**Criteria for Evaluation of Project Applications**

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| Title of the operational programme | Growth and Employment |
| Title and number of the priority axis  | 8. Education, Skills and Lifelong Learning |
| Title and number of the specific objective (SO)  | 8.2.3. To Ensure Better Governance in Higher Education Institutions |
| Selection type of project applications | Open selection of project applications |
| Responsible Institution | Ministry of Education and Science |
| **1. COMMON CRITERIA** | **Evaluation system** | **Impact of the criterion on decision-making****(R[[1]](#footnote-1); A[[2]](#footnote-2))** |
| **Yes or No** |
| 1.1. | The project applicant meets the requirements of the Cabinet of Ministers Regulations set for project applicants for the implementation of the specific objective (hereinafter MC Regulations on the implementation of the SO)[[3]](#footnote-3). |  | R |
| 1.2. | The project application form completed using a computer. |  | R |
| 1.3. | On the date of project application, the project applicant and project cooperation partner (if applicable) have no tax debts in the Republic of Latvia, including mandatory social security contribution debts exceeding a total of EUR 150. |  | A |
| 1.4. | The project application has been submitted to the Cohesion Policy funds management information system for 2014–2020. |  | A |
| 1.5.  | The project application form has been completed in Latvian in compliance with the requirements of Regulations No. 784 of the Cabinet of Ministers of 16 December 2014 “Procedures by which the institutions involved in the management of European Union Structural Funds and the Cohesion Fund shall ensure preparation of planning documents and implementation of such funds in the 2014–2020 programming period”, the project application contains all the documents required by the project selection regulations, they have been prepared in Latvian or accompanied by a certified translation into Latvian. |  | A |
| 1.6. | The financial data in the project application are indicated in EUR. |  | A |
| 1.7. | Financial calculations in the project application are arithmetically correct and comply with the requirements of the CM regulations on the implementation of the SO and with the requirements of the project application form in Annex 1 to Regulations No. 784 of the Cabinet of Ministers of 16 December 2014 “Procedures by which the institutions involved in the management of European Union Structural Funds and the Cohesion Fund shall ensure preparation of planning documents and implementation of such funds in the 2014–2020 programming period”. |  | A |
| 1.8. | The amount of funding in the project application to be provided by the European Social Fund (ESF) corresponds to the allowable project funding set by the CM regulations on the implementation of the SO. |  | A |
| 1.9. | The ESF aid intensity indicated in the project application does not exceed the maximum ESF aid intensity set by the CM regulations on the implementation of the SO. |  | A |
| 1.10. | The total costs included in the project application, planned eligible activities and cost items correspond to those set by the CM regulations on the implementation of the SO, incl. do not exceed the set per cost item amounts, and: | - | - |
| 1.10.1. are related to project implementation; |  | A |
| 1.10.2. are necessary for the implementation of the project (implementation of the project activities, meeting the needs of the target group, addressing the problem defined); |  | A |
| 1.10.3. ensure the achievement of the project objective and indicators. |  | A |
| 1.11. | The project implementation deadlines correspond to the project implementation period set by the CM regulations on the implementation of the SO. |  | A |
| 1.12. | The project objective corresponds to the objective stated in the CM regulations on the implementation of the SO. |  | A |
| 1.13. | The results to be achieved and monitoring indicators are precisely defined in the project application, they are justified, measurable and foster the achievement of indicators set by the CM regulations on the implementation of the SO. |  | A |
| 1.14. | Project activities planned in the application: |  |  |
| 1.14.1. correspond to those set by the CM regulations on the implementation of the SO and provide for a link to the relevant eligible activities; |  | A |
| 1.14.2. are precisely defined and justified, and address the problems defined by the project; |  | A |
| 1.14.3. are clear and realistic, with precisely defined deadlines and results. |  | A |
| 1.15. | The publicity and information measures planned in the project application comply with the conditions of the General Regulation[[4]](#footnote-4) and Regulations No. 87 of the Cabinet of Ministers of 17 February 2015 “Procedures of ensuring observation of communication and visual identity requirements in 2014–2020 programming period in the implementation of the European Union structural funds and the Cohesion Fund”. |  | A |
| 1.16. | The project application identifies, describes and assesses project risks, evaluates their impact and likelihood, and defines mitigation measures.  |  | A |
| 1.17. | The project cooperation partner (if applicable) indicated in the application meets the requirements of the CM regulations on the implementation of the SO. |  | A |
| 1.18. | The project application defines the project cooperation partners’ activities planned within the project and they complying with the eligible activities (if applicable) under the CM regulations on the implementation of the SO. |  | A |
| **2. SPECIFIC ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA** | **Evaluation system** | **Impact of the criterion on decision-making****(R; A)** |
| **Yes or No** |
| 2.1. | The project application defines the problem to be addressed and justifies the needs of the target group selected. |  | A |
| 2.2. | The project ***Work Programme has been developed in strategic partnership*** with stakeholders involved:2.2.1. scientific institutions involved in supporting the development of masters’ and doctoral research papers of the relevant higher education institution (at least two leading, admitting the largest number of students);2.2.2. the student organisation (student self-governance body, student parliament etc.) of the higher education institution concerned;2.2.3. leading industry associations corresponding to the higher education institution’s profile. |  | R |
| 2.3. | The Work Programme of the project application is accompanied by description of participating institutions and CVs of the staff involved in the project implementation. |  | A |
| 2.4. | The project Work Programme provides for: |  | A |
| 2.4.1. A detailed ***change management and implementation plan for modernisation of the supply of study programmes*** developed within the project:2.4.1.1. which is agreed with the relevant professional industry organisations;2.4.1.2. which is implemented under the management of “change agents”;2.4.1.3. which among other things provides for implementation of student initiatives to improve the content of study programmes;2.4.1.4. which is subject to international peer-review, recommendations of which are taken into account in the improvement of the said plan and practical implementation of the improvements; |
| 2.4.2. The ***governance improvements designed and introduced*** within the project are subject to international **peer-review**, the recommendations of which are taken into account in the development of governance improvement measures and practical implementation of the improvements. |
| 2.4.3. the improvements designed and introduced within the project to ***develop the internal quality management system*** are subject to international **peer-review**, the recommendations of which are taken into account in the development of improvement measures and practical implementation of the improvements. |
| 2.4.4. Implementation of at least the following ***e-solutions*** is planned within the project to improve the efficiency and quality of studies:2.4.4.1. development of a comprehensive governance information system;2.4.4.2. e-sharing solutions with other higher education institutions and scientific institutions;2.4.4.3. digitalisation and e-learning solutions;2.4.4.4. the *e-solutions* introduced within the project are subject to international **peer-review**, the recommendations of which are taken into account in the development of the said improvement measures and practical implementation of the improvements. |
| 2.5. | The project application shows that the higher education institution has created an organisational structure which fulfils the tasks of attracting and supporting foreign students in a transparent and efficient manner, and is capable of operating in a strategic and coordinated way. |  | A |
| 2.6. | The project implementation contributes to the achievement of the results specified by the CM regulations on the implementation of the SO. |  | A |
| 2.7. | The project application describes the project management, implementation and monitoring system and its required resources (number of staff to be involved, their qualifications and responsibilities, and the available material and technical base), and they are adequate for the needs of the project. |  | A |
| **3. QUALITY CRITERIA[[5]](#footnote-5)** | **Evaluation system[[6]](#footnote-6)** | **Maximum score: 24 points.****Minimum score: 14**  |
| **Score**  |
| 3.1. | **Relevance of the project:** | **0–5** *(Evaluation unit – 0.5 points)* | At least **4** points must be scored |
| **3.1.1. Objective:** The project corresponds to the objectives and priorities of Latvian Higher Education Policy and Smart Specialisation Strategy.  |
| **3.1.2. Consistency / internal logic:** 3.1.2.1. Activities planned within the project are based on realistic and proper/justified analysis of the needs;3.1.2.2. Objectives and results to be achieved are clearly defined, realistic and focussed on issues relevant to the project applicant’s institution and target groups;3.1.2.3. Activities planned within the project and their implementation conditions ensure introduction of good and smart governance at higher education institutions according to the best international practice; |
| **3.1.3. Innovation:**The project takes into account of modern methods and techniques and is intended to achieve project-specific innovative results and solutions; |
| **3.1.4. Complementarity:** The eligible activities planned within the project have justified synergies and complementarity with other aid programmes fostering development of education and innovation; |
| 3.2. | **Quality of the project design and implementation:** | **0–5***(Evaluation unit – 0.5 points)* | At least **3.5** points must be scored |
| **3.2.1. Coherence:** The project reflects a coherent and comprehensive set of activities to meet the needs identified and to achieve the planned results; |
| **3.2.2. Structure:**The ***Work Programme*** is clear, understandable, qualitative and covers all stages (preparation, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and dissemination); |
| **3.2.3. Management:** Deadlines, organisation, tasks and responsibilities are clearly defined and realistic. The project envisages adequate resources for each activity to reach the project objectives and planned results in a qualitative way; |
| **3.2.4. Quality and financial control:** Special evaluation arrangements for processes and deliverables ensure that the project will be implemented in high quality, in a timely manner and within the budget.  |
| 3.3. | **Quality of the project implementation team and the cooperation arrangements:** | **0–5***(Evaluation unit – 0.5 points)* | At least **3.5** points must be scored |
| **3.3.1. Implementation capacity:** 3.3.1.1. The project involves mutually complementary cooperation partners (if applicable) with the required specialisation, experience, skills, know-how and management support necessary for successful implementation of the project;3.3.1.2. The project implementation staff (incl. that of the cooperation partner, if applicable) have the appropriate knowledge, skills, experience and management support to successfully implement all the activities planned within the project and reach the set objective;3.3.1.3. An adequate and varied range of non-academic partners has been attracted to project implementation to enable use of their diverse experiences and specialisation (foreign experts, technology experts, industry representatives etc.) for quality achievement of the project objectives and results. |
| **3.3.2. Partnership:** The contribution by cooperation partners (if applicable) is appropriate and complementary. Division of areas of responsibility and tasks demonstrates the commitment and active participation of all organisations involved according to their capabilities and the specific area of know-how. Roles and responsibilities of staff involved in the project implementation are clear, appropriate for quality achievement of the project objectives and results, and affirm the commitment/motivation of all actors involved to participate actively in conformity with their competences and tasks envisaged by the project; |
| **3.3.3. Cooperation arrangements:** The project application envisages clear arrangements and responsibilities for transparent and effective (quality, operative) decision-making, conflict resolution, reporting and communication between the organisations involved. |
| 3.4. | **Project impact and dissemination of the results:** | **0–5***(Evaluation unit – 0.5 points)* | At least **3** points must be scored  |
| **3.4.1. Use:** The project demonstrates how the results (outcomes) of the project activities will be used by partners and other stakeholders and how the project results will be achieved. The activities are envisaged for evaluation (including through international peer-review) of the achievement and exploitation of the direct project results during and after the project lifetime; |
| **3.4.2. Dissemination:** The project envisages a clear and efficient plan for dissemination of the results and includes appropriate measures, tools and channels to ensure efficient dissemination of the results and outputs among stakeholders and non-participating parties, both during and after the project lifetime; |
| **3.4.3. Impact:** The project confirms its social and economic relevance and scope (including the impact on participants and project applicants’ institutions during and after the project lifetime; impact outside the organisations and private entities involved, directly participating in the project at local, regional, national or European level). It envisages appropriate measures to monitor progress and evaluate the expected (short- and long-term) impact. |
| **3.4.4. Open access:** The project describes how the materials and documents prepared will be made freely available and disseminated through open licences, and availability does not contain disproportionate limitations; |
| **3.4.5. Sustainability:** The project includes appropriate measures and resources to ensure the existence of the partnership, project results and outputs also after its lifetime. |
| 3.5. | The project application includes measures planned to align with industry development needs the content of STEM study programmes, including medical and creative industries. | **1** | The criterion gives an additional point |
| 3.6. | The project applicant has concluded an agreement with the Ministry of Education and Science on good practice of attracting foreign students and delivering studies. | **2** | The criterion gives an additional point |
| **4. QUALITY CRITERIA FOR HORIZONTAL PRIORITIES** | **Evaluation system** | **Minimum score**  |
| **Score** |
| 4.1. | Horizontal priority “Equal opportunities” | **0–0.5** | The criterion gives an additional point |
| 4.1.1. The specific activities planned within the project promote compliance with the horizontal principle of “Equal opportunities” (gender equality, disability, age and ethnicity). | 0.5 |
| 4.1.2. No specific activities are planned within the project to promote compliance with the horizontal principle of “Equal opportunities” (gender equality, disability, age and ethnicity). | 0 |
| 4.2. | Horizontal priority “Sustainable development”. | **0–0.5** | The criterion gives an additional point |
| 4.2.1 Training on the application of eco-innovation, green jobs or green public procurement will be carried out within the project; | 0.5 |
| 4.2.2. No training on the application of eco-innovation, green jobs or green public procurement will be carried out within the project | 0 |

