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## **The Guidelines for the Preparation of the Joint Report by the Experts on the Assessment of a Study Programme**

The guidelines for the preparation of the joint report by the experts (hereinafter - the experts) on the assessment of a study programme (hereinafter – the guidelines) have been developed in accordance with Subparagraph 2.4 of Cabinet Regulation No. 795 of 11 December 2018 “Regulations on Licensing of Study Programmes”.

The purpose of the guidelines is to provide the experts with a structured framework for the preparation of the joint report by the experts for a study programme. Within the process of licensing of a study programme, the experts shall prepare a joint report (hereinafter - the joint report by the experts).

### **The joint report by the experts shall be prepared as follows:**

- in accordance with the sequence set forth in the guidelines, justifying the made statements and providing references and examples;
- in accordance with the literary and grammar rules of the official language, legal and academic terminology; and
- providing recommendations for the elimination of the deficiencies identified (on a short-term basis) and for improving the study programme (on a long-term basis).

Preparing the joint report by the experts on a study programme, the experts shall agree upon the evaluation of the relevant requirements and the criteria. If the opinion of the experts regarding any requirement or criteria differs, it shall be specified below the Chapter VII “Recommendations” of the joint report by the experts. Whilst preparing the joint report by the experts, the experts shall evaluate each requirement and criterion specified in the guidelines.

The experts shall evaluate requirements as follows:

1. Compliance of the study programme with the study field in which it is to be included.
2. Compliance of the study provision, informative provision (including the library), financial provision, and the material and technical provision with the requirements for the implementation of the study programme.
3. Compliance of the content of the study programme to be licensed and the mechanism for the implementation thereof with the aim, objectives, and the intended learning outcomes of the study programme.

4. Compliance of the qualification of the academic staff members, visiting professors, visiting associate professors, visiting docents, visiting lecturers, and visiting assistants with the requirements for the implementation of the study programme and the provisions set out in the respective regulatory enactments.
5. Compliance of the study programme with the provisions set forth in the Law on Higher Education Institutions and other regulatory enactments.
6. Elimination of the non-compliances with the provisions set forth in the regulatory enactments, as identified by the competent authorities and regarding the performance of the higher education institution/ college in the previous year prior to the decision, in line with the deadline set by the mentioned authorities.
7. Compliance of the factual circumstances with the information provided by the higher education institution/ college.

The experts' evaluation on compliance is provided for each requirement according to the following grading: "fully compliant", "partially compliant" or "non-compliant", by taking into account the evaluation given to the relevant criteria.

<b>Evaluation</b>	<b>Explanation of the evaluation</b>
Fully compliant	The criteria relevant to the requirement have been evaluated as "excellent" or "good".
Partially compliant	The criteria relevant to the requirement have been evaluated as "average".
Non-compliant	At least one criterion relevant to the requirement has been evaluated as "poor".

The experts shall evaluate each criterion as follows: "excellent", "good", "average" or "poor". Evaluating each criterion, the experts shall analyse the available information by providing specific examples and references to the information included in the application of the higher education institution/ college<sup>1</sup> and the description of the study programme, as well as to the information obtained during the visit. The experts shall analyse each criterion and make conclusions, by specifying the strengths and weaknesses of the higher education institution/ college in meeting the relevant criterion as to the implementation of the study programme.

<b>Evaluation</b>	<b>Explanation of the evaluation</b>
Excellent	No deficiencies in meeting the set criteria have been identified.
Good	No significant deficiencies in meeting the set criteria have been identified.
Average	Deficiencies have been identified in meeting a criterion, but they can be eliminated by the day on which the Study Quality Commission (hereinafter - the SQC) in its meeting is supposed to review the application on the licensing of the study programme.
Poor	Significant deficiencies have been identified, and these as well as deficiencies that cannot be eliminated by the day on which the SQC in its meeting is supposed to review the application on the licensing of the study programme.

The experts shall prepare the joint report according to the structure specified in these guidelines. The chapters of the joint report by experts, which contain the reference "if applicable", shall be deleted if they are not applicable to the study programme to be evaluated. Additionally, the experts may complement the table on the compliance of the study programme and assess other criteria relevant to the specific features of the study programme to be evaluated.

