

APPROVED

by Resolution No. SPN-63 of 19 November 2019
of the Senate of Vilnius University

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROCEDURE FOR THE RECOGNITION OF COMPETENCIES ACQUIRED BY VILNIUS UNIVERSITY STUDENTS THROUGH NON-FORMAL AND SELF-EDUCATION AND THE CREDITING OF COURSE UNITS (MODULES)

CHAPTER I GENERAL PROVISIONS

1. The Description of the Procedure for the Recognition of Competencies Acquired by Vilnius University Students Through Non-Formal and Self-Education and the Crediting of Course Units (Modules) (hereinafter the ‘Description’) establishes the procedure for the recognition of competencies acquired by Vilnius University (hereinafter the ‘University’) students through non-formal and/or self-education (hereinafter the ‘recognition of competencies’) and the crediting of corresponding course units (modules) based on this recognition (hereinafter the ‘crediting of course units (modules)').

2. The Description has been prepared in accordance with the Republic of Lithuania Law on Higher Education and Research, the Republic of Lithuania Law on Nonformal Adult Education, the Republic of Lithuania Law on Education, and the General Principles for the Assessment and Recognition of the Competencies Concerning Higher Education Acquired Through Non-Formal or Self-Education, approved by Order of the Minister of Education, Science and Sport of the Republic of Lithuania No. V-289 of 24 April 2017 “On the Approval of the General Principles for the Assessment and Recognition of the Competencies Concerning Higher Education Acquired Through Non-Formal or Self-Education”.

3. The aim of the recognition of competencies and crediting of course units (modules) is to expand students’ opportunities for self-education and address individual learning needs by implementing the principles of lifelong learning.

4. Key terms used in the Description:

4.1. **Candidate** – a student seeking recognition of their competencies acquired through non-formal and/or self-education and crediting of a course unit (module) based on those competencies.

4.2. **Counsellor** – an employee of the Studies Office (hereinafter the ‘Studies Office’) of a core academic unit or *sui generis* academic unit (hereinafter the ‘Unit’) of the University, responsible for performing the functions of an Academic Counsellor. The Counsellor shall consult the candidates on matters relating to the recognition of competencies and the crediting of course units (modules).

4.3. **Portfolio of learning outcomes** – a collection of evidence demonstrating the competencies acquired by a candidate seeking recognition of competencies and crediting of a course unit (module), including the candidate’s curriculum vitae, documents and/or examples of work that enable an objective and comprehensive assessment of the candidate’s acquired competencies and support a decision on crediting the course unit (module).

4.4. **Non-formal education** – education under different programmes for meeting educational needs, qualification development, and acquiring additional competencies, except for formal education programmes.

4.5. **Application** – a candidate’s application for the recognition of competencies acquired through non-formal and/or self-education and for the crediting of course units (modules) based on those competencies, submitted to the Unit via the Vilnius University Study Information System (hereinafter the ‘VUSIS’). The application must specify one or more course units (modules) that the candidate seeks to have credited.

4.6. **Self-education** – independent learning based on a person’s knowledge acquired from various sources and their practical experience.

5. Other terms used in the Description shall be understood as they are defined in the legal acts

referred to in Item 2 of the Description.

6. The recognition of competencies and the crediting of course units (modules) shall follow these principles:

6.1. **Accessibility principle.** Candidates may seek recognition of their competencies acquired through non-formal and/or self-education, regardless of the method of their acquisition.

6.2. **Flexibility principle.** The applicable assessment methodology enables the evaluation of candidates' competencies acquired through non-formal and/or self-education and the determination of whether course units (modules) should be credited based on the recognition of these competencies, regardless of where and how they were acquired; candidates entering the system of higher education from various backgrounds – such as professional practice or institutions providing non-formal education – are given the opportunity to individualise their study pathways.

6.3. **Transparency and objectivity principle.** The recognition of a candidate's competencies and the crediting of course units (modules) shall be carried out in a manner that avoids assessor's subjectivity regarding competencies acquired through non-formal and/or self-education and the procedures for their recognition and crediting of course units (modules) based on this recognition. The candidate shall receive feedback about the decision and may submit an appeal.

6.4. **Comparability principle.** The recognition of competencies and the crediting of course units (modules) shall be carried out in accordance with the study objectives specified in the respective study programme implemented by the University and in the description of the course unit (module).

6.1. **Voluntariness principle.** By voluntarily deciding to participate in the process of recognition of competencies and crediting of course units (modules), candidates assume responsibility for their portfolios of learning outcomes submitted to be assessed and are expected to be motivated to be assessed and prepared to undergo the recognition and crediting procedure.

CHAPTER II RECOGNITION OF COMPETENCIES

7. Candidates may seek the recognition of their competencies acquired through their:

- 7.1. work activities;
- 7.2. unpaid and/or voluntary work or internship;
- 7.3. short-term or long-term work placements, courses, seminars, projects, exhibitions, or other activities;
- 7.4. independent learning;
- 7.5. other activities.

8. The recognition of competencies and the crediting of course units (modules) shall be carried out by the committee (hereinafter the 'Committee') of the study programme that includes in its study plan the course unit (module) for which the candidate seeks crediting. An assessor or a commission of assessors, appointed according to the procedure established by legal acts of the University and this Description, may also participate in the procedure for the assessment of competencies.

