



**STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT DIRECTIONS  
OF THE QUALITY AGENCY FOR HIGHER EDUCATION  
FOR 2024–2028**

**RIGA, 2024**

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## ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THE STRATEGY

**AGENCY** – Quality Agency for Higher Education.

**AIC** – Academic Information Centre.

**CEENQA** – Central and Eastern European Network of Quality Assurance Agencies.

**ENQA** – European Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education.

**e-platform** – e-platform for ensuring the accreditation of study fields and the licensing of study programmes.

**EQAR** – European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education.

**ESG** – Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area.

**INQAHE** – International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education.

**MoES** – Ministry of Education and Science.

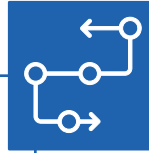
**CoM** – Cabinet of Ministers.

**STRATEGY** – Strategic development directions of the Quality Agency for Higher Education for 2024–2028.

## AGENCY'S STATUS AND LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR ITS OPERATION



The Quality Agency for Higher Education is a department of the foundation "Academic Information Centre" (hereinafter – AIC), responsible for the tasks related to quality assurance in higher education outlined in the laws and regulations or the agreement delegating the public administration tasks.



The Agency's strategy "Strategic Development Directions of the Quality Agency for Higher Education for 2024–2028" was developed to ensure the effