards specified in the Criteria for the accreditation of particular change to the higher education institution.

4. Accreditation of a study programme: the assessment shall determine whether the study programme meets the legal requirements and the quality standards specified in the Criteria in the areas of the structure and content of the study programme, as well as the concept of its delivery. When accrediting a joint study programme, the agreement concluded between the participating higher education institutions shall also be assessed.

5. Extraordinary evaluation of a higher education institution: the procedure shall include external evaluation of the entire operation of a higher education institution in the period since the previous accreditation, specifically in the areas of operation of the higher education institution, human resources, students, material conditions and internal quality assurance and improvement, modification, updating and delivery of study programmes. The basis for the assessment shall be a self-evaluation report which must include the evaluation of the whole set of activities and the evaluation of the delivery and modifications of study programmes to ensure the quality of educational, scientific, professional or artistic work in the fields and disciplines of study programmes.

6. Extraordinary evaluation of a study programme: the procedure shall be the same as that for the external evaluation of a study programme as part of a higher education institution reaccreditation procedure. The assessment shall cover the modification and updating of a study programme, the delivery of a study programme and the quality assurance system of a higher education institution in the part referring to the assurance and improvement of quality of a study programme (self-evaluation). The basis for the assessment shall be a self-evaluation report at the study programme level. The external evaluation of a joint study programme shall also assess the agreement concluded between the participating higher education institutions, or compliance with the obligations set forth in the agreement.

7. Evaluation of a sample of study programmes: the assessment shall determine whether the study programme meets the legal requirements and the quality standards specified in the Criteria. The assessment shall cover the modification and updating of a study programme, the delivery of a study programme and the quality assurance system of a higher education institution in the part referring to the assurance and improvement of quality of a

study programme (self-evaluation). The basis for the assessment shall be a self-evaluation report of the higher education institution at the study programme level. The external evaluation of a joint study programme shall also assess the agreement concluded between the participating higher education institutions, or compliance with the obligations set forth in the agreement. The procedure shall be the same as that for the external evaluation of a study programme as part of a higher education institution reaccreditation procedure; it shall conclude with recommendations to a higher education institution for improving the quality of the study programme.

(2) The Agency shall respect the principles of professionalism, impartiality, legality and political neutrality in all procedures referred to in the preceding paragraph.

Article 3
(Areas of assessment according to the types of accreditation and external evaluations)

ACCREDITATION AND EXTERNAL EVALUATION OF A HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION	
<i>INITIAL ACCREDITATION</i>	<i>REACCREDITATION WITH A REGULAR OR EXTRAORDINARY EVALUATION</i>
1. Operation of the higher education institution	1. Operation of the higher education institution
2. Human resources	2. Human resources
3. Material conditions	3. Students
	4. Material conditions
	5. Internal quality assurance and improvement, modification, updating and delivery of study programmes
ACCREDITATION AND EXTERNAL EVALUATION OF A STUDY PROGRAMME	
<i>ACCREDITATION</i>	<i>EXTRAORDINARY EVALUATION OR SAMPLE EVALUATION</i>
1. Structure and content of a study programme	1. Internal quality assurance and improvement of the quality of a study programme
2. Study programme delivery concept	2. Modification and updating of a study programme
	3. Study programme delivery

For each area of assessment, quality standards have been established that must be taken into account in accreditation and evaluation procedures. The content of the assessment of the compliance with individual quality standards shall be defined in more detail in forms for the accreditation and external evaluation of higher education institutions and study programmes annexed to the Criteria.

II. QUALITY STANDARDS

II.1 ACCREDITATION OF A HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION

Article 4

(Initial accreditation of an independent higher education institution)

In the initial accreditation of an independent higher education institution, compliance with legal requirements and criteria shall be assessed in accordance with the following quality standards:

A. Area of assessment of the operation of a higher education institution

Standard 1

The founder should have a formally accepted mission, vision and strategy with a strategic plan containing clear and verifiable organisational and implementation objectives enabling the planned implementation of higher education activities.

The following shall be assessed:

- a) position of the higher education institution in the higher education and broader social space;
- b) cohesion of the content of the mission, vision and strategy with the strategic plan;
- c) feasibility of the objectives defined in the strategic plan;
- č) draft study programmes to be delivered by the higher education institution;
- d) a draft strategy for the use of the Slovenian language, which promotes the use of Slovenian in the publication of scientific, professional and popular science works, review works and terminology dictionaries, whether as standalone publications or as supplements to other publications.

Standard 2

The earmarked and planned financial resources should enable the high-quality development of higher education activities.

The assessment shall consider the financial projection of the founder, which must demonstrate the resources intended for the financing of all planned activities of the higher education institution.

Standard 3

The internal organisation of the higher education institution should be such as to enable the cooperation of employees, students and other stakeholders in the management and implementation of the activities of the higher education institution. Equal treatment of all individuals, regardless of gender, should be guaranteed, and an environment should be created where the dignity of all individuals involved in the activities of the higher education institution is respected and protected.

The following shall be assessed:

- a) the suitability of the draft memorandum of association and the draft statutes of the higher education institution, which shall demonstrate, among other things, the rights and obligations of students, higher education teachers and faculty assistants as well as other internal stakeholders, the equal protection of rights and the

- concept of the appeal bodies of the higher education institution;
- b) the inclusion of mechanisms for identifying and preventing discrimination in draft internal acts in accordance with Article 14 of the ZViS-1.

Standard 4

The practical training of students in a work environment, if envisaged by study programmes, should be well planned. There should be sufficient resources provided for its implementation.

The assessment shall consider the suitability of companies, institutes, institutions and other organisations (hereinafter: training institutions) for the delivery of practical training and the connections of such training with fields and disciplines to which the draft study programmes refer.

Standard 5

The internal quality assurance system should be devised in a manner that enables the closing of the quality loop in all areas of the higher education institution's operation.

The assessment shall consider the quality manual or the draft corresponding document and the plan for the establishment of an internal quality assurance system.

B. Area of assessment of human resources

Standard 6

Higher education teachers should be ensured for all areas of study or for all compulsory and internal elective courses determined in draft study programmes.

The following shall be assessed:

a) the validity of appointment to titles of higher education teachers and appropriateness of the field in which the titles are awarded in view of the courses whose holders they will be;

b) human resources plan;

c) structure of the temporary senate;

č) consideration of the minimum standards of the Agency in the draft criteria of the higher education institution for the appointment to titles of higher education teachers, researchers and faculty assistants (hereinafter: criteria for election to titles).

Standard 7

The scientific, professional, research or artistic work of course holders and providers of study programmes should correspond to the fields and disciplines for which the higher education institution is being established and from which stem the draft study programmes.

The following shall be assessed:

a) the report on the scientific, professional, research or artistic work of course holders and providers of study programmes in the last five years and the suitability of this work;

b) the programme of scientific, professional, research or artistic work for the following five years;

c) assurance of minimum research standards and compliance with the conditions for mentoring when a higher education institution will implement third-cycle study programmes.

C. Area of assessment of material conditions:

Standard 8

The founder should provide suitable premises for the implementation of higher education activities.

The premises shall be assessed with consideration of the educational, scientific, professional, research or artistic activities, draft study programmes, human resources and the anticipated number of students enrolled.

Standard 9

The founder should provide suitable technical, technological and other equipment for the implementation of higher education activities.

The equipment shall be assessed with consideration of the educational, scientific, professional, research or artistic activities, draft study programmes, anticipated method and forms of their delivery (hybrid study, distance learning, etc.), human resources and the anticipated number of students enrolled.

Standard 10

Adaptations for students with special needs and special status should be provided in accordance with Article 115 of the ZViS-1.

The assessment shall consider the adjustments to the premises and equipment as well as communication and information accessibility.

Standard 11

Students and employees should be provided with the higher education institution library services; the library activities should support the educational, professional, research and artistic processes of the higher education institution.

The following shall be assessed:

a) academic, professional and scientific literature and a development plan for the library activities and services;

b) qualifications of library employees.

Article 5

(Initial accreditation of a university)

(1) If a university is being established, the founder shall demonstrate well-developed educational, scientific, professional, research or artistic activities.

(2) The assessment shall consider compliance with:

a) the quality standards relating to the operation of a higher education institution determined for the initial accreditation of an independent higher education institution under Article 4 of the Criteria; and

b) Standard 3 relating to the operation of the higher education institution, as well as the quality standards concerning human resources, students and material conditions determined for the reaccreditation of a higher education institution under Article 6 of the Criteria.

Article 6 **(Reaccreditation of a higher education institution)**

(1) The assessment shall consider the progress and development since the previous accreditation in all areas of assessment, especially the internal quality assurance system of the higher education institution. The basis for the assessment shall be a self-evaluation report which includes the evaluation of the institution's activities as a whole, and the evaluation of the delivery and modifications of study programmes for the purpose of ensuring the quality of educational, scientific, professional or artistic work in the fields and disciplines of the study programmes.

(2) In the reaccreditation of an independent higher education institution, compliance with legal requirements and criteria shall be assessed in accordance with the following quality standards:

A. Area of assessment of the operation of a higher education institution

Standard 1

A higher education institution should successfully fulfil its mission in the higher education area. By achieving organisational and implementation objectives, it should maintain the quality and development of higher education activities.

In the case of a first reaccreditation, the mission, vision and strategy of a higher education institution shall demonstrate that the obligations of the founder are continuously complied with.

The following shall be assessed:

a) consistency of strategic planning with the mission and national and European guidelines;

b) feasibility and comprehensiveness of strategic planning;

c) adequacy of the methods used to assess the implementation of strategic planning;

č) implementing the strategy to promote the use of Slovenian as a professional or scientific language in accordance with Article 15 of the ZViS-1.

Standard 2

The internal organisation of a higher education institution should ensure the participation of higher education teachers and faculty assistants, researchers and non-educational staff, students and other stakeholders in the management and development of the activities of a higher education institution. A higher education institution should ensure equal treatment of all individuals, regardless of gender, and create an environment where the dignity of all individuals involved in the activities of the higher education institution is respected and protected.

The higher education institution provides support and services to its internal stakeholders (students, higher education teachers, researchers, other employees and external associates, as well as participants in short-term education and training courses) to ensure that their fundamental rights and obligations are fulfilled.

The following shall be assessed:

a) the representation of stakeholders in the bodies of a higher education institution and the exercise of their rights and obligations;

b) mechanisms for identifying and preventing discrimination in accordance with Article 14 of the ZViS-1.

Standard 3

A higher education institution should demonstrate a high quality of scientific, professional, research or artistic activities and the related important achievements in the fields and disciplines where it carries out these activities. A higher education institution should develop the fields of study in which it delivers study programmes.

The assessment shall consider the quality, development and progress of the scientific, professional, research or artistic activities.

Standard 4

The practical training of students in a work environment, if it is part of educational activities, should be well organised and implemented. There are resources available for its implementation.

The following shall be assessed:

a) systemic regulation of practical training of students and its delivery;

b) satisfaction of the participants in practical training and the system for assessing the achievement of their learning outcomes and competencies.

Standard 5

The higher education institution should monitor the needs for knowledge and employment needs in the environment. It should provide information regarding employment possibilities in the fields suitable for the competences or learning outcomes of graduates.

The following shall be assessed:

a) cooperation of the higher education institution with the environment or employers and its own graduates, regular monitoring of the needs for knowledge and profiles of graduates; and

b) development of career centres, alumni clubs or other forms of organisation and the system for monitoring the employment and employability of graduates.

Standard 6

The internal quality assurance system should enable the closing of the quality loop in all areas of operation of a higher education institution.

The following shall be assessed:

- a) understanding the meaning and role of an internal quality assurance system;
- b) the self-evaluation report for the last completed self-evaluation period, measures based on the self-evaluation in the period since the previous accreditation, and a plan of improvements for the following self-evaluation period;
- c) how the internal quality assurance system enables and promotes the development, linking and updating of the educational, scientific, professional, research or artistic activities, and the impact of these activities on the environment;
- č) ensuring academic integrity and mechanisms to prevent and address violations (such as plagiarism, research ethics, unethical use of generative artificial intelligence, etc.).

Standard 7

(assessed in a higher education institution that offers short-term education and training courses for obtaining microcredentials)

The higher education institution should have established a high-quality, transparent and effective quality assurance system for short-term education and training courses for obtaining microcredentials, which should be integrated into the self-evaluation of the institution's educational activities and include the following: identifying the needs of the labour market, society and individuals; and planning, designing (structure and content), delivering, monitoring, updating and, if necessary, discontinuing short-term education and training courses for obtaining microcredentials.

It shall be assessed whether the quality assurance system for short-term education and training courses for obtaining microcredentials ensures the following:

- a) systematic identification of the needs of the labour market, society and individuals, and a demonstrated link between those identified needs and the planned competencies and learning outcomes;
- b) a clearly structured and documented concept and delivery of short-term education and training courses for obtaining microcredentials, which incorporate flexible and pedagogically sound teaching and learning methods;
- c) transparent assessment of the achievement of learning outcomes and competencies ensuring objectivity, traceability and appropriate documentation of results;
- (c) accurate, up-to-date and publicly available information on short-term education and training courses for obtaining microcredentials at the level of the higher education institution, as well as on individual short-term education and training courses for obtaining microcredentials;

d) clear, effective and appropriately adapted internal mechanisms of the quality assurance system for short-term education and training courses for obtaining microcredentials, which also include monitoring the effects of short-term education and training courses for obtaining microcredentials, as evidenced by records of internal assessments, analyses, measures and improvements;

Standard 8

(assessed for a university reaccredited twice in a row for a full period)

The university should have established an appropriate internal quality assurance system for the design, adoption, updating and discontinuation of state-approved study programmes that it adopts itself.

The following shall be assessed:

a) compliance with the provisions of the ZViS-1, the Criteria and the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (hereinafter: ESG) in the design, adoption and quality assessment of state-approved study programmes, and in the design and quality assessment of international joint study programmes, as well as the European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes;

b) a clear and predetermined procedure for the development and adoption of a state-approved study programme;

c) mechanisms for the regular internal self-evaluation and updating of state-approved study programmes in accordance with Standard 6 of Article 6 of the Criteria.

Standard 9

A higher education institution should inform the stakeholders and the public about its study programmes and activities in a timely manner.

The assessment shall consider the accessibility, content, reliability, comprehensibility and accuracy of the information about the activities of a higher education institution, especially the information regarding study programmes, their delivery and the scientific, professional, research or artistic activities in the fields and disciplines covered by those programmes.

B. Area of assessment of human resources

Standard 10

Higher education teachers, researchers and faculty assistants should be provided to ensure the high-quality implementation of teaching, research and other work.

The following shall be assessed:

a) provision of teaching and professional development for higher education teachers and faculty assistants over the past five years;

b) scientific, professional, research or artistic achievements of higher education teachers and researchers;

c) criteria of the higher education institution for appointment to titles and the fields in which the titles are awarded;

č) type of employment of higher education teachers and faculty assistants, stability of the staffing structure and stability and transparency of employment arrangements.

Standard 11

Professional, technical and administrative staff (hereinafter: non-educational staff) should be provided for efficient assistance and counselling.

The following shall be assessed:

- a) the type and suitability of the assistance and counselling provided to students and other stakeholders;
- b) the number, field of work and qualification structure of non-educational staff;
- c) education and training of non-educational staff.

C. Area of assessment of students

Standard 12

The higher education institution should provide its students with adequate assistance and counselling.

The following shall be assessed:

- a) consideration of the diversity and needs of students in the establishment and determination of the content of counselling or assistance provided to them,
- b) timely and efficient provision of information to students,
- c) monitoring student satisfaction with services.

Standard 13

Students should be provided with the appropriate conditions for high-quality study, scientific, professional, research or artistic work and extracurricular activities.

The following shall be assessed:

- a) delivery of study and conditions for its delivery in accordance with the needs and expectations of students;
- b) enabling appropriate professional, artistic and research work by students;
- c) conditions for extracurricular activities.

Standard 14

The higher education institution should protect students' rights.

The following shall be assessed:

- a) operation of the bodies of the higher education institution in this area,

b) mechanisms for the identification and prevention of discrimination against vulnerable groups of students and discrimination based on personal circumstances and beliefs of students,

c) cooperation of student representatives in the bodies of the institution with other students.

Standard 15

Students should participate in the assessment and updating of the contents of higher education institution activities and their implementation.

The following shall be assessed:

a) participation of students in the formulation of the mission and strategic guidelines, in self-evaluation of the higher education institution and study programmes as well as their modification;

b) methods of ensuring participation in the self-evaluation and updating of activities.

Č) Area of assessment of material conditions

Standard 16

The higher education institution should provide suitable premises and equipment for the implementation of its activities.

The premises and equipment shall be assessed by considering the needs for educational, scientific, professional, research or artistic activities, the method of delivery of study programmes (hybrid study, distance study etc.) and the number of students enrolled.