When providing the justification of the evaluation in Chapter V "Compliance of the Study Programme with the Provisions of Regulatory Enactments" of the joint report by experts, also the information referred to in other parts of the joint report or the information provided by the higher education institution/ college may be specified.

<sup>1</sup> The term "higher education institution/ college" used herein is applicable to all higher education and science institutions mentioned in the Law on Higher Education Institutions which implement academic and professional study programmes, as well as deal with science, research activities, and artistic creation (universities, higher education institutions, academies, institutes, and colleges).

In Chapter VI “Assessment” of the joint report by experts, the experts shall provide a summary and conclusions on the study programme, in which the evaluation of both the study content (Chapters I to IV) and the compliance of the study programme with the provisions of regulatory enactments (Chapter V) shall be taken into consideration.

In Chapter VII “Recommendations” of the joint report by experts, the experts shall provide a justification of the recommendation on the licensing of the study programme (i.e. whether or not it shall be licensed), as well as recommendations for the elimination of the minor deficiencies identified on a short-term basis as well as recommendations for further improvement of the study programme on a long-term basis. The recommendations arise out of the analysis and the conclusions on the strengths and weaknesses of the study programme, as well as the compliance of the study programme with the set requirements.

The experts may recommend to license the study programme if all requirements have been evaluated as “fully compliant”.

The experts may recommend not to license the study programme if at least one requirement has been evaluated as “non-compliant”.

The experts may recommend to license the study programme if a requirement has been evaluated as “partially compliant” and by the day on which the SQC meeting is to take place, the higher education institution/ college has met the conditions/ requirements set by the experts.

The joint report by the experts shall be prepared and submitted electronically.

After the procedure for licensing of a study programme of the higher education institution/ college is completed, the joint report by the experts shall be published in the Agency`s E-platform (<https://eplatforma.aika.lv/>)

### **The Structure of the Joint Report by the Experts**

Information on the experts

Information on the study programme

- I. Compliance of the study programme with the study field
- II. Resources and provision of the study programme
- III. Study content and the mechanism for the implementation of the study programme
- IV. Teaching staff
- V. Compliance of the study programme with the provisions of regulatory enactments
- VI. Assessment
- VII. Recommendations  
The dissenting opinion of an expert (*if applicable*)
- VIII. Summary

# Joint Report by the Experts on the Licensing of a Study Programme

## STUDY PROGRAMME

(Name)

Name of the Higher Education Institution/ College

The experts recommend to license/ not to license the study programme.

Experts:

1. Expert, degree/ professional qualification, name, surname (signature)
2. Expert delegated by the Employers' Confederation of Latvia, name, surname (signature)/ expert delegated by the Sectoral Expert Council, name, surname (signature) (if applicable)
3. Expert delegated by the Student Union of Latvia, name, surname (signature).

Date (dd/mm/yyyy)

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## Information on the Experts

Academic	<i>Name</i>	<i>Surname</i>	<i>Degree/ professional qualification</i>	<i>Workplace</i>
Expert delegated by the Employers' Confederation of Latvia / Expert delegated by the Sectoral Expert Council (if applicable)	<i>Name</i>	<i>Surname</i>	<i>Degree/ professional qualification</i>	<i>Workplace</i>
Expert delegated by the Student Union of Latvia	<i>Name</i>	<i>Surname</i>		

Visit at the higher education institution/ college	<i>Date</i>
The joint report by the experts has been prepared based on the observations made during the visit and the following sources:	<i>Full reference to a document, database, other source and place therein (external regulatory enactments, additional information requested by the experts). If the document is not publicly available, it shall be attached in the annex by indicating a consecutive number for each document.</i>

## Information on the Study Programme

1.	Name of the higher education institution/ college	
2.	Name of the relevant study field of the study programme	
3.	Other study programmes included in the study field	
4.	Name of the study programme (in brackets name of study programme in English)	
4.1.	Name of the sub-programme (if applicable)	
5.	Code of the study programme/sub-programme in accordance with the Latvian Education Classification	
5.1.	Level of Latvian Qualifications framework (LQF)/ European Qualifications framework (EQF)	
6.	Language in which the study programme/sub-programme is implemented	
7.	Amount, duration, type and form of the study programme/sub-programme ( <i>also distance learning, also distance learning, if applicable</i> )	
8.	Admission requirements ( <i>including for each sub-programme, if applicable</i> )	
9.	Place of the implementation of the study programme by specifying whether the study programme is to be implemented by the higher education institution or its branch, or the college or its branch.	
10.	Degree or professional qualification to be acquired, or degree and professional qualification to be acquired (specifying the code in accordance with the Latvian Education Classification)	

# I. Compliance of the Study Programme with the Study Field

**Requirement [1]** The study programme complies with the study field in which it is to be included.

**Criteria:**

1. The development of the study programme and sub-programme (if applicable) is well-founded, and it complies with the strategy of the higher education institution/ college. The aim, objectives, and the intended learning outcomes are attainable, correlated and compliant with the respective LQF/EQF level. External experts, the teaching staff, students, employers, etc. were involved in the development of the study programme.
2. The performance indicators, as well as the dynamics and trends as to the number of students, etc. of the higher education institution/ college have been analysed and taken into account in the process of the development of the study programme.
3. The study programme keeps up with the sectoral trends of the European Union countries and worldwide. The higher education institution/ college has provided a justification of why the study programme is compared with the study programmes of the relevant higher education institutions/ colleges, as well as the main conclusions.
4. The prospects for the development of the study programme have been analysed and justified.
5. Publicly available information (if higher education institution/college makes it public) on study programme under assessment is compliant with the information submitted to licensing and is not misleading.

**Analysis**

*The analysis of the criteria shall include justifications and evidence for the evaluation of each criterion.*

Conclusions by specifying strengths and weaknesses of the described criteria and the compliance with the Requirement [1]

*Strengths and weaknesses of each criterion shall be specified based on the analysis, and a justification of the compliance for the relevant Requirement [1] shall be provided.*

**Evaluation of the Criteria:**

Criterion	Evaluation			
	Excellent	Good	Average	Poor
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				

**Evaluation of the Requirement [1]:**

Requirement	Compliance			Justification
The study programme complies with the study field in which it is to be included.	Fully compliant	Partially compliant	Non-compliant	

## II. Resources and Provision of the Study Programme

**Requirement [2]** The study provision, informative provision (including the library), financial provision, and the material and technical provision comply with the requirements for the implementation of the study programme.

**Criteria:**

1. The study provision, which includes the involved structural unit (department, group of professors, laboratory, institute, etc.) and the required ancillary staff, has been identified, and it complies with the requirements for the implementation of the study programme.
2. The informative and methodological provision, databases, and the literature available in the library comply with the requirements for the implementation of the study programme.
3. The financial provision and the costs of the study programme meet the needs of the study programme and comply with the requirements for the implementation of the study programme. The sources of funding of the study programme have been identified, and the financial resources are sufficient for the implementation of the study programme in order to achieve the learning outcomes.
4. The material and technical provision and its availability for the students and the teaching staff are sufficient as to the specific features and implementation of the study programme.

\* If the study programme is to be implemented in the form of distance learning and/or in a branch (or branches) of the higher education institution/ college, the analysis of the criteria 1 to 4 shall be provided in view of the form of distance learning and/ or the branches.

\*\* If the study programme consists of sub-programmes, provide an assessment on necessary material and technical provision, and financial provision for each sub-programme.

**Analysis**

*The analysis of the criteria shall include justifications and evidence for the evaluation of each criterion.*

Conclusions by specifying strengths and weaknesses of the described criteria and the compliance with the Requirement [2]

*Strengths and weaknesses of each criterion shall be specified based on the analysis, and a justification of the compliance for the relevant Requirement [2] shall be provided.*

**Evaluation of the Criteria:**

Criterion	Evaluation			
	Excellent	Good	Average	Poor
<b>1.</b>				
<b>2.</b>				
<b>3.</b>				
<b>4.</b>				

**Evaluation of the Requirement [2]:**

Requirement	Compliance			Justification
The study provision, informative provision (including the library), financial provision, and the material and technical provision comply with the requirements for the implementation of the study programme.	Fully compliant	Partially compliant	Non-compliant	



### III. Study Content and the Mechanism for the Implementation of the Study Programme

**Requirement [3]** The content of the study programme to be licensed and the mechanism for the implementation thereof comply with the aim, objectives, and the intended learning outcomes of the study programme.

**Criteria:**

1. The study content is relevant and in line with the latest sectoral trends and/or the trends in science, and it complies with the requirements of the respective LQF/EQF level, state standard, profession standard or professional qualification requirements. The contents of the study courses are harmonised and allows achieving the learning outcomes of study courses and the study programme.
2. The mechanism for the implementation of the study programme allows achieving the learning outcomes, including the principles of student-centred teaching, learning and assessment. The requirements for the organisation of traineeships for the students (if applicable) and the support provided for the students have been determined and integrated in the content of the study programme.
3. There is a quality assurance system in place at the higher education institution/ college, the principles of which are complied with also in the study programme to be licensed. The study programme meets the standards set forth in Part 1 of the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG).
4. The students, graduates, employers and/or employer organisations in the relevant sector, and other sectoral organisations are involved in the development of the respective study programme, and such involvement is expected also for future improvement of the study programme (including the work with the outcomes of the surveys conducted among the students and employers).

\* If the study programme is to be implemented in the form of distance learning and/or in a branch (or branches) of the higher education institution/ college, the description of the criteria 1 to 4 shall be provided in view of the form of distance learning and/ or the branches.

\*\* If the study programme is to be implemented in foreign language, provide an explanation on its compliance with requirements set on Section 56 paragraph 4 and 5 of the Law on Higher Education Institutions.

\*\*\* If the study programme consists of sub-programmes, provide an assessment of the criteria for each sub-programme.

**Analysis**

*The analysis of the criteria shall include justifications and evidence for the evaluation of each criterion.*

Conclusions by specifying strengths and weaknesses of the described criteria and the compliance with the Requirement [3]

*Strengths and weaknesses of each criterion shall be specified based on the analysis, and a justification of the compliance for the relevant Requirement [3] shall be provided.*

**Evaluation of the Criteria:**

Criterion	Evaluation			
	Excellent	Good	Average	Poor
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				

**Evaluation of the Requirement [3]:**

Requirement	Compliance			Justification
The content of the study programme to be licensed and the mechanism for the implementation thereof comply with the aim, objectives, and the intended learning outcomes of the study programme.	Fully compliant	Partially compliant	Non-compliant	

**IV. Teaching Staff**

**Requirement [4]** The qualification of the academic staff members, visiting professors, visiting associate professors, visiting docents, visiting lecturers, and visiting assistants complies with the requirements for the implementation of the study programme and the provisions set out in the respective regulatory enactments.

**Criteria:**

1. The criteria for the selection of the teaching staff involved in the implementation of the study programme comply with the specific features of the study programme and the study courses.
2. The qualification of the teaching staff members allows achieving the learning outcomes of the study programme.
3. The higher education institution/ college ensures further training of the teaching staff as to raise their professional qualifications, as well as promotes scientific and research activities.

**Analysis**

*The analysis of the criteria shall include justification and evidence for the evaluation of each criterion.*

Conclusions by specifying strengths and weaknesses of the described criteria and the compliance with the Requirement [4]

*Strengths and weaknesses of each criterion shall be specified based on the analysis, and a justification of the compliance for the relevant Requirement [4] shall be provided.*

**Evaluation of the Criteria:**

Criterion	Evaluation			
	Excellent	Good	Average	Poor
1.				
2.				
3.				

**Evaluation of the Requirement [4]:**

Requirement	Compliance			Justification
The qualification of the academic staff members, visiting professors, visiting associate professors, visiting docents, visiting lecturers, and visiting assistants complies with the requirements for the implementation of the study programme and the provisions set out in the respective regulatory enactments.	Fully compliant	Partially compliant	Non-compliant	

## V. Compliance of the Study Programme with the Provisions of Regulatory Enactments

**Requirement [5]** The study programme complies with the provisions set forth in the Law on Higher Education Institutions and other regulatory enactments.

