ORDER
OF THE RECTOR
OF VILNIUS UNIVERSITY

ON THE APPROVAL OF THE VILNIUS UNIVERSITY PLAN OF MEASURES TO IMPROVE THE ACTIVITIES AND IMPLEMENT THE RECOMMENDATIONS PROVIDED DURING THE EXTERNAL EVALUATION

In accordance with Article 43(1)(42) of the Statute of Vilnius University and Items 28 and 29(1) of the Description of the Procedure for the External Evaluation and Accreditation of Higher Education Institutions and Branches of Foreign Higher Education Institutions, Evaluation Areas and Indicators, approved by Order of the Minister of Education, Science and Sport of the Republic of Lithuania No. V-1529 of 19 December 2019 "On the Approval of the Description of the Procedure for the External Evaluation and Accreditation of Higher Education Institutions and Branches of Foreign Higher Education Institutions, Evaluation Areas and Indicators":

1. I hereby approve the accompanying Vilnius University Plan of Measures to Improve the Activities and Implement the Recommendations Provided During the External Evaluation (hereinafter the 'Plan of Measures').
2. I hereby assign:
2.1. The responsible units indicated in the Plan of Measures – to implement the activities established in the Plan of Measures within the set terms.
2.2. The Strategic Planning Division of the Central Administration of Vilnius University – to inform the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education of the approved Plan of Measures and publish it on the website of Vilnius University.

APPROVED
by Order No. _____ of _____ 20__
of the Rector of Vilnius University

THE VILNIUS UNIVERSITY PLAN OF MEASURES TO IMPROVE THE ACTIVITIES AND IMPLEMENT THE RECOMMENDATIONS PROVIDED DURING THE EXTERNAL EVALUATION

MANAGEMENT AREA				
1. Recommendation. *To enhance the strategic steering capacity, agility and responsiveness to external needs, the Panel recommends that the University increase its willingness to set institutional priorities, create critical mass, and increase resources at the central institutional level to enable larger efforts. More cross-faculty priorities with supporting resources and incentives to collaborate across faculties in larger clusters are needed to address national and global challenges, create international visibility and competitiveness, and to enable VU to play a leading role in the development of the Lithuanian state, economy and society.*				
Planned actions, measures for improvement	**Intended outcomes**	**Responsible**	**Terms**	**Notes**
1.1. Strengthening the University's strategic planning process, paying particular attention to the procedures for the monitoring of needs, trends, and data analysis and strategic cascading to units and divisions.	Systematic, consistent, and periodical performance of the analysis of internal and external needs, trends, and data. Coordinated, approved, and implemented procedures for monitoring the preparation and approval of the annual activity plans of the University units and divisions and the implementation of the University Strategic Plan.	Rectorate, Strategic Planning Division	Progress assessment in 2025, implementation by 2029	
1.2. Setting institutional and interdisciplinary/cross-faculty priorities.	Institutional and interdisciplinary/cross-faculty priorities set.	Rectorate, Strategic Planning Division, University community	2025–2026	Implemented while preparing a new University Strategic Plan.
2. Recommendation. *The Panel recommends clearer selection and presentation of a small set of strategic performance data that are the key in strategic development to be always at hand for decision-making bodies. The challenge of identifying strengths and weaknesses that require prompt strategic attention by institutional decision-makers is still unsolved and should be given prioritised attention.*				
Planned actions, measures for improvement	**Intended outcomes**	**Responsible**	**Terms**	**Notes**

2.1. Setting up a procedure for response to the evaluation report of the University's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats.	Coordinated, approved, and enabled procedure for response to the evaluation report of the University's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats.	Rectorate, Strategic Planning Division	2023–2025	
2.2. Strengthening the University's strategic planning process, paying particular attention to the procedures for setting and measuring strategic indicators.	Coordinated, approved, and enabled procedure for setting and measuring strategic performance indicators of the University. Prepared methodology for developing indicators.	Strategic Planning Division	2023–2025	

3. Recommendation. *The Panel suggests considering the appointment of a Chief Information Officer, or the establishment of an Institutional Research Office that would gather, analyse and present core information on strategic development and other key aspects of institutional development. Its key functions might include providing analyses and reports to support an evidence-based approach to organisational planning, decision-making, and quality enhancement.*

Planned actions, measures for improvement	Intended outcomes	Responsible	Terms	Notes
3.1. Establishing a Chief Information Officer position/an internal data analysis centre at the University.	An established Chief Information Officer position/an internal data analysis centre at the University. Coordinated, approved, and enabled processes of institutional development aspects' analysis.	Rectorate	2023–2024	

4. Recommendation. *To make the annual development interviews contribute maximally to achieving strategic aims, the Panel commends the VU's plan to conduct these interviews at all levels of the organisation and with all individual employees. The Panel also recommends that prioritised strategic attention is given to leadership development and staff competence training to enable all responsible persons to conduct such interviews effectively and sensitively.*

Planned actions, measures for improvement	Intended outcomes	Responsible	Terms	Notes
4.1. Developing competence of the management in regards to conducting annual development interviews (training, seminars, etc. for the management).	Annual development interviews conducted effectively and sensitively, forming the culture of employees contributing maximally to achieving the strategic aims of the University.	Human Resources Division, Pro-Rector for Organisation Development and Community Affairs	2023–2029	Strategic Planning Division may also contribute to the implementation of the measure (in line with the competencies of the Division). Established and enabled training system for employees (the management included), comprised list of training topics and schedule/agenda for employees (the management included), established recommended training

				topics, etc., see Measure 8(1), pg. 5.

5. Recommendation. *With respect to website development, the Panel recommends making all key documents and performance indicators more easily accessible for institutional members and external partners. It also recommends enhancing the webpage accessibility for people with physical or mental disabilities.*

9. Recommendation. *The Panel recommends that quality assurance documentation – including quality goals and the description of the quality assurance system – is made publicly available to anyone on the VU website in Lithuanian and English.*

Planned actions, measures for improvement	Intended outcomes	Responsible	Terms	Notes
5.1. and 9.1. Updating the University's website (in Lithuanian and English).	Key documents and performance indicators of the University accessible to the community members and external partners. The University's website adapted to visitors with special needs. Quality assurance system's documents published on the University's website in Lithuanian and English.	Communication and Marketing Division, Community Development Division, Information Technology Service Center, quality specialist/expert of the Strategic Planning Division, Pro-Rector for Organisation Development and Community Affairs	2024–2029	

QUALITY ASSURANCE AREA

6. Recommendation. *The Panel recommends that VU establishes a comprehensive quality assurance policy and system that contains the quality assurance organisational structure – with the description of the participants' exact roles and tasks.*

7. Recommendation. *The Panel also recommends that the quality assurance policy and system take full account of current practices, which reflect existing roots of the quality culture.*

Planned actions, measures for improvement	Intended outcomes	Responsible	Terms	Notes
6.1. – 7.1. Establishing a unified University Quality Assurance System.	Established position of a quality management specialist/expert at the University.	Rectorate	2023	
	Current quality culture at the University evaluated. Examples of process management and quality assurance good practice established and to be integrated into the unified University Quality Assurance System under development.	Quality specialist/expert of the Strategic Planning Division	2024	
	University's quality policy document and a set of quality documents – quality guide/process book – prepared, coordinated with the community, and approved.	Quality specialist/expert of the Strategic Planning Division, Rectorate	2024–2026	

8. Recommendation. *The Panel recommends intensifying work on "institutional standards for staff development". This recommendation has been made already in the External Evaluation Report of 2013, but university-wide standards are not yet in place, though particularly important for institutional development.*

Planned actions, measures for improvement	Intended outcomes	Responsible	Terms	Notes
8.1. Establishing a training system for employees (the management included) and setting the University staff development standards.	Established and enabled training system for employees (the management included) (comprised list of training topics and schedule/agenda for employees (the management included), established recommended training topics, etc.). The document of the University staff development standards prepared and approved.	Human Resources Division, Educational Competence Centre (in regards to lecturers), Research and Innovation Department (in regards to researchers and scientists), Pro-Rector for Organisation Development and Community Affairs	2024–2025	
8.2. Creating a system of allowances for staff development training.	A system of allowances for staff development training created.	Human Resources Division, Educational Competence Centre (in regards to lecturers), Research and Innovation Department (in regards to researchers and scientists), Pro-Rector for Organisation Development and Community Affairs	2025–2026	

9. Recommendation. *The Panel recommends that quality assurance documentation – including quality goals and the description of the quality assurance system – is made publicly available to anyone on the VU website in Lithuanian and English.*

See Measures 5.1. and 9.1., pg. 4.

10. Recommendation. *The Panel recommends giving more personalised and effective support to foreign students in order to facilitate their integration into the VU community.*

Planned actions, measures for improvement	Intended outcomes	Responsible	Terms	Notes
10.1. Updating the information regarding international students' admission on the University's website in English.	Updated information on the University's website in English regarding international students' admission process, study programmes, and study environment.	Communication and Marketing Division, Student Services and Career Division	2025	
10.2. Developing a plan for the measures for integrating foreign students into the University community.	A plan for the integration measures for foreign students developed.	International Relations Division, Community Development Division, Studies Divisions of the core academic units	2023–2024	Reviewed annually

11. Recommendation. *The Panel recommends raising awareness among students about the concrete way of appeal processes, and organising staff training to raise awareness on non-discrimination practices and the capacity to notice critical situations.*

Planned actions, measures for improvement	Intended outcomes	Responsible	Terms	Notes
11.1. Forming a policy on the prevention of discrimination and violence at the University.	The policy on the prevention of discrimination and violence and the procedure for appeals regarding its violation prepared and approved.	Pro-Rector for Organisation Development and Community Affairs, Community Development Division, Human Resources Division	2023	
11.2. Preparing descriptions of appeal handling procedures that are clear and easily accessible to users.	Visual, clear, and easily accessible to users information on appeal handling procedures.	Pro-Rector for Organisation Development and Community Affairs, Community Development Division, Human Resources Division	2024	Reviewed annually
11.3. Disseminating the policy on the prevention of discrimination and violence amongst the University community.	Training sessions on the topics of emotional health and prevention of discrimination and violence developed and implemented (student and employee training carried out).	Pro-Rector for Organisation Development and Community Affairs, Community Development Division, Human Resources Division	2023–2024	Reviewed annually

STUDIES AND RESEARCH AREA

12. Recommendation. *The Panel recommends promptly establishing a robust method for assessing student and graduate competences since this strategic aim responds directly to the national skill demand and stakeholders' needs. Special attention should be put on generic competences and transferable skills.*

Planned actions, measures for improvement	Intended outcomes	Responsible	Terms	Notes
12.1. Creating a methodology for assessing the general competencies of the University graduates.	Created, approved, and tested methodology for assessing the general competencies of the University graduates.	Pro-Rector for Studies, Study Quality and Development Division	2024–2026	

13. Recommendation. *The Panel recommends increasing flexibility (including inter- and multi-disciplinarity) of study programmes, expanding the individual study plan approach, and to consider part-time study options and blended learning between the workplace and academia.*

Planned actions, measures for improvement	Intended outcomes	Responsible	Terms	Notes
13.1. Consolidating opportunities for the implementation of individualised studies.	Procedure for organising individualised studies at the University prepared and approved.	Study Administration Division	2023	

Planned actions, measures for improvement	Intended outcomes	Responsible	Terms	Notes
13.2. Preparing a concept of interdisciplinary studies of the University.	The concept of interdisciplinary studies of the University prepared and approved.	Study Quality and Development Division	2023	A working group has already been working on it since November 2022
13.3. Developing interdisciplinary course units and study programmes.	No less than eight new interdisciplinary course units (modules) developed.	Pro-Rector for Studies, Study Quality and Development Division	2023–2025	Planned for every year

14. Recommendation. *In order to vitalise epistemic communities, to offer joint services to PhD students and make second and third cycle studies and research more efficient, the Panel recommends extending the model of doctoral schools with greater speed to other units of the VU, in particular to those which have been evaluated by MOSTA (currently STRATA, translator's note) as internationally most competitive. The ARQUS alliance should be fully used for this purpose.*