Standard 17

Adaptations for students with special needs and special statuses should be provided in accordance with Article 115 of the ZViS-1.

The following shall be assessed:

a) adjustments to the premises and equipment,

b) communication and information accessibility,

c) adjustments of study materials and the delivery of study.

Standard 18

Adequate and stable financial resources should be provided for the implementation and further development of higher education activities.

The assessment shall consider the current financial plan of the higher education institution and the success in the implementation of financial plans over the last four years.

Standard 19

The library of the higher education institution should have suitable academic,

professional and scientific literature and should provide high-quality library services.

The following shall be assessed:

- a) suitability of the academic, professional and scientific literature;
- b) library stock, accessibility of materials, information bibliographic support and access to databases;
- c) professional assistance provided by library staff;
- č) development of library activities.

The assessment of the quality assurance and improvement, modification, updating and delivery of study programmes shall be based on the quality standards for the external evaluation of a study programme determined in Article 11 of the Criteria.

II.2 ACCREDITATION AND EVALUATION OF A STUDY PROGRAMME

Article 7 (Accreditation of a study programme)

In the accreditation of a study programme, the assessment shall concern compliance with legal requirements and criteria in accordance with the following quality standards:

A. Area of assessment of the structure and content of a study programme

Standard 1

The structure and content of a study programme should be such as to provide students with comprehensive knowledge and help them achieve the objectives set and the planned competences or learning outcomes.

The following shall be assessed:

- a) consistency and cohesion of the content of individual courses and syllabi and the study programme as a whole;
- b) alignment of objectives, competences or learning outcomes determined in the syllabi with the objectives and competences of a study programme and its content having regard to the type and cycle of study;
- c) scientific, professional, research or artistic content integrated into the programme;
- č) order of courses or the distribution of courses by individual semesters and years (horizontal and vertical cohesion) and their credit assessment.

Standard 2

A study programme should correspond to the envisaged field and discipline in terms of name, purpose and content.

The assessment shall consider the cohesion of the study programme contents, their relation to applied or basic knowledge from the field and discipline as well as the conceptual selection of contents that are clearly defined and reasonably connected with the current state of development and development trends in science, the profession or art.

Standard 3

A study programme should be connected with the environment in which the higher education institution operates.

The following shall be assessed:

- a) analyses or research into the needs of the employment environment, labour market and the employability of graduates or society's needs for knowledge and objectives;
- b) conditions for the practical training of students.

Compliance with Standard 3 shall not be compulsory for third-cycle study programmes.

B. Area of assessment of the concept of the study programme delivery

Standard 4

The concept of the study programme delivery should correspond to its content, composition, type, cycle and purpose (objectives), ensuring high-quality adjustments and the provision of the study content, delivery practices and resources (human resources and material resources).

The following shall be assessed:

- a) envisaged methods, forms and course of teaching;
- b) adequacy of human resources in accordance with Standards 10 and 11 of Article 6 of the Criteria and:
 - appropriateness of appointment to titles of higher education teachers and faculty assistants in their fields;
 - assurance of minimum research standards and compliance with the conditions for mentoring for third-cycle study programmes;
- c) material conditions related to the delivery of the study programme, in accordance with Standards 16 to 19 of Article 6 of the Criteria.

Standard 5

The conditions of study and compulsory components of a study programme should be determined, clear and understandable. They should enable the exercise of rights and compliance with obligations of all stakeholders in the study process.

The following shall be assessed:

- a) conditions for enrolment in a study programme and advancement of students;
- b) criteria for the recognition of knowledge and skills acquired before enrolling to the

study programme;

c) methods of assessment;

č) language of delivery of study;

d) requirements for the completion of study;

e) conditions for completing individual parts of the programme if the programme contains such discrete parts;

f) professional, scientific or artistic title awarded in accordance with the law;

g) conditions and criteria for transferring between study programmes.

Points (c) and (e) shall not apply to third-cycle study programmes, unless the statutes of the higher education institution stipulate that these must also be defined in the third-cycle study programme.

Article 8 (Supplementary study programme)

The supplementary study programme shall be assessed according to all Standards of Article 7 of the Criteria, with the exception of Standard 2 and points e), f) and g) of Standard 5 of Article 7 of the Criteria.

Article 9 (Accreditation of a joint study programme)

(1) A joint study programme shall be adopted by all accredited Slovenian higher education institutions that participate in its delivery. For the accreditation of a joint study programme, compliance with the quality standards under Article 7 of the Criteria shall be assessed in addition to a special agreement between the participating higher education institutions, which shall define particularly the following:

a) rights and obligations of higher education institutions in the delivery of a joint study programme;

b) self-evaluation of a joint study programme, its modification and updates;

c) the proportion of the joint study programme to be implemented by each participating higher education institution;

č) diploma and diploma supplement;

d) coordination of the call for enrolment, selection and enrolment of students, course and completion of study;

e) coordination of the acquisition of competences or learning outcomes of students and graduates of a joint study programme;

f) coordination of ensuring the rights of students enrolled in a joint programme, of higher education teachers and faculty assistants as well as other stakeholders participating in the delivery of the programme.

(2) The minimum duration of the agreement shall be equal to the duration of the study under the joint study programme extended by one year.

(3) The proportion of a joint study programme delivered by participating higher education institutions shall be appropriately distributed and justified in terms of content and delivery. The distribution in a joint study programme shall mean a study connection that transcends the educational, research and creative capacities of each participating higher education institution.

(4) When an individual higher education institution withdraws from the programme or loses a valid accreditation, the remaining participating higher education institutions must redefine their mutual relations, rights and obligations by an agreement within three months. They must notify the Agency of such an amendment within 30 days of its entry into force and enclose the new or amended agreement.

Article 10 (Accreditation of a study programme of international federation of universities under Article 20 of the ZViS-1)

In the process of accreditation of a study programme of an international federation of universities under Article 20 of the ZViS-1, the Agency Council shall assess whether the international federation of universities under Article 20 of the ZViS-1 meets all quality standards for accreditation of a study programme under Article 7 of the Criteria and the provisions of the ZViS-1 on study programmes, professional, scientific and research and artistic work, higher education teachers and assistants, premises and equipment necessary for the delivery of the study programme, and the higher education institution library.

Article 11 (External evaluation of a study programme)

External evaluation of a study programme shall be a process of assessing the modification and updating of a study programme, its delivery and the quality assurance system of a higher education institution in the part referring to quality assurance and improvement of a study programme (self-evaluation). The basis for the assessment shall be a self-evaluation report of the higher education institution at the study programme level.

(2) In the external evaluation of a study programme, compliance with legal requirements and criteria shall be assessed in accordance with the following quality standards:

A. Area of assessment of internal assurance and improvement of the quality of a study programme

Standard 1

A higher education institution should evaluate and update the content, structure and delivery of the study programme. Self-evaluation reports should demonstrate the implementation of tasks planned on the basis of the findings of the self-evaluation of a study programme.

The following shall be assessed:

a) whether the self-evaluation of a study programme enables its development and updating by maintaining its relevance and creating a high-quality educational environment;

b) methods and procedures of collecting and analysing information and proposals for the modifications of a study programme;

c) stakeholder participation in the processes of gathering information, developing improvement measures and monitoring their implementation; and informing stakeholders about the results of the self-evaluation and the implementation of planned improvements;

č) closed quality loop.

B. Area of assessment of the modification and updating of a study programme

Standard 2

A higher education institution should monitor the delivery of a study programme, review and improve it by taking into consideration the development of the study, scientific, professional, research or artistic fields and disciplines (development of the profession) to which it corresponds, by evaluating the achievement of the set objectives, competences or learning outcomes and society's objectives and needs for knowledge – depending on the type and cycle of a study programme. The modifications and updates should take into consideration the basic objectives of the programme and maintain the cohesion of its contents or courses.

The assessment shall consider whether the study programme is still complete in terms of content and structure upon the development and modification of its content, whether the cohesion of the syllabi and curriculum with the objectives and competences of the study programme is preserved and whether the contents are connected horizontally and vertically; this shall be done subject to Quality Standards 1, 2 and 3 under Article 7 of the Criteria.

C. Area of assessment of the location of the delivery of study programme

Standard 3

The method, form and extent of the delivery of a study programme should correspond to its content, structure, type and cycle, which allows for high-quality adjustments and the provision of the study content, delivery practices and resources (human resources and material resources).

The following shall be assessed:

a) methods and forms of teaching, their development or adjustment (including resources):

- to various groups of students,
- to various study needs and study modes (student-centred study and teaching),
- to the needs of higher education teachers and faculty assistants;

b) number of completed contact hours determined by the study programme, or other types of organised work with students;

c) study materials and their adjustment to the methods and forms of teaching and students' needs;

č) work of students in scientific, professional, research or artistic projects subject to Article 43 of the ZViS-1;

d) practical training of students;

e) suitability of timetables, number of office hours or accessibility of higher education teachers and faculty assistants to students;

f) adequacy and qualifications of human resources in accordance with Standards 10 and 11 of Article 6 of the Criteria and assurance of minimum research standards and compliance with the conditions for mentoring for third-cycle study programmes;

g) material conditions related to the delivery of the study programme, in accordance with Standards 16 to 19 of Article 6 of the Criteria.

Standard 4

Protection of rights of stakeholders in the study process should be provided.

The following shall be assessed:

a) whether all students, when regularly meeting the requirements determined by a study programme, can uninterruptedly advance and complete their studies;

b) whether all higher education teachers and faculty assistants enjoy the respect of their autonomy in teaching and research and receive help and counselling in their career development;

c) provision of information to stakeholders in accordance with Standard 9 of Article 6 of the Criteria.

The external evaluation of joint study programmes shall also assess the compliance with the obligations set forth in the agreement concluded between the participating higher education institutions.

II.3 ACCREDITATION OF CHANGES TO A HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION

Article 12 (Changes to a higher education institution)

(1) Changes to a higher education institution shall include the following:

- transformation into another type of higher education institution;
- establishment of a new member institution of a university;
- transformation of another university member into a faculty, an art academy or a higher professional college;
- merger by acquisition, merger by formation of a new entity or division of the higher education institution;
- change in the location of the delivery of a study programme.

(2) The university and the independent higher education institution must notify the Agency of any other changes to the higher education institution that do not constitute changes under the preceding paragraph of this Article (e.g. a change of name, a change of location, closure of a branch, new or additional facilities for the delivery of a study programme, etc.) within 30 days of the change by completing an electronic form "Form for reporting changes to a higher education institution in accordance with paragraph two of Article 89 of the ZViS-1" (Annex 5, which forms an integral part of the Criteria).

Article 13

(Transformation into another type of higher education institution)

(1) The founder of a higher education institution may decide that an institution shall be transformed into another type (for example, a professional college into a faculty).

(2) Transformation into another type of higher education institution shall be processed in accordance with the quality standards for the reaccreditation of a higher education institution under Article 6 of the Criteria.

(3) Upon the transformation of a higher education institution, all accredited study programmes and state-approved study programmes adopted by the university itself, students, employees and other rights and obligations of the transformed higher education institution shall be transferred to the new higher education institution created by the transformation. The transformed higher education institution shall be accredited for seven years.

(4) A change in the name of a higher education institution shall not be considered a transformation into another type of higher education institution.

Article 14

(Establishment of a new university member)

(1) A university may establish a new member (a faculty, an art academy or a higher professional college) (hereinafter: establishment of a new university member).

(2) A prerequisite for the establishment of a new university member shall be an accredited study programme or a state-approved study programme adopted by the university itself in the field in which the member is being established, and which will be delivered at the new university member.

(3) The assessment of whether the conditions for establishing a new university member under this Article have been met shall be conducted in accordance with the following:

- quality standards in the area of operation of a higher education institution determined for the initial accreditation of an independent higher education institution under Article 4 of the Criteria;

- Standard 3 under Article 6 of the Criteria, and

- quality standards in the area of human resources and material conditions under Article 6 of the Criteria, determined for the reaccreditation of a higher education institution.

(4) The assessment of whether the conditions for establishing a new university member have been met shall take into account that the new university member will operate within the university.

(5) The new university member shall be reaccredited together with the university.

Article 15
(Transformation of another university member into a faculty, an art academy or a higher professional college)

A university may transform another university member referred to in paragraph four of Article 16 of the ZViS-1 (hereinafter: another university member) into a university member – a higher education institution, a faculty, an art academy or a higher professional college. Compliance with the conditions for the transformation of another university member under this Article shall be assessed in accordance with the quality standards for the establishment of a new university member set forth in Article 14 of the Criteria.

Article 16
(Merger by acquisition, merger by formation of a new entity or division of a higher education institution)

(1) The founder of a higher education institution may decide that the higher education institution shall be merged by acquisition with another higher education institution, that two or more higher education institutions shall merge and form a new higher education institution, or that the higher education institution shall be divided into two or more higher education institutions.

(2) Upon a merger by acquisition, all accredited or state-approved study programmes adopted by the university itself, as well as the students, employees and all other rights and obligations of the acquired higher education institution, shall be transferred to the acquiring higher education institution. The accreditation of the acquiring higher education institution shall remain valid for the period specified upon its most recent accreditation.

(3) Upon the merger by formation of a new entity, all accredited study programmes or state-approved study programmes adopted by the university itself, as well as the students, employees and all other rights and obligations of the merging higher education institutions shall be transferred to the higher education institution formed by the merger. The newly established higher education institution shall be accredited for seven years.

(4) Upon the division of a higher education institution into two or more higher education institutions, all its accredited study programmes or state-approved study programmes adopted by the university itself, students and employees as well as other rights and obligations shall be transferred to the new higher education institutions formed by division. The accreditation of the newly formed higher education institutions shall be valid for the period determined for the higher education institution before the division.

(5) Merger by acquisition, merger by formation of a new entity or division of a higher education institution shall be processed in accordance with the quality standards for the reaccreditation of a higher education institution under Article 6 of the Criteria.

Article 17

(Change of location)

(1) The following shall be considered a change of location: introduction of a new location when a higher education institution shall deliver the entire study programme also outside the location of the registered address of a higher education institution or university member (branch) in Slovenia or abroad.

(2) The following shall be assessed for a branch:

1. suitability of premises, equipment, library or access to suitable literature and information and communication technology;

2. adaptation of premises and equipment for students with special needs and special statuses in accordance with Article 115 of the ZViS-1;

3. provision of human resources which correspond in number and quality to the educational, scientific, professional, research or artistic work related to study fields and disciplines or study programmes which the higher education institution plans to deliver at the branch;

4. provision of counselling services and non-educational staff at the branch;

5. provision of financial resources for the branch;

6. operation of the quality assurance system at a higher education institution and planning the self-evaluation of the branch;

7. plan for the delivery of the study programme at the parent higher education institution and at the branch, taking into account Quality Standards 3 and 4 set forth in Article 11 of the Criteria.

(3) A higher education institution may deliver other accredited or state-approved study programmes adopted by the university itself at an accredited branch, provided that the requirements set out in the preceding paragraph are fulfilled.

III. ACCREDITATION AND EVALUATION PROCEDURES

Article 18 (Initiation of the procedure)

The procedures for the initial accreditation and reaccreditation of a higher education institution, the accreditation of changes to a higher education institution and the accreditation of a study programme shall be initiated at the applicant's request by submitting an electronic application via the Agency's eNakvis information system. The procedures for the extraordinary evaluation of higher education institutions and study programmes, as well as the evaluation of a sample of study programmes shall be initiated with a call for the submission of electronic applications via the Agency's eNakvis information system.

Article 19

(Application)

(1) The accreditation and external evaluation application shall be drafted in accordance with the ZViS-1 and the Criteria. It must be completed in the electronic form, which is identical to the form in the annex to the Criteria, and signed with a qualified electronic signature. The applicant shall first register the certificate in the security scheme. The enclosures specified in the Criteria shall be attached to the electronic application form in electronic format.

(2) The application shall be in the Slovenian language. If the enclosures are in a foreign language, the Agency may require the applicant to submit a translation of the enclosures or a part thereof.

(3) The applicant shall also submit a translation of the application into English. The translation shall contain the English translation of the form and individual enclosures depending on the type of procedure:

- initial accreditation of a university (point B): all required enclosures in the form of a summary;

- accreditation of a study programme (point C): enclosures 1, 2, 8 in full; enclosures 9 and 10 in the form of a summary;

- reaccreditation of a higher education institution (point D): enclosures 2, 3, 4 and 8 in full; enclosures 1, 7, 10 and 11 in the form of a summary;

- evaluation of a study programme (point F): enclosure 1 in full.

(4) The application shall be submitted to the Agency. The Agency shall process applications in the order of their submission.

(5) Notwithstanding the provision of the preceding paragraph, extraordinary evaluation procedures shall have priority.