9. For the assessment of competencies acquired through non-formal and/or self-education, various assessment methods may be applied, including the analysis of documents and/or examples of work presented in the portfolio of learning outcomes, tests, interviews, case studies, knowledge (mind) maps, essays, reflections (self-analyses), activity monitoring, workplace assessments, or other methods applicable for the assessment of candidates' acquired competencies and proposed by the Committee.

10. No more than 50 per cent of the scope of the study programme may be credited. Final examinations, final theses, and other papers designated in the study programme as separate course units (modules) may not be credited.

11. The Studies Office shall be responsible for organising the procedure for assessing knowledge and skills acquired through non-formal and/or self-education and for recognising competencies.

CHAPTER III

ORGANISATION AND FORMALISATION OF THE RECOGNITION OF COMPETENCIES AND CREDITING OF COURSE UNITS (MODULES)

12. Candidates seeking recognition of competencies and crediting of course units (modules) conducted during the autumn semester must submit applications and portfolios of learning outcomes to the Studies Office no later than 15 May, and for course units (modules) conducted during the spring semester – no later than 15 December. Candidates seeking crediting of course units (modules) conducted during the first semester of studies must submit applications and portfolios of learning outcomes to the Unit within the first two weeks of the semester.

13. While preparing the portfolio of learning outcomes, candidates may consult the Counsellor regarding the assessment procedure, principles, criteria, and other matters related to the preparation of the portfolio of learning outcomes.

14. The Studies Office shall, within five working days of receiving the application, forward the candidate's application and portfolio of learning outcomes to the Committee.

15. The Committee shall, within two weeks of the start of the new semester, and in the case of first-year students, within the first month of the new semester, make one of the following decisions:

15.1. the evidence presented by the candidate allows the recognition that the student has acquired competencies corresponding to the learning outcomes of the course unit (module) at a level not lower than the threshold and the course unit (module) is to be credited;

15.2. the evidence presented by the candidate allows the recognition that the student has not acquired competencies corresponding to the learning outcomes of the course unit (module) at a level not lower than the threshold, and the course unit (module) is not to be credited;

15.3. the evidence presented by the candidate is insufficient for an objective and comprehensive assessment and recognition that the student has acquired competencies corresponding to the learning outcomes of the course unit (module) at a level not lower than the threshold, and additional assessment methods (a test, practical tasks, observation of practical activities, etc.) are to be prescribed. The member of the teaching staff responsible for coordinating a course unit (module), as specified in the course unit (module) description, shall carry out the assessment assigned by the Committee and submit a recommendation regarding the decision to be taken to the Committee within ten working days of the assignment of the assessment.

15.4. the evidence submitted by the candidate cannot be objectively and comprehensively evaluated by the Committee members and therefore it is to be requested that an assessment commission be formed by the deputy head of the Unit responsible for the organisation of studies which shall, within ten working days of its formation, carry out the additional assessment and submit to the Committee a recommendation regarding the recognition of competencies acquired by the candidate through non-formal and self-education and the crediting of a course unit (module).

16. In cases established in 15(3) and 15(4) of the Description, after making an additional assessment, the Committee shall, no later than within ten working days from receiving a recommendation, make a final decision on the recognition of the candidate's competencies and the crediting of a course unit (module).

17. The candidate shall be informed via VUSIS of the time and place of the Committee's meeting and shall have the right to attend the Committee's meeting, present their portfolio of learning outcomes to the Committee members, and respond to the questions of the Committee members.

18. The Committee's decision regarding the recognition of the candidate's competencies and the crediting of a course unit (module) shall be recorded in the minutes of the meeting, which shall be forwarded to the Studies Office for formalisation.

19. Once the Committee has decided to recognise the candidate's acquired competencies and credit the course unit (module), the student's learning outcomes shall be attributed to the appropriate level of learning outcomes specified in the Temporary Description of the Procedure for the Rotation and Ranking of Vilnius University Students Based on Their Learning Outcomes, and the credited course unit (module) shall be evaluated as follows:

19.1. 10 – if the student's learning outcomes are attributed to an excellent level of learning

outcomes;

19.2. 7 – if the student's learning outcomes are attributed to a typical level of learning outcomes;

19.3. 5 – if the student's learning outcomes are attributed to a threshold level of learning outcomes.

20. In cases where the initial parts of a continuous course unit (module) may be assessed on a pass/fail basis in accordance with the Study Regulations of Vilnius University and the procedure established in other University legal acts, those parts of the course unit (module) shall be credited with the evaluation of 'pass'.

21. The Studies Office shall, within five working days of receiving the minutes of the Committee's decision, inform the candidate of the Committee's decision and arrange for the formalisation of the course unit (module) evaluation in the VUSIS – under the recognition of competencies acquired by the student through non-formal and self-education and crediting of course units (modules) section.

22. A candidate who objects to the Committee's evaluation may appeal to the Unit's Dispute Resolution Commission in accordance with the Regulations of the Dispute Resolution Commission of the Unit.

23. Candidates' applications, portfolios of learning outcomes, and recognition of competencies acquired by the student through non-formal and self-education and crediting of course units (modules) cards shall be stored in accordance with the procedure established by the University's legal acts.