Planned actions, measures for improvement	Intended outcomes	Responsible	Terms	Notes
14.1. Creating an institutional network of doctoral schools.	Institution's doctoral studies implemented at doctoral schools.	Pro-Rector for Research, Doctoral and Postdoctoral Studies Division	2026	

15. Recommendation. *The Panel recommends offering international master and doctoral programmes in all areas which maintain a high international standard in research based on comparative research evaluation.*

Planned actions, measures for improvement	Intended outcomes	Responsible	Terms	Notes
15.1. Developing international study programmes, with special attention paid to areas which demonstrate the international standard in research based on comparative research evaluation.	Six international study programmes developed or updated.	Pro-Rector for Studies, Study Quality and Development Division, core academic units	2024–2029	

16. Recommendation. *To allow for integrated communities and international classroom experiences, the Panel recommends to expand the number of joint modules of English-language and Lithuanian study programmes and to merge these programmes as much as possible.*

Planned actions, measures for improvement	Intended outcomes	Responsible	Terms	Notes
16.1. Performing an internal audit of study programmes implementing studies in parallel flows (in Lithuanian and English).	Prepared recommendations for core academic units regarding the potential merging of the flows to international classrooms.	Study Quality and Development Division	2023	

17. Recommendation. *To address the uneven research performance across CAU, the Panel recommends not only helping weaker units develop initiatives, but also strengthening those which have already developed their potential – as a model and incentive for others.*

Planned actions, measures for improvement	Intended outcomes	Responsible	Terms	Notes

| 17.1. Developing research and innovation initiatives, in order to promote interdisciplinary cooperation by including the leading and other core academic units. | Development of internal competitions and promotion initiatives to expand cooperation between core academic units. | Pro-Rector for Research, Research and Innovation Department | 2023–2026 | |

18. Recommendation. *In order to achieve the ambitious internationalisation goals that the VU has set itself, the Panel recommends establishing stricter rules for staff language proficiency together with relevant training opportunities, such as language courses, international mobility, and intercultural social networks among VU academic staff. English-language proficiency among all academic staff should be developed and certified according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR).*

Planned actions, measures for improvement	Intended outcomes	Responsible	Terms	Notes
18.1. Following the approved Language Policy Guidelines, preparing an English language teaching and learning plan for lecturers.	No less than two English-learning groups of lecturers per year (in the spring and autumn semesters).	Heads of core academic units, head of the Faculty of Philology, Pro-Rector for Studies	2023–2025	Implemented in accordance with the Implementation Plan of the University's Language Policy Guidelines, approved by Order of the Rector of Vilnius University No. R-54 of 9 February 2023.

19. Recommendation. *The Panel recommends with utmost urgency to convey among all VU members the importance of international exposure for self-perception, civic and global understanding, intercultural sensitivity, leadership, and competitiveness. Students and staff should be helped by mentors and leadership, to understand the value of leaving their comfort zones and familiar contexts, to disrupt the sense of self-understood attitudes, to enhance their creativity, ability to communicate and innovate. The outgoing mobility of students and staff should be promoted through additional scholarships, quality counselling and recently established VU Foundation. The systematic assurance of mobility windows and of recognition of study credits obtained abroad must be achieved within the current strategic period.*

Planned actions, measures for improvement	Intended outcomes	Responsible	Terms	Notes
19.1. Introducing mobility windows in the study programmes implemented at the University.	No less than 10 study programmes updated by introducing mobility windows.	Pro-Rector for Studies, Study Quality and Development Division	2023–2026	
19.2. Creating a mobility package for employees.	A mobility package for employees created and approved.	International Relations Division, Human Resources Division, Pro-Rector for Organisation Development and Community Affairs	2025–2026	Part of the system of allowances for staff development training (see Measure 8.2.).

20. Recommendation. *The Panel recommends the Rectorate, the Council, the Senate, and all other decision-makers, to exert influence on national government and agencies to provide additional funds for recruiting international staff in competition with other European research universities. Reception of visiting professors at the University has been promoted via special programmes, but is still at a very low level due to non-competitive salaries.*

Planned actions, measures for improvement	Intended outcomes	Responsible	Terms	Notes
20.1. Preparing a proposal to the Government of the Republic of Lithuania regarding the application of special measures in order to attract international staff members to the University.	A proposal on the application of special measures in order to attract international staff members to the University prepared and submitted to the Government of the Republic of Lithuania.	Rector, Chancellor, Council	Until 2028	

AREA OF IMPACT ON REGIONAL AND NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

21. Recommendation. *The Panel recommends establishing a unit that would gather and analyse information on regional and national needs to support strategic development in this regard. It is advisable to make a complete inventory in what areas the University is, or could be the strongest partner for national or regional development and to nominate CAUs to take responsibility for particular areas.*

Planned actions, measures for improvement	Intended outcomes	Responsible	Terms	Notes
21.1. Performing analysis to reveal the areas where the University is, or could be, the strongest national or regional development partner.	Identified areas where the University is, or could be, the strongest national or regional development partner. Core academic units encouraged to take into account the identified areas and develop cooperation.	Partnership Development Division, Research and Innovation Department	2023–2025	

22. Recommendation. *The Panel recommends establishing a systematic process for the evaluation of LLL needs that would allow VU proactively shape the national debate on the skills development agenda, and become a key provider of continuous professional development in the Baltic region.*

Planned actions, measures for improvement	Intended outcomes	Responsible	Terms	Notes
22.1. Shaping and developing the University's lifelong learning policy.	Lifelong Learning Center established at the University. The Center's concept of operation prepared and approved.	Pro-Rector for Studies, Business School, other core academic units	2023	
22.2. Preparing and approving a plan for skill development through lifelong learning activities.	A plan for skill development through lifelong learning activities prepared and approved.	Pro-Rector for Studies, Business School, other core academic units	2024–2025	The plan corresponds to the OECD Skills Strategy Lithuania

23. Recommendation. *The Panel recommends strengthening partnership in the areas which are crucial for Industry 4.0 and where VU is particularly strong, such as fin-tech, laser and chip technologies, sustainable environment, smart cities etc.*

Planned actions, measures for improvement	Intended outcomes	Responsible	Terms	Notes

| 23.1. Strengthening partnership in the areas which are crucial for Industry 4.0.

23.2. Developing partnerships and initiatives in areas connected to Industry 4.0 (activities of the European Digital Innovation Hub "EDIH Vilnius"; EUROC II, activities of ELI ERIC and the European Space Agency Business Incubator). | Identification of areas crucial for Industry 4.0 and their inclusion in the plan of the Partnership Development Division. Increased number of business orders and joint activities with partners. | Pro-Rector for Partnerships, Pro-Rector for Research, Research and Innovation Department, Partnership Development Division | 2023–2024 | |

24. Recommendation. *The Panel recommends putting more attention on the assessment of external factors that have profound impact on Lithuania's state, society and economy. This assessment must be both regular and agile in order to provide knowledge-based recommendations for long-term and short-term challenges.*

Planned actions, measures for improvement	Intended outcomes	Responsible	Terms	Notes
24.1. Strengthening and developing the University's connections/influence in order to increase the involvement and engagement of the University's researchers and experts when preparing strategic documents of national significance or implementing projects of national significance (e.g. the participation of the University's experts in the development of the State Progress Strategy 'Lithuania 2050').	Participation of VU experts in the development of the State Progress Strategy 'Lithuania 2050'. Identified areas in the 2050 Strategy where the University could be influential.	Rectorate	2023–2027	

25. Recommendation. *In order to raise awareness of the University's reputation at national and international levels, the Panel recommends more actively disseminating the achievements of the VU students, researchers, and alumni to the broad public.*

Planned actions, measures for improvement	Intended outcomes	Responsible	Terms	Notes
25.1. Introducing a process for assessing the dissemination of research communication at the University.	An assessment of the national and international exposure of the University's research activities carried out.	Communication and Marketing Division, Research and Innovation Department, Pro-Rector for Research	2023–2024	Implemented periodically
25.2. Preparing and approving a national and international plan for the dissemination of the University's research.	A national and international plan on the dissemination of the University's research prepared and approved.	Communication and Marketing Division, Research and Innovation Department	2024–2025	