Article 20 (Enclosures)

The following enclosures shall be attached to applications for accreditation and external evaluation:

A. Initial accreditation of an independent higher education institution

The electronic form "Form for the initial accreditation of an independent higher education institution" (Annex 1, which forms an integral part of the Criteria) shall be completed and the following shall be attached:

1. decision of the founder in the event of establishment of a public higher education institution;

2. formally adopted mission, vision and strategy of the founder including a strategic plan;

3. draft study programme(s) with draft curriculum (curricula) and syllabus (syllabi) to be implemented by the higher education institution, and a study or analysis of society's needs

for knowledge and objectives in the fields and disciplines of this (these) draft(s);

4. financial projection of the founder;
5. draft memorandum of association and draft statutes of the higher education institution, and a draft quality manual or similar document;
6. agreements with training institutions on practical training of students;
7. valid decisions on the appointments to titles of higher education teachers for all course holders and providers of courses in draft study programmes, and their statements of cooperation and the consent of their employers;
8. human resources plan and a list of all employees and external associates at the higher education institution, the name of the course taught by each course holder, the validity period and the field of appointment to title;
9. draft criteria for appointments to titles;
10. report of the founder on the scientific, professional, research or artistic work of course holders and providers of study programmes in the last five years;
11. programme of the founder regarding the scientific, professional, research or artistic work of a higher education institution for the following five years;
12. evidence on the premises and equipment: suitable evidence of ownership or lease of premises and equipment (lease agreements, operating permits, safety statements, inventory list);
13. plan for the delivery of a study programme when the premises are at different locations;
14. development plan for library activities, evidence on the qualifications of library staff and statements of their cooperation.

Agreements with training institutions referred to in point 6 shall be enclosed for a professional higher education study programme or for a study programme for which practical training of students is planned.

B. Initial accreditation of a university

The electronic form "Form for the initial accreditation of a university" (Annex 6, which forms an integral part of the Criteria) shall be completed and the following shall be attached:

1. enclosures from points 1, 2, 4, 5, 9 and 10 determined for the initial accreditation of a higher education institution (point A), and
2. enclosures from points 4, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 11 determined for the reaccreditation of a higher education institution (the enclosures from this indent shall also be submitted by the founder).

If the university is being established by higher education institutions that are already accredited and have different founders, the founders' agreements or their consents shall also

be submitted.

C. Accreditation of a study programme

The electronic form "Form for the accreditation of a study programme" (Annex 3, which forms an integral part of the Criteria) shall be completed and the following shall be attached:

1. decision of a university or independent higher education institution senate on the adoption of the draft study programme or a decision by the competent body of an international federation of universities referred to in Article 20 of the ZViS-1 determined in the statutes or other basic act of this federation;

2. syllabi;

3. analysis or research into the needs of the employment environment, labour market and employability of graduates if a professional higher education study programme is being accredited;

4. the analysis of society's needs for knowledge and objectives if a university study programme or a second-cycle study programme is being accredited;

5. agreements with training institutions on practical training of students;

6. plan for the practical training of students or a suitable relevant document (e.g. an annual work plan) if it is not evident from the syllabus;

7. valid decisions on the appointment to a title, statements on cooperation, consents of employers;

8. evidence on the scientific, professional, research or artistic work of providers of the programme, or links to websites from which this information is evident;

9. evidence on the premises and equipment necessary for the delivery of the study programme;

10. plan for the delivery of the study programme when the study is organised at different locations, as hybrid study, distance learning, etc.;

11. consent of the ministry responsible for the profession for which the graduate will be qualified, where the profession is regulated.

Agreements or contracts with training institutions referred to in point 5 and the plan for practical training of students referred to in point 6 shall be attached for a professional higher education study programme in which practical training of the students is planned.

Enclosures from points 3, 4, 5 and 6 are not necessary if a third-cycle study programme is being accredited.

Č. Accreditation of a joint study programme of Slovenian higher education institutions

The electronic form "Form for the accreditation of a study programme" (Annex 3, which

forms an integral part of the Criteria) shall be completed and the following shall be attached in addition to the enclosures listed in point C:

1. special agreement on the cooperation of higher education institutions in the delivery of a joint study programme signed by all higher education institutions and drafted in accordance with Article 9 of the Criteria;

2. sample diploma supplement.

D. Reaccreditation of a higher education institution

The electronic form "Form for the reaccreditation of a higher education institution" (Annex 2, which forms an integral part of the Criteria) shall be completed and the following shall be attached:

1. memorandum of association and statutes of the higher education institution;

2. strategic plan of the higher education institution;

3. quality manual of the higher education institution or another relevant document;

4. self-evaluation report for the last completed self-evaluation period and a document demonstrating the implementation of tasks based on the findings from the self-evaluation report for the last completed self-evaluation period, and a plan of measures for the following self-evaluation period;

5. criteria of the higher education institutions for appointment to titles;

6. staffing tables listing all employees and external associates at the higher education institution, specifying the course taught, the validity period and the field of appointment to the title;

7. plan of the higher education institution for the education or training of higher education teachers and faculty assistants;

8. report of the higher education institution on the scientific, professional, research or artistic work in the last five years;

9. plan of the higher education institution for education, supplementing knowledge or training of non-educational staff;

10. financial plan for the following accreditation period or for the period for which an agreement has been concluded with a competent ministry;

11. report on the development of library activities since the previous accreditation;

12. list of records kept by the higher education institution.

Enclosures from points 7, 8, 9 and 11 shall not be necessary if plans and reports are contained in the self-evaluation report of the higher education institution. The provision shall also apply to the accreditation of changes to a higher education institution.

If the enclosures to the application for the reaccreditation of the higher education

institution do not demonstrate the delivery, modification and self-evaluation of study programmes in accordance with Article 11 of the Criteria, the Agency shall require the applicant to complete the electronic form "Form for the evaluation of a study programme" (Annex 4, which forms an integral part of the Criteria) for study programmes determined by the Agency Council's decision.

E. Changes to a higher education institution

The electronic form "Form for the reaccreditation of a higher education institution" (Annex 2, which forms an integral part of the Criteria) shall be completed, or changes shall be entered into the already completed electronic form.

For a transformation into another type of higher education institution and a merger by acquisition of a higher education institution with another higher education institution, the enclosures specified in point D shall be attached. For a transformation of a higher education institution, the decision of the founder shall be attached, and for the merger by acquisition a special agreement between the founders of higher education institutions about the merger by acquisition shall be attached.

For the establishment of a new university member or transformation of another university member into a faculty, an art academy or a higher professional college, the enclosures specified in point D shall be submitted; and, for the study programmes to be delivered by the new university member, the enclosures specified in points 9 and 10 of point C, Accreditation of a study programme shall be submitted.

For the merger of higher education institutions by formation of a new entity, a special agreement between the founders of the higher education institutions on the merger shall be attached as well as the enclosures specified in point B.

For the division of a higher education institution into several higher education institutions, the following shall be attached:

1. decision of the higher education institution founder on the division which shall, besides the general information on the newly formed higher education institutions, include the information on:

- which accredited study programmes or state-approved study programmes adopted by the university itself shall be transferred to individual higher education institutions,

- which higher education teachers and faculty assistants, researchers and other professional staff shall work at individual higher education institutions,

- transfer of the scientific, professional, research or artistic work to individual higher education institutions,

- division of premises and equipment,

- division of library activities,

- management of individual higher education institutions;

2. self-evaluation report of the higher education institution in the process of division, and

3. for each newly formed higher education institution, the electronic form "Form for the reaccreditation of a higher education institution" (Enclosure 2, which forms an integral part of the Criteria) shall be completed and the following shall be attached:

- enclosures from points 2, 5, 7 and 10 determined for the initial accreditation of an independent higher education institution (point A), and

- enclosures from points 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11 determined for the reaccreditation of a higher education institution (point D).

For the establishment of a new member of a public university or for status changes to a public university (transformation into another type of higher education institution, merger by acquisition, merger by formation of a new entity and division of a higher education institution), the consent of the university senate and its administrative board as well as the consent of the Government of the Republic of Slovenia must be provided.

For a branch, the following shall be enclosed:

1. evidence on the premises and equipment for a branch: suitable evidence of ownership or lease of premises and equipment (lease agreements, operating permits, statements of safety, inventory list);

2. plan for the delivery of a study programme at the branch;

3. information on higher education teachers and faculty assistants and non-educational staff at the branch;

4. development plan for the library activities at the branch.

If a higher education institution wishes to deliver other already accredited study programmes or state-approved study programmes adopted by the university itself at an already accredited branch, it must attach the evidence specified in points 2 and 3 of the preceding paragraph. The evidence specified in point 1 shall be attached only when additional equipment is required for the delivery of a specific study programme.

F. Evaluation of a study programme

The electronic form "Form for the evaluation of a study programme" (Annex 4, which forms an integral part of the Criteria) shall be completed and the following shall be attached:

1. self-evaluation reports for the last three years and documents demonstrating the implementation of tasks based on the findings of the self-evaluation report for the last completed self-evaluation period (when these are not a part of the self-evaluation report) and the plan of measures for the following self-evaluation period;

2. syllabi for all courses of the study programme;

3. plan for the practical training of students or a suitable relevant document (e.g. an annual work plan) if it is not evident from the syllabus.

Article 21
(Completeness of the application)

(1) The application shall be deemed formally complete when the prescribed electronic form has been completed and all enclosures listed in Article 20 of the Criteria have been attached.

(2) If the application is not formally complete, the Agency shall require it to be supplemented and shall set the time limit for remedying the deficiencies. If the applicant fails to remedy the deficiencies, the Agency Council shall issue a decision dismissing the application.

(3) Notwithstanding the provision of the preceding paragraph, in procedures for the reaccreditation of a higher education institution, the extraordinary evaluation of a higher education institution and a study programme and the evaluation of a sample of study programmes, the Agency Council shall appoint a group of experts even in the event of an incomplete application.

Article 22
(Group of experts)

(1) In accreditation and evaluation procedures, the Agency Council shall generally appoint a group of independent experts consisting of at least three members, at least one of whom shall be a foreign expert and one a student. Slovenian experts who are members of the group of experts must be entered in the register of experts kept by the Agency.

(2) Foreign experts shall be evaluators from foreign agencies entered in EQAR or experts from the field of quality assessment in higher education.

(3) In cooperation with the Agency, a group of experts shall carry out a visit of a higher education institution and/or an evaluation of a study programme. The visit must be notified at least 30 days in advance. The applicant shall provide the group of experts with the conditions necessary for efficient work and shall submit only those additional documents required for the proper establishment of the facts. The site visit in the procedures of initial accreditation of a higher education institution and the accreditation of a study programme shall be intended to inspect the facilities and equipment used for the higher education institution's operations and the delivery of the study programme. In procedures for the reaccreditation of a higher education institution and the external evaluation of a study programme, the visiting group of experts shall also conduct interviews with various groups of interviewees in order to properly establish the facts. The visit may take place at the higher education institution, remotely through online tools, or in a hybrid format. This shall be determined by the group of experts.

(4) The assessment by a group of experts shall be independent. The findings shall be set out in an accreditation or evaluation report, prepared using the prescribed form and structured according to the areas of assessment set out in the Criteria, taking into account all quality standards, the provisions governing their assessment and the relevant statutory provisions.

IV. SPECIFICS OF ACCREDITATION AND EVALUATION PROCEDURES

Article 23
(Initial accreditation of a higher education institution and accreditation of a study programme)

The procedures for the initial accreditation of a higher education institution and the accreditation of a study programme shall be determined in Articles 77 to 79 of the ZViS-1. In the procedure of accreditation of a study programme, a group of experts shall visit the facilities where the higher education institution is to deliver the study programme if this is necessary to properly establish the facts (where special equipment, a laboratory etc. is necessary for the delivery of the programme).

Article 24
(Reaccreditation of a higher education institution)

(1) The procedure of reaccreditation of a higher education institution shall be determined in Article 80 of the ZViS-1; it shall be carried out by external evaluation and shall conclude with a decision on reaccreditation.

(2) External evaluation of a higher education institution is a procedure for the comprehensive and in-depth assessment of the quality of operation of a higher education institution in the period since the previous accreditation.

(3) Following the Agency Council decision on the second visit to a higher education institution, the Agency shall inform the higher education institution thereof and the institution shall, within one month after being informed of the decision, complete the electronic application form "Form for evaluation of a study programme" (Annex 4, which forms an integral part of the Criteria), and attach enclosures specified in points 1, 2 and 3 of Point F – Evaluation of a study programme (for all study programmes determined by the Agency Council).

(4) When the Agency Council adopts a decision that a second visit is not necessary, the group of experts shall prepare an evaluation report based on the findings report.

Article 25
(External evaluation of a study programme)

(1) The external evaluation of a study programme shall be performed in the reaccreditation procedures of a higher education institution, extraordinary evaluation of a higher education institution or study programme, or in the context of a special procedure of evaluation of a sample of study programmes.

(2) As part of the external evaluation of a study programme, the Agency shall request the higher education institution to complete the electronic form "Form for the evaluation of a study programme" (Annex 4, which forms an integral part of the Criteria) for the study programme to be evaluated, and to attach the enclosures specified in points 1, 2 and 3 of Point F – Evaluation of a study programme.

(3) The external evaluation of a study programme shall be carried out by a group of experts appointed by the Agency Council. The procedure for the external evaluation of a study

programme is the same as that for the evaluation of individual programmes as part of a higher education institution reaccreditation procedure with a compulsory visit by a group of experts as determined in Article 80 of the ZViS-1.

Article 26 **(Extraordinary evaluation of a higher education institution and study programme)**

(1) The procedure of extraordinary evaluation of a higher education institution or study programme is set forth in Article 85 of the ZViS-1 and is conducted in the same manner as the procedure for the reaccreditation of a higher education institution or the evaluation of a study programme in the context of the procedure of reaccreditation of a higher education institution, with the following exceptions:

a) the procedure shall be initiated by the Agency on its own initiative or based on an initiative received to perform an extraordinary evaluation when it has reason to suspect:

- major deficiencies or non-compliances in the functioning of the higher education institution or in its quality assurance system (extraordinary evaluation of a higher education institution);

- major deficiencies or non-compliances in the organisation, delivery or modification of the study programme and the operation of the quality assurance system relating to the programme (extraordinary evaluation of a study programme);

b) before initiating the procedure, the Agency shall invite the higher education institution to state its position on the statements in the received initiative without revealing the identity of the person submitting the initiative; the higher education institution shall have one month from the receipt of the invitation to state its position;

c) after the expiry of the time limit referred to in the preceding point, the Agency Council shall adopt a decision on the implementation of the extraordinary evaluation, notify the higher education institution of this decision and request that it complete the electronic form for the reaccreditation of the higher education institution or for the evaluation of the study programme;

č) the Agency shall publish a notice on the extraordinary evaluation on its website.

(2) Even if the higher education institution fails to enclose the documentation under point c) of the preceding paragraph, the Agency Council shall appoint a group of experts and continue the procedure.

Article 27 **(Extraordinary evaluation of a group of higher education institutions or study programmes)**

(1) If the Agency Council determines that compliance with a specific quality standard, area of assessment or provision of the Act must be verified at one or more higher education institutions or for one or more study programmes, it may, in exceptional cases, decide to conduct extraordinary evaluation procedures for those higher education institutions or study programmes simultaneously, assessing only compliance with a specific quality standard, area of assessment or provision of the Act.

(2) The procedure of the extraordinary evaluation of a group of higher education institutions or study programmes shall be conducted in the same manner as the procedure of extraordinary evaluation set forth in Article 26 of the Criteria, with the following exceptions:

- the Agency Council shall conduct procedures simultaneously for multiple higher education institutions or study programmes; all participating higher education institutions shall have the status of a party to the proceedings;

- the procedure shall verify only compliance with a specific legal provision, a specific quality standard or an area of assessment specified in the Criteria.

(3) If, during the procedure, a group of experts identifies any major deficiencies or non-compliances with any quality standards or provisions of the Act that are not subject to a concrete assessment, it shall obtain additional clarifications and findings to properly establish the facts and include its findings in the evaluation report.

(4) Following the completion of the procedure, the Agency Council shall adopt a decision as provided for in paragraphs five and six of Article 85 of the ZViS-1.

Article 28

(Changes to a higher education institution)

(1) The procedures of transformation of a higher education institution into another type of institution, as well as merger by acquisition, merger by formation of a new entity and division of a higher education institution and changes in the location of a study programme delivery, shall follow the same procedure as the reaccreditation of a higher education institution in accordance with Article 80 of the ZViS-1.

(2) The procedures for establishing a new university member and for transforming another university member into a faculty, an art academy or a higher vocational college shall follow the same procedure as the initial accreditation of a higher education institution under Article 78 of the ZViS-1. The university must indicate in the application which already accredited study programmes or state-approved study programmes adopted by the university itself shall be delivered at the new member.

