MYKOLAS ROMERIS UNIVERSITY SENATE

DECISION
ON THE APPROVAL OF THE PROVISIONS OF STUDIES AND RESEARCH QUALITY POLICY AND INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM OF MYKOLAS ROMERIS UNIVERSITY

In accordance with paragraph 33.3 of the Statute of Mykolas Romeris University, the Senate of Mykolas Romeris University on 27 February 2023 decided:

1. To approve the Provisions of the Studies and Research Quality Policy and Internal Quality Assurance System of Mykolas Romeris University (attached).

2. To declare null and void:

2.1. Resolution No. 1SN- 69 of 28 June 2013 of the Senate of Mykolas Romeris University "On the Approval of the Provisions of the Internal Quality Assurance System for Sudies of Mykolas Romeris University";

2.2. Resolution No. 1SN- 15 of 3 December 2013 of the Senate of Mykolas Romeris University "On the Approval of the Provisions of the Policy for Studies and Research Quality of Mykolas Romeris University".

3. This decision shall take effect from the date of its registration.

I announce this decision adopted by the Senate of Mykolas Romeris University.

RECTOR OF THE UNIVERSITY   *PROF. DR INGA ŽALĖNIENĖ*

I claim that this decision of the Senate of Mykolas Romeris University is authentic.

President of the Senate   prof. dr. Romas Prakapas

PROVISIONS OF THE STUDIES AND RESEARCH QUALITY POLICY AND INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM OF MYKOLAS ROMERIS UNIVERSITY

I.   GENERAL PROVISIONS

1.   The Provisions of the Studies and Research Quality Policy and Internal Quality Assurance System (hereinafter referred to as the Provisions) of Mykolas Romeris University (hereinafter referred to as the University) establish the principles of quality assurance of studies, non-formal adult education and learning, and research, the structure of the quality assurance system, the principles of distribution of responsibilities of academic and administrative personnel, students, listeners, participants of non-formal adult education and learning for the quality of studies and research, quality monitoring and assessment processes and tools.

2.   The Provisions aim to develop a quality culture of studies, non-formal adult education and learning, and research at the University; to enhance an internal quality assurance system for studies and research, and to ensure that studies, non-formal adult education and learning at the University comply with international quality standards applied to these activities. The quality assurance policy is part of the University's strategic management implemented through internal quality assurance processes which ensure the institution-wide involvement.

3.   The Provisions are based on the University Statute and the Strategic Activity Plan and are consistent with the Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania, the laws and by-laws of the Republic of Lithuania, and follow the documents in the field of quality assurance and enhancement of higher education and research.

4.   The terms used in these Provisions are defined in the Statute of the University and other legal acts of the University.

5.   Should there occur any contradictions between these Provisions and the legal acts of the Republic of Lithuania, the legal acts of the Republic of Lithuania shall prevail.

II. GENERAL UNIVERSITY PRINCIPLES OF QUALITY ASSURANCE OF STUDIES, NON-FORMAL ADULT EDUCATION AND LEARNING, AND RESEARCH

6.   General University principles of quality assurance of studies, non-formal adult education and learning, and research correspond to the internal and external studies and research quality assurance principles enshrined in Lithuanian and international education policy documents.

7.   When providing non-formal adult education and learning services, *mutatis mutandis,* the quality principles set for studies are followed.

8.   Internal quality assurance of **studies** and **research** is based on the following principles common to all the above listed activities:

a.   *responsibility* – the University, as a provider of public services in higher education, is responsible for the quality of the provided services and its assurance;

b.   *inclusion* – the entire University community participates in the establishment of quality standards for studies and research, in their assurance processes by their monitoring, assessment and improvement;

c. *transparency* – quality standards for studies and research and its assurance processes are recorded in the legal acts publicly available to the University community;

d. *validity based on data* – quantitative and qualitative data are collected at the University to assess the quality of studies, non-formal adult education and learning, and research;

e. *shared leadership* – responsibility for the quality of studies and research rests on all University community members and all departments;

f. *financial accountability* – the University guarantees accountability for state and private financing;

g. *continuous improvement* – the University has an organizational structure that ensures the proper implementation and improvement of study programmes and research, the processes of studies and research quality assurance are carried out in accordance with the recommendations of external evaluation;

h. *innovativeness* – the University promotes the diversity and innovation in studies, in non-formal adult education and learning content, and in research;

i. *internationality* – the activities of research and studies at the University meet the internationally recognized highest quality standards of research and studies and the priorities of internationalization;

j. *cooperation* – the University implements studies and research through cooperation of different University departments, other Lithuanian and foreign higher education and research institutions, taking into account the needs and interests of social stakeholders;

k. *relevance* – the content of studies and research reflects Lithuanian, European and global challenges, meets the needs of the state and society, and promotes the progress of society.

9. University internal quality assurance of **studies** is based on the following general principles:

a. *student-centered studies* – studies aim to provide each student with the essential competencies for personal development, professional career and social life.

10. University internal quality assurance of **research** is based on the following principles:

a. *freedom of research* – research at the University is carried out on the basis of the principles of freedom of research and professional responsibility.

b. *interdisciplinarity* – research integrates knowledge from different fields and disciplines of knowledge and seeks to develop a holistic approach to the global challenges;

c. *authenticity* – on the basis of research, new knowledge is created, study programmes are updated and new programmes are opened;

d. *integrity* – ethics and transparency of research, intellectual property protection;

e. *open access to research results* – University research results are made available to the general public.

III.   UNIVERSITY STUDIES AND RESEARCH QUALITY POLICY

11. In the attempt to develop studies, non-formal adult education and learning, and research quality culture, to enhance studies and research internal quality assurance system, and to ensure that studies, non-formal adult education and learning at the University meet the international standards of quality applicable to these activities, the *University community*:

a.   responsibly and appropriately accumulates, develops, applies and disseminates internationally innovative knowledge and competencies that meet the expectations and needs of social stakeholders, national and international society;

b.   fosters, individually and as a community, a culture of quality based on the values of cooperation, engagement and trust;

c. in all academic activities follows the provisions of the Mangna Charta Universitatum; of the European Higher Education Quality Assurance; and of international university codes of ethics, which establish academic freedom, the autonomy of universities, academic integrity, continuous learning and development; and of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

12. The *University management*, seeking the quality of studies and research:

a. encourages the University community to strive for higher results of studies and research and to improve competencies;

b. adequately and rationally allocates responsibilities, ensures the transparency of the higher education and research processes, the adequacy and sufficiency of resources;

c. provides opportunities for students of all study cycles to participate in the process of studies and research quality assurance;

d. ensures the efficient and productive functioning of the quality management system, provides it with prerequisite resources;

e. promotes sustainable development in order to achieve proficiency in all areas of activity and the reduction of negative environmental impacts;

f. taking into account external and internal changes and the needs and interests of social stakeholders, periodically reviews and improves the studies and research quality policy, the internal quality assurance system of studies and quality enhancement goals;

g. ensures that the University studies and research quality policy is understandable to all, implemented at all levels of the institutional activities, and accurately followed.

12. University studies and research quality policy focuses on the following areas:

12.1. strengthening the interaction of research and studies;
12.2. development of student-centered studies;
12.3. compliance of studies to the needs of students, social stakeholders and society;
12.4. inter-, multi- and transdiciplinarity and internationality of research and studies;
12.5. digitalization of studies;
12.6. promotion of entrepreneurship, transferable competences, sustainability;
12.7. social innovations based on research and experimental development;
12.8. consistency and continuity of studies and research.

13. University studies and research quality policy applies to all study and research programmes of all cycles. The University quality assurance policy also covers all areas of the University activities (implementation of projects, provision of services to the public, etc.), which are carried out with other individuals and/or legal bodies. It draws upon adequate and sufficient resources of the University and its partners, responsible cooperation and uniform and proportionate application of quality assurance measures.

14. The internal social stakeholders of the University (teachers, students, listeners, administrative staff) develop and implement this policy through relevant structures, processes and actions, engaging external social stakeholders (graduates, employers, public authorities, non-governmental, business organizations and persons financing student (listeners)'s studies, which do not fall into the above categories) as well.

15. This University studies and research quality policy is the basis for the University studies and research quality enhancement strategy. It reflects the interaction of studies, research and innovation and takes into account both the national and the international contexts in which the University acts.

IV. INTERNAL SYSTEM OF UNIVERSITY STUDIES AND RESEARCH QUALITY ASSURANCE

16. Internal system of university studies and research quality assurance is based on the logical structure of studies and research quality assurance measures and on the corresponding processes and procedures.