*Specify in the table whether the provided statements fully comply, partially comply or do not comply with the study programme and provide a justification thereof. Additionally, it is also possible to refer to the relevant part of the joint report by the experts or the information provided by the higher education institution/ college, the content of which indicates to the mentioned compliance, partial compliance or non-compliance.*

*If applicable, the table may be complemented with other requirements set out in the Law on Higher Education Institutions or other regulatory enactments applicable to the study programme to be licensed.*

No.	Requirement	Fully compliant	Partially compliant	Non-compliant	Justification
1.	Removed in accordance with amendments to the Law on Higher Education Institutions <sup>2</sup>				
2.	Documents confirming that the higher education institution/ college will provide the students with the options to continue the acquisition of education in another study programme or at another higher education institution/ college (a contract with another accredited higher education institution/ college), in case the implementation of the study programme is discontinued.				
3.	Document confirming that the higher education institution/ college guarantees to the students a compensation for losses if the study programme is not accredited or the licencing of the study programme is cancelled due to the actions of the higher education institution/ college (actions or failure to act) and the student does not wish to continue the studies in another study programme.				
4.	The qualification of the teaching staff members complies with the requirements for the implementation of the study programme and the provisions set out in the regulatory enactments regulating the field of education. In addition, altogether at least five professors and associated professors, which have been elected to the academic positions at the relevant higher education institution/ college, are involved in the implementation of the academic study programme, specifically in its mandatory and limited elective part.				
5.	Each member of the academic staff has either				

<sup>2</sup> Law “Amendments to the Law on Higher Education Institutions” adopted on 14.07.2022., in force from 11.08.2022. Published: Latvijas Vēstnesis, 144, 28.07.2022.

	publications published in reviewed editions within the last six years, including international editions (if they have worked for a shorter period of time, the number of publications shall be in proportion to the work period), or artistic creation achievements (for instance, exhibitions, films, theatre performances, and concert activity), or a five-year practical work experience (except for the experience in the implementation of the study programme) in accordance with the Law on Higher Education Institutions.				
6.	Confirmation of the higher education institution/college that the teaching staff members to be involved in the implementation of the study programme have at least B2-level knowledge of a related foreign language according to European language levels (see the levels under <a href="http://www.europass.lv">www.europass.lv</a> ), if the study programme or any part thereof is to be implemented in a foreign language, or is compliant with requirements <sup>3</sup> set on the respective regulatory enactments, if the study programme or any part thereof is to be implemented in the Latvian language, and a teaching staff member has not acquired the secondary or higher education in the Latvian language.				
7.	The study programme complies with the State Academic Education Standard or the Professional Education Standard in meeting the minimum requirements for the content of the mandatory course in civil protection and the training of employees in civil protection issues whilst implementing the study programme. Study programme/sub-programme (if applicable) is compliant with the requirements set on Section 55 paragraph 1 of the Law on Higher Education Institutions.				
8.	The study programme/sub-programme (if applicable) complies with the valid professional standard or the requirements for the professional qualification (if there is no professional standard required for the relevant occupation) provided that the completion of the study programme/sub-programme (if applicable) leads to a professional qualification.				
9.	The descriptions of the study courses and the study materials have been prepared in all languages in which the study programme is implemented, and they comply with the requirements set forth in Section 56 <sup>1</sup> , Paragraph two and Section 56 <sup>2</sup> , Paragraph two of the Law on Higher Education Institutions.				
9.1	The study programme is to be implemented in				

<sup>3</sup> Cabinet Regulation No. 157 “Regulations Regarding the Extent of the Knowledge of the Official Language and the Procedures for Examining the Proficiency in the Official Language”, adopted on 08.03.2022.

	foreign language is compliant with the requirements set on Section 56 paragraph 4 and 5 of the Law on Higher Education Institutions.				
10.	The sample of the study agreement complies with the mandatory provisions to be included in the study agreement (including for doctoral studies funded by state budget, if applicable)				
11.	The sample of the diploma to be issued for the acquisition of the study programme complies with the procedure by which state-recognised documents of higher education are issued.				
12.	There are procedures for the recognition of competences acquired outside formal education or through professional experience and learning outcomes achieved in previous learning in place at the higher education institution/ college.				
13.	Requirement [6] The non-compliances with the provisions set forth in the regulatory enactments, as identified by the competent authorities and regarding the performance of the higher education institution/ college in the previous year, have been eliminated prior to the decision in line with the deadline set by the mentioned authorities.				
14.	Requirement [7] Compliance of the factual circumstances with the information provided by the higher education institution/ college.				