Notes: The compliance of the project application with quality criteria is assessed by the set points. Where necessary, the criteria indicate the minimum score for the project application to be approved.

1. In case of discrepancy of the criterion, the cooperation authority shall decide on rejection of the project application; [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. In case of a discrepancy of the criterion, the cooperation authority shall decide on conditional approval of the project application, with consideration of the project selection regulations for the Specific Objective; [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Compliance of the project applicant’s legal status is assessed under the criterion; [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 laying down common provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund, the Cohesion Fund, the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund and laying down general provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund, the Cohesion Fund and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund and repealing Council Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006 [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Weight of the criteria:

Relevance of the project — **45%**;

Quality of the project design and implementation — **20%**;

Quality of the project implementation team and the cooperation arrangements — **15%**;

Project impact and dissemination of the results — **10%;**

The project application includes measures planned to align with industry development needs the content of STEM study programmes, including in medical and creative industries — **3 %**;

The project applicant has concluded an agreement with the Ministry of Education and Science on good practice of attracting foreign students and delivering studies — **3 %**.

Horizontal priority “Equal opportunities” — **2 %**;

Horizontal priority “Sustainable development” — **2 %**. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. For the evaluation of the quality criteria, the expert applies the following assessment approach in accordance with ERASMUS+ project evaluation practice: “**0 points** — The application fails to address the respective criterion or cannot be assessed due to missing or incomplete information (unless a “manifest clerical error has occurred”); **1 point —** Weak: the criterion is not sufficiently addressed, or there are serious deficiencies in the application; **2 points**— Fair: the application broadly addresses the criterion, but there are some significant shortcomings; **3 points**— Good: the application addresses the criterion well, but there is still a number of shortcomings; **4 points** — Very good: the application addresses the criterion very well, but there is still a number of shortcomings; **5 points**— Excellent: the application successfully meets all the relevant aspects of the criterion; if there are shortcomings, they are minor.

Based on the expert evaluation form, the expert justifies the number of points awarded. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)