(3) The group of experts shall prepare an accreditation report by the areas of assessment and quality standards taking into account Articles 13 to 17 of the Criteria.

(4) Notwithstanding the provisions of paragraphs one or two of this Article, the Agency Council shall conduct the accreditation of a change to a higher education institution without appointing a group of experts or without visiting the higher education institutions in the following cases:

- establishment of a new university member in the already accredited premises of the university where it is evident from the application and enclosures that conditions and quality standards under Article 14 of the Criteria have been met;

- a higher education institution wishes to deliver already accredited study programmes or state-approved study programmes adopted by the university itself at an already accredited branch, and compliance with conditions set forth in Article 24 of the ZViS-1 and the quality standards assessed for a branch under the Criteria is clearly evident from the application and enclosures;

- merger by formation of a new entity of accredited higher education institutions that have the same founder and are not changing the location of the delivery of study programmes;

- merger by acquisition of one accredited higher education institution by another accredited higher education institution when it is evident from the agreement that the accredited state of affairs, apart from the founder structure and management of the acquired higher education institution and other joint services necessary for the operation of the transformed higher education institution, are not changing;

- division of a higher education institution into two or more higher education institutions when it is evident from the documents that the accredited state of affairs, apart from the establishment and management of the newly created higher education institution and other joint services necessary for the operation of the newly created higher education institutions, are not changing.

Article 29

(External evaluation by other agencies)

(1) If an external evaluation of a higher education institution or study programme is conducted by another agency registered with EQAR, the final decision in the external evaluation procedure shall be made by the Agency Council.

(2) A foreign agency referred to in the preceding paragraph must take into account the provisions of the ZViS-1 and the Criteria in its assessment.

(3) The higher education institution shall submit the application to the Agency and, at the same time, notify the Agency that the external evaluation will be conducted by another agency registered with EQAR. If a higher education institution fails to submit the final report of the group of experts appointed by a foreign agency to the Agency within one year of the application's submission, the Agency Council shall appoint a group of experts to conduct the external evaluation.

Article 30

(Determination of a sample of study programmes for evaluation and procedure)

(1) Every year the Agency Council shall determine a sample of study programmes and adopt a plan of their evaluation by the Agency. Every year, the sample shall contain at least two per cent of the accredited study programmes delivered by higher education institutions at that time. A state-approved study programme adopted independently by the university shall also be included in the sample two years after the commencement of its delivery. The purpose of these evaluations shall be to advise higher education institutions in the development of self-evaluation and improvement of the quality of study programmes.

(2) In the determination of the sample, the Council may consider various factors or indicators related to the findings from previous procedures. The sample may include study programmes with regard to:

- individual cycles and types;
- individual study, artistic or professional fields or scientific disciplines;
- method and form of delivery;

- self-evaluation procedures;
- other.

(3) Proposals for the inclusion of individual study programmes in the sample may also be submitted by higher education institutions. The Agency shall inform them which factors shall be considered in determining the sample for the following year and set the time limit for submitting proposals. The Agency Council shall consider proposals when higher education institutions take into consideration these factors or when there is enough room in the sample for the proposed study programmes.

(4) When the list of study programmes included in the sample has been established, the Agency shall publish it on its website.

(5) The procedure of evaluation of a sample shall be determined in paragraphs six and seven of Article 88 of the ZViS-1 and shall be the same as that for the evaluation of individual study programmes as part of a higher education institution reaccreditation procedure with a compulsory visit by a group of experts.

(6) The evaluation of a sample of study programmes may also be conducted on the basis of individual compulsory components of the study programmes or on the basis of individual areas of assessment specified in Article 11 of the Criteria.

(7) Every five years, as part of its evaluation of a sample of study programmes, the Agency shall also evaluate the accredited study programmes of an international federation of universities referred to in Article 20 of the ZViS-1.

V. MAJOR DEFICIENCIES OR NON-COMPLIANCES

Article 31

(Major deficiencies or non-compliances and time limits for their elimination)

(1) Major deficiencies or non-compliances shall be the following:

1. failure to comply with the provisions of the ZViS-1;
2. failure to comply with the quality standards set forth in the Criteria;
3. systemic deficiencies within the framework of one or more quality standards set forth in the Criteria, which have a detrimental effect on the quality of a higher education institution or study programme.

(2) They shall include in particular:

1. Operation of the higher education institution:
 - inadequate development and provision of educational, scientific, professional, research or artistic activities in the fields or disciplines for which the higher education institution is accredited or in which it offers accredited study programmes;
 - inadequate resources for the practical training of students in a work environment (material and human resources) when it is a compulsory part of the study;

- internal organisation of the higher education institution which does not ensure the exercise of the rights and obligations of all stakeholders;
- prevention of the operation or development of an internal quality assurance system, quality culture and the closing of the quality loop;
- the quality assurance system for short-term education and training courses for obtaining microcredentials is not established or lacks quality, effectiveness or transparency;
- the quality assurance system for the design, adoption, updating and discontinuation of state-approved study programmes that the university adopts itself is not appropriate;
- failure to adequately ensure the rights set forth in Article 14 of the ZViS-1.

2. Human resources

- scientific, professional, research, or artistic work of higher education teachers is not connected to the subject areas of the courses in the study programmes of which they are holders;
- failure to achieve minimum research standards for doctoral study programmes;
- unsuitable mentors for doctoral study;
- insufficient staffing in terms of numbers or qualifications;
- failure to ensure the professional development of human resources and the educational development of higher education teachers and faculty assistants.

3. Students:

- failure to consider the diversity and needs of students;
- prevention of student participation in the self-evaluation of a higher education institution and study programmes and their modification.

4. Material conditions:

- inadequate library services;
- delivery of the study in inappropriate premises or with inadequate equipment;
- inadequate conditions or equipment for conducting hybrid and distance study.

5. Internal quality assurance and improvement of the quality of a study programme:

- inadequacy of the evaluation of the study programme and of the related self-evaluation report.

6. Modification and updating of a study programme:

- modification of a study programme is not in accordance with paragraphs eight and ten of Article 41 of the ZViS-1;

- changes to the compulsory components of a study programme that leads to qualifications for a regulated profession without the consent of the competent ministry;
- modifications of a study programme have not been reported to the Agency in a timely manner.

7. Study programme delivery:

- insufficient number of hours for the delivery of a study programme (lectures, tutorials, seminars, practical training);
- inappropriate method of delivering a study programme, whereby students are prevented from attaining certain competences or learning outcomes determined by the study programme;
- failure to involve doctoral students in scientific, professional, research or artistic work in accordance with Article 43 of the ZViS-1;
- inadequate practical training of students.

8. Failure to comply with the conditions for the establishment of a higher education institution set forth in paragraphs one and two of Article 24 of the ZViS-1.

(3) A group of experts may also classify an individual finding in the procedure as partial compliance, which also constitutes a major deficiency or non-compliance under this Article.

(4) If a group of experts determines that a finding in the procedure constitutes partial compliance, the Agency Council must state its position on it. If it determines that a finding by the group of experts classified as partial compliance does not constitute a major deficiency or non-compliance, it shall reclassify it as an opportunity for improvement.

(5) All major deficiencies or non-compliances, save for those listed as non-compliances under point 8 of paragraph two of this Article, shall also be identified in the international federation of universities under Article 20 of the ZViS-1 in connection with the external evaluation and evaluation of a sample of a study programme.

(6) When the Agency Council grants a reaccreditation of a higher education institution for a shorter period or determines partial compliance of the delivery of a study programme and imposes time limits on the institution for the elimination of the identified major deficiencies or non-compliances, the higher education institution shall, within two months of the finality of the decision, make a plan for the elimination of the major deficiencies or non-compliances indicated in the decision. The plan must include measures and related tasks, the persons responsible for the implementation of measures and tasks and detailed time limits for their implementation, whereby the higher education institution shall take into account the time limits imposed in the decision. The higher education institution must promptly notify the Agency about the completion of the tasks from the plan.

VI. MODIFICATIONS OF STUDY PROGRAMMES

Article 32 (Modifications of study programmes)

(1) A higher education institution shall modify its study programmes itself. It shall inform the Agency within 30 days of the confirmation of the changes of compulsory components of study programmes by the competent bodies of the higher education institution by transferring these changes through a web interface to the eNakvis information system or entering them in the electronic form "Form for the modifications of a study programme" (Annex 9, which forms an integral part of the Criteria), and attach in the enclosures a printout of the decision of the senate by which the modifications have been adopted. If the study programme leads to qualifications for a regulated profession, the higher education institution must also submit the approval of the ministry responsible for the profession for which the graduate will obtain a degree.