*To be filled in if the study programme subject to the assessment is a doctoral study programme:*

No.	Criteria	Fully compliant	Partially compliant	Non-compliant	Justification
1.	At least five teaching staff members with a science doctoral degree are among the academic staff of an academic doctoral study programme, at least three of which are experts approved by the Latvian Science Council in the respective field of science (till August 1, 2024). At least five teaching staff members with a doctoral degree are among the academic staff of a professional doctoral study programme in arts.				
2.	The scientific and pedagogical qualification or outcomes of artistic creation of the persons with a doctoral degree complies with the criteria set forth in the regulatory enactments regarding the assessment of the scientific and pedagogical qualification of a person applying for the position of a professor and associate professor.				
3.	The Latvian Science Council has provided the necessary support				

*To be filled in if the study programme subject to the assessment is a joint study programme:*

No.	Criteria	Fully compliant	Partially compliant	Non-compliant	Justification
1.	The higher education institution/ college and a partnering institution (or institutions) have entered into a written agreement on the development and implementation of the joint study programme.				
2.	The study programme shall consist of the parts of study programmes of the same level of the higher education, as implemented by the higher education institution/ college and the partnering institutions.				
3.	The higher education institution/ college and the partnering institutions involved in the implementation of the study programme shall each implement certain part of the entire relevant study programme jointly and in terms of the content, the parts of the joint study programme together form a unified and consecutive joint study programme.				
4.	Unified requirements regarding the implementation of the joint study programme, the final examinations, and granting of degrees to be acquired in studies and professional qualifications. In terms of the content, the parts of the joint study programme together form a unified and consecutive joint study programme.				
5.	The higher education institution/ college and the partnering institutions have jointly developed a quality assurance system for the joint study programme.				
6.	Mobility of students is ensured, which also allows for the acquisition of a commensurate and essential part of the joint study programme in one or several partnering institutions.				
7.	Mobility of the academic staff members is ensured, which allows them to teach in at least one partnering institution.				
8.	A degree or professional qualification to be granted as a result of the acquisition of the joint study programme has been specified in compliance with the system of degrees or professional qualification to be acquired in studies, as set forth in the regulatory enactments of Latvia.				
9.	The content of the diploma, as well as of the annex appended to the diploma to be issued jointly by the higher education institution/ college and partnering institutions has been specified, and it complies with the procedure by which State-recognised documents of higher education are issued.				

## VI. Assessment

*Summary and conclusions on the study programme (including the strengths and weaknesses thereof) by taking into consideration the evaluation of both the criteria and the requirements.*

*Should any requirement be evaluated as “non-compliant” or “partially compliant”, provide an in-depth analysis by justifying the non-compliance or partial compliance and specify the conditions, which the higher education institution/ college must meet by the day on which the SQC is supposed to review the application on the licensing of the study programme.*

## VII. Recommendations

*Justification of the recommendation to license or not to license the study programme.*

*Recommendations for the improvement of the study programme or the elimination of the deficiencies (on a short-term and a long-term basis).*

**If the opinion of the experts regarding any requirement or criterion differs, please, specify the dissenting opinion.**

*Name and surname of the expert, and the dissenting opinion by specifying the relevant requirement or criterion and providing a justification thereof.*

## VIII. Summary of the Assessments of the Requirements

	<b>Requirements</b>	<b>Fully compliant</b>	<b>Partially compliant</b>	<b>Non-compliant</b>
R1	The study programme complies with the study field in which it is to be included.			
R2	The study provision, informative provision (including the library), financial provision and the material and technical provision comply with the requirements for the implementation of the study programme.			
R3	The content of the study programme to be licensed and the mechanism for the implementation thereof comply with the aim, objectives, and the intended learning outcomes of the study programme.			
R4	The qualification of the academic staff members, visiting professors, visiting associate professors, visiting docents, visiting lecturers, and visiting assistants complies with the requirements for the implementation of the study programme and the provisions set out in the respective regulatory enactments.			
R5	The study programme complies with the provisions set forth in the Law on Higher Education Institutions and other regulatory enactments.			
R6	The non-compliances with the provisions set forth in regulatory enactments, as identified by the competent authorities and regarding the performance of the higher education institution/ college in the previous year have been eliminated prior to the decision in line with the deadline set by the mentioned authorities.			
R7	The factual circumstances comply with the information provided by the higher education institution/ college.			