17. In accordance with the provisions and guidelines for quality assurance in higher education in Europe, the University distinguishes the following broad internal areas *of studies* and *research* quality assurance:

17.1. ***Ensuring the competence and effectiveness of teachers' and researchers' work.*** The University believes that the role of the lecturer is fundamental in building a premise for quality experience for the student and for provision of the conditions for acquiring the knowledge, abilities and attitudes necessary for their personal, professional and public life. Since there exist a prerequisite for establishing synergy between research and studies, research is an obligatory part of the activities of the academic personnel, but the University recognizes the importance of diversification in an academic career. The University ensures that the academic staff complies with the qualification standards established by national legislation and the University. Lecturers, scientists and researchers at all stages of their careers are constantly improving their competencies in professional (subject, didactic, scientific) activities at the institutional, national and international levels. The University mobilizes sufficient resources and provides the infrastructure for the systematic and continuous organization and execution of competence development activities. In its function, the University is guided by clear, publicly available criteria, and transparent, equivalence-ensuring public processes in recruiting lecturers and researchers, assessing their work which contributes to the importance of teaching and research, and the implementation of the activities of the University's third mission.

17.2. ***Data collection and analysis.*** The University ensures that accurate quantitative and qualitative information is collected, analyzed and used, for the benefit of self-assessment and effectivel management of study fields, as well as study and research areas. The University maintains the study information system, the electronic document management system, the Library information system, the feedback information system, the research data accounting system and other information data storage systems, which allow systematic collection, analysis and further application of the following basic data for improvement of quality of studies and research: personal identification data of students and listeners, their number, competitive scores, study results, progress, mobility, drooping; data of teachers, the results of their pedagogical and research, change of qualifications, accounting of workload, mobility; catalogs of study programmes and subject descriptions; study and scientific infrastructure; study tools and scientific production; the opinion of internal and external social stakeholders about the quality of studies; graduates` career data, etc.

17.3. ***Public information.*** The University constantly publishes the latest, accurate, unbiased and easily accessible quantitative and qualitative information about its activities, practical for current and future students, university scientists and researchers, as well as for other interested parties and the broader public. The University website provides information on the available study programmes and admission requirements, study programmes` outcomes, study conditions and procedures, higher education qualifications awarded, students, graduates and other stakeholders opinion on the quality of studies, results of University work external evaluation, study and research fields, career indicators of graduates and other relevant information to the general public.

18. In accordance with The Standards and *guidelines* for quality assurance in the European Higher Education Area, the following University function areas of internal quality assurance of **studies** are identified:

18.1. ***Design, approval and improvement of study programmes.*** The development and approval of study programmes takes place in accordance with the procedure established by the Senate, which defines the processes, formal procedures and establishes responsibilities. Study programmes are designed and improved in such a way as to reflect the needs of the internal and external social stakeholders of the University, to meet set goals and study outcomes, and to comply with the University's Strategy Policy. Defining the content of the University study programmes, selecting methods of teaching, study and assessment aims to prepare students for their future careers

and work globally (paying due emphasis to students` practice and mobility to provide students with experience), and also contributes to the development of students' citizenship, fostering and developing a free, creative, responsible, critically thinking personality, integrating research and innovations with studies. Qualifications awarded after successful completion of study programmes are clearly presented to the public and linked to the levels of the Lithuanian National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education Qualifications and the European Qualifications Framework for Higher Education. By implementing study programmes and awarding qualifications together with foreign partners, the University contributes to the promotion of transparency and mutual trust in higher education in the European and global higher education area.

18.2. ***Student-centered learning, teaching and assessment of learning outcomes.*** The University ensures the implementation of study programmes that encourage students and listeners to take an active role in the study process, and the assessment of the learning outcomes of students and listeners are in agreement with this approach. Students' and listeners' learning outcomes are assessed using the principles, criteria and procedures set out in the publicly available regulations. The University selects such methods of assessment of learning outcomes that allow student to show the mastered level of the expected learning outcomes, students are provided with individual feedback that motivates them to improve. The final assessment of learning outcomes, which provide grounds for qualification award, is carried out by more than one evaluator. Assessment of the learning outcomes is based on the principles of transparency, objectivity and justice. All members of the University's academic community undertake to comply with the Code of Academic Ethics. In order to ensure transparency, fairness and objectivity in the assessment of learning outcomes, students and listeners are given the right of appeal, a clear procedure for settling disputes regarding possible cases of academic dishonesty. In order to stimulate students' motivation, involvement in the study process and reflection, the teaching, study and assessment methods are regularly revised, elected and updated, so that the study programme learning outcomes would be achieved.

18.3. ***Student admission, progression and certification.*** The University consistently adheres to pre-defined and publicly available rules covering the entire cycle of study process from the admission of students to the issuance of diplomas. The admission processes and criteria for admission to studies are clear and transparent, and the applicants are properly introduced to the University and the University legal acts regulating studies and the study programme. The University has processes and tools for collecting information about the student's study progress, monitoring it and using it to recognize study outcomes. The procedures for the recognition of students` prior learning when admitted to the University, for the recognition of the qualifications acquired by the students studying in partial studies, as well as for non-formal and informal learning, is based on institutional recognition practices in line with the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention, cooperation with other institutions, quality assurance agencies and the national ENIC/NARIC centre for consistency in recognition. The University has established clear procedures for the completion of studies, according to which students are issued with documents providing information about the completed study programme and the acquired qualification, including the achieved study outcomes, the context, level of studies, the content of studies.

18.4. ***Study resources and support for students.*** The University ensures that the physical (library, information and communication technologies, infrastructure, etc.) and people (teachers, managers, etc.) resources were suitable and sufficient for students' and listeners' studies in every field of study. When planning, accumulating and allocating of study resources and providing support for students, requirements of a wide range of students are taken into consideration (e.g. senior, employed, international students, students with disabilities or special needs, etc.). The University ensures that the support provided for students is available and students are informed about the services and assistance available to them. The University ensures that the staff providing support is competent and provides opportunities for the improvement of their competencies.

18.5. ***On-going monitoring and periodic review of study programmes.*** Study programmes are improved in accordance with the procedures established by the Senate, which define the processes, formal procedures and establishes responsibilities. Continuous monitoring,

evaluation and review of study programmes at the University aims at ensuring that the content of study programmes corresponds to the latest research achievements in a particular field of study, that the achieved study outcomes are proposed, methods and forms of teaching and studying, methods of assessing study results, educator and other personnel competencies, material and information resources, academic and social support for students, mobility of the programme teachers and students, cooperation with social partners and employers would not only meet the regulatory requirements for higher education studies, but also respond to the changing needs of society. Study programmes are regularly evaluated and reviewed with the involvement of students and other social stakeholders. The descriptions of the updated study programmes are annually made public.

18.6. ***Cyclical external assurance of study quality.*** The University periodically participates in the procedures of external assurance of studies quality, which assesses the effectiveness of the University internal study quality assurance system; external feedback promotes advancement of studies and opens up new prospects for the development of study activities. The conclusions of the external assessment of the quality of studies and subsequent activities at the University are publicly available. The University constantly takes into account the progress made after the last external evaluation, when preparing for the next external evaluation.

19. The University distinguishes the following areas of internal ***scientific*** management and quality assurance of results:

19.1. ***Development of research, experimental development and innovation (R&D&I) and dissemination of results.*** The University R&D&I activities are planned and carried out according to the long-term scientific programmes, which are planned for a period of five years. The University research programmes are planned in accordance with Lithuanian, regional and international scientific priorities, the importance of research for public education, culture and economy, international scientific cooperation programmes, the needs of external shareholders, taking into account the mission and vision of the University, the strategic activity plan, the study needs and the resources allocated to research. The University research programmes are linked to study programmes in all cycles of study, ensuring the unity of research and studies and fostering a culture of research-based studies. Research is carried out in the University academic departments, laboratories, centers. In order to ensure the accessibility of research to the public, the University conducts a policy of open access to publications, provides outsource research services and expert opinions to the public and external social stakeholders. The University promotes a culture of innovation, complexity of research, cooperation of inter-, multi-, trans- disciplinary groups of researchers.

19.2. ***Involvement of students in research.*** The University promotes and supports the involvement of students in research. Students' research skills at all levels are constantly developed, students are informed about scientific events taking place at the University and other institutions, and are included in the research carried out by scientific groups as much as possible. Students are provided with support and consultations in conducting research, preparing applications for funding for their research, organizing scientific events.

19.3. ***Preparing a new researchers' generation.*** Doctoral studies are developed at the University. They are carried out in accordance with the Doctoral Provisions of the relevant scientific fields in cooperation with other universities. Doctoral studies are organized according to the doctoral programme of a specific field of research, characterized by specific elements, such as study subjects, publications, mobility. The quality of doctoral programmes in specific scientific fields is supervised by doctoral committees. The quality of doctoral studies is regularly assessed taking into account a number of criteria, such as doctoral student publications, doctoral graduation rates, internationality level, qualifications of supervisors, satisfaction of doctoral students with studies. The University strives to ensure that the quality of doctoral studies meets international standards, responds to the latest scientific trends. The University promotes the internationality of doctoral studies, provides an opportunity to obtain a European doctoral certificate, promotes doctoral studies leading to a double degree. Doctoral students are provided with opportunities to go on short-term and long-term internships in foreign higher education institutions, to participate in

international scientific events or interinstitutional training of doctoral students, to carry out international dissemination of research results. The University seeks to involve doctoral students in acting groups of scientists submitting project applications and implementing scientific projects. Doctoral students are given opportunities to gain experience in pedagogical work. The development of doctoral competencies includes research, general academic, didactic, project development and entrepreneurial competencies. The most active doctoral students are financially encouraged for their active scientific, social activities and high achievements in research. University lecturers and researchers are encouraged to pursue a PhD degree.