(2) The Agency shall review the changes on an ongoing basis and determine whether the higher education institution has complied with the statutory provisions and quality standards from the Criteria. If the circumstances indicate that modifications of a study programme entail major deficiencies or non-compliances with the ZViS-1 and the Criteria, the Agency Council shall initiate an extraordinary evaluation procedure for that study programme and, within 30 days of initiating the procedure, notify eVŠ of this. The higher education institution may not publish a call for enrolment in the modified study programme or implement it until the decision in the extraordinary evaluation procedure becomes final. The same applies to state-approved study programmes adopted by the university itself.

Article 33 (Progress report)

(1) In the progress report referred to in Article 94 of the ZViS-1, a higher education institution must report to the Agency Council on the progress made and compliance with the recommendations set forth in the decision or final report issued in the accreditation or evaluation procedure. The progress report may refer to the parts of the self-evaluation report that show the progress made and/or compliance with the recommendations.

(2) The Agency Council shall take note of the progress report and notify the higher education institution of the adequacy of its response to the Agency Council's recommendations.

(3) If the Agency Council finds that a higher education institution has failed to submit the progress report referred to in paragraph one of this Article within the prescribed time limit, it shall notify the higher education institution of this finding.

(4) The progress report or notification from the Agency Council referred to in the preceding paragraph shall be forwarded to the group of experts upon its appointment during the first subsequent accreditation or evaluation procedure for that higher education institution or study programme. This process shall also assess the appropriateness of the planned measures and their actual impact on quality improvement.

VII. TARGETED REVIEW

Article 34 (Targeted review)

(1) A targeted review of a higher education institution shall be a procedure of reaccreditation of a higher education institution in which Quality Standards 3, 6, 10, 16 and

19 from Article 6 of the Criteria, as well as three other Quality Standards from Article 6 of the Criteria selected by the higher education institution shall be assessed in detail.

(2) Notwithstanding the preceding paragraph, Standards 7 and 8, respectively, from Article 6 of the Criteria shall be assessed in detail in a higher education institution that offers short-term education and training courses for obtaining microcredentials or in a university that adopts its own state-approved programmes. A higher education institution may select Standard 7 or 8 from Article 6 of the Criteria as the optional standard referred to in paragraph one of this Article.

(3) The assessment of the internal quality assurance and improvement, modification, updating and delivery of study programmes shall be based on the quality standards for the external evaluation of a study programme determined in Article 11 of the Criteria.

(4) Higher education institutions may opt for a targeted review if they have been reaccredited twice in a row for a full period.

(5) If, during a targeted review of a higher education institution, a group of experts identifies any major deficiencies or non-compliances with quality standards that are not subject to detailed assessment, it must obtain additional clarifications to properly establish the facts and include its findings in the evaluation report.

(6) Following the completion of the targeted review of the higher education institution, the Agency Council shall decide on the reaccreditation of the higher education institution.

(7) Following a targeted review of the higher education institution, the subsequent procedure of reaccreditation of the higher education institution shall be conducted again in accordance with all the quality standards set forth in Article 6 of the Criteria.

VIII. STANDARDS OF EXCELLENCE

Article 35 (Standards of excellence)

Standards of excellence are voluntary standards designed to promote quality that exceeds the minimum requirements for accreditation and external evaluation. Compliance with these standards shall not influence the decisions of the Agency Council in accreditation and evaluation procedures, but shall serve as the basis for the awards the Agency grants to higher education institutions or study programmes for outstanding achievements.

Article 36 (Areas of assessment)

(1) The Agency shall assess standards of excellence in the following areas:

- teaching,
- integrity,
- international cooperation,
- active involvement of students,

- links with the business community and society at large,
- implementation of sustainability principles.

(2) A higher education institution must demonstrate exceptional achievements in complying with each standard of excellence by:

- a clearly defined strategy or objectives that go beyond the basic requirements;
- measurable results or effects;
- sustainability of operation and/or transferrable good practices.

(3) The Agency may also grant a higher education institution recognition for exceptional progress made by the higher education institution since the last evaluation period.

(4) The Agency Council may adopt a specific regulation containing more detailed provisions for the assessment of the standards of excellence referred to in this Article.

Article 37 **(Process for determining compliance with standards of excellence)**

(1) Compliance with each standard of excellence shall be assessed by a group of experts as part of the accreditation or external evaluation procedure, based on the evidence attached by the higher education institution to its application and other sources deemed relevant by the group of experts. A higher education institution may attach additional evidence to its application to demonstrate compliance with a specific standard of excellence. Evidence of exceptional achievements must be clear, verifiable and comparable to best practices both domestically and internationally.

(2) Upon receipt of the final evaluation report, the Agency Council shall carry out an additional assessment of compliance with the standards of excellence; on the basis of this assessment, it shall annually select higher education institutions and study programmes demonstrating exceptional achievements in the operation of higher education institutions or in the delivery of one or more study programmes, and award them recognition. The Agency may award recognition for one or more areas of excellence or for exceptional progress. Such awards shall be presented at a special ceremony organised by the Agency.

IX. NOTIFICATION OF STUDY PROGRAMMES OF AN INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF UNIVERSITIES

Article 38 **(Notification of study programmes of Slovenian higher education institutions)**

(1) An international federation of universities referred to in Article 20 of the ZViS-1 may, on the basis of a mutual cooperation agreement concluded with Slovenian higher education institutions, also deliver study programmes of other accredited Slovenian higher education institutions.

(2) The international federation of universities referred to in Article 20 of the ZViS-1 shall notify the Agency of the delivery of a study programme referred to in the preceding paragraph. Notification shall be permitted if it involves the delivery of a state-approved study programme of a Slovenian higher education institution that holds a valid accreditation, and if the study programme delivery plan demonstrates that the appropriate conditions for delivering the notified study programme are met (adequate human resources, appropriate evidence regarding the delivery of practical training, ensuring comparable quality in the delivery of the study programme to achieve the competencies envisaged by the study programme).

(3) To notify a study programme referred to in paragraph one of this Article, an international federation of universities as defined in Article 20 of the ZViS-1 shall complete the electronic form "Form for the Notification of a Slovenian Study Programme by an International Federation of Universities" (Annex 7, which forms an integral part of the Criteria). An application for the notification of a study programme must be accompanied by a study programme delivery plan and a resolution of the senate of the Slovenian higher education institution, indicating that the institution consents to the notification of the accredited study programme.

(4) The Agency Council shall decide on the notification by issuing a decision.

(5) The Agency shall enter the study programmes referred to in this Article into the public register of notified study programmes.

X. STATE-APPROVED STUDY PROGRAMMES

Article 39 (State-approved study programmes)

A university reaccredited twice in a row for a full period shall notify the Agency of the adoption of a state-approved study programme within 30 days of its adoption by entering the information on the study programme into the electronic form "Form for a State-Approved Study Programme" (Annex 8, which forms an integral part of the Criteria) and attach the enclosures specified in points 1 and 2 of point C, "Accreditation of a Study Programme."

XI. TRANSITIONAL AND FINAL PROVISIONS

Article 40 (End of validity)

From the date of entry into force of the Criteria, the Criteria for the Accreditation and External Evaluation of Higher Education Institutions and Study Programmes (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia [Uradni list RS], Nos 42/17, 14/19, 3/20, 78/20, 82/20 – corr., 44/21, 23/23) shall cease to apply; however, in accordance with paragraph three of Article 192 of the ZViS-1, they shall apply to the completion of procedures that were initiated after the ZViS-1 entered into force and before the adoption of the Criteria.

Article 41
(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.

No 0072-6/2010/88
Ljubljana, 29 January 2026

Dr Boris Dular
president of the Council
of the Slovenian Quality Assurance Agency

for Higher Education

Annexes:

- Annex 1: [Form for the initial accreditation of an independent higher education institution](#)
- Annex 2: [Form for the reaccreditation of a higher education institution](#)
- Annex 3: [Form for the accreditation of a study programme](#)
- Annex 4: [Form for the evaluation of a study programme](#)
- Annex 5: [Form for reporting changes to a higher education institution in accordance with paragraph two of Article 89 of the ZViS-1](#)
- Annex 6: [Form for the initial accreditation of a university](#)
- Annex 7: [Form for the notification of a Slovenian study programme by an international federation of universities](#)
- Annex 8: [Form for a state-approved study programme](#)
- Annex 9: [Form for the modifications of a study programme](#)