19.4. ***Funding of research and support for scientists***. The University ensures that the necessary physical and human resources for the development of R&D&I are adequate and sufficient, and the advice and support provided to the University's researchers and scholars is easily accessible. The University promotes the internationalization of research and provides financial support for research aimed at influencing the development of international research. Scientists and researchers publish R&D&D&I results in monographs, scientific studies, scientific journals, prioritizing academic publishing houses recognized by the international academic community, web of research and Scopus databases in scientific journals with a high citation index. The University promotes the attraction of external funding for research under national, regional and international scientific programmes.

19.5. ***Accounting for scientific publications***. Researchers and scientists register all their publications in the Information System of the Lithuanian Academic Electronic Library (eLABa), in the University publications database. All scientific publications of the University researchers and scientists are placed in the University institutional cache and accessible through open access, except for those cases provided for by separate contracts with publishers.

19.6. ***On-going monitoring of research and periodic internal and external evaluation.*** The results of research are monitored and evaluated at the University every year on the basis of the internal legislation of the University. Continuous monitoring, evaluation and review of scientific programmes and their results at the University are aimed at ensuring that the content of scientific programmes corresponds to the latest standards of R&D&I, societal requirements and study programmes needs, and scientific achievements correspond to the University's strategic indicators. Research at the University and external institutions is evaluated in accordance with national legislation, *Frascati* manual approved by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development and other international scientific standards.

IV. ALLOCATION OF RESPONSIBILITIES

20. In accordance with the agreement of the academic community on the introduction and development of quality culture and the principle of subsidiarity, the following distribution of responsibility for the quality of studies and research is provided for:

20.1. *The Senate and the Rectorate are* responsible for the formation of the University policy on the quality of studies and research, the adoption of legal acts implementing it, the implementation of this policy;

20.2. *Academic departments, study field committees and laboratories are* responsible for the quality of study and research programmes and their implementation – the compliance of study programmes with the students` needs and the labour market, the compliance of research programmes with the requirements of the country and society, with the provisions of the University study and research quality policy, with scientific achievements; for the selection of personnel and the initiation of the improvement of their qualifications, supervision of material and information resources, attracting, educating and providing support to students, listeners, including doctoral students, attracting researchers and scientists, organizing and evaluating their activities.

20.3.   *Academic Affairs Centre* is responsible for initiating and preparing the University legislation ensuring the quality of studies, coordinating the study processes, developing, updating and evaluating of study programmes, and the quality of support for the academic community.

20.4.   *Research and Innovation Centre* is responsible for initiating and preparing the University legislation ensuring the quality of research, coordinating the scientific process, the development, updating and scientific evaluation of scientific programmes, the quality of support to the academic community; the coordination of the University project activities; *The Doctoral School of Social Innovations of Research and Innovation Centre* is responsible for the centralized administration of doctoral studies and postdoctoral activities, as well as for the provision of support to young researchers.

20.5.   *Lecturers, researchers and scientists* are responsible for the quality of studies in the subjects taught – achievement of study results, creative and innovative teaching, quality of study materials and compliance with the latest scientific achievements, quality of contact work, compliance with the needs of students and listeners, quality of fundamental and applied research results, dissemination of scientific knowledge, practical application of scientific knowledge in the preparation and improvement of study programmes. They undertake to comply with academic ethics, other requirements of the university community, the quality of the study and scientific process, and to provide feedback on the quality of studies and scientific results. Scientists are responsible for the effective, reliable and transparent use of resources allocated to research.

20.6.   *Students and listeners are* responsible for personal study achievements and the quality of their studies and research. They undertake to comply with academic ethics, other requirements of the University community, the quality of the study and scientific process, and to provide feedback on the quality of studies and scientific results.

V. FINAL PROVISIONS

18. The University internal studies and research quality monitoring is carried out continuously and at all levels.

19. The data of the University internal study and research quality assurance system are used for internal and external assessment of the quality of studies and research, for external and internal accountability.

20. These Provisions are published publicly on the University website.

21. The individual processes of the University studies and quality assurance of research are regulated by other legal acts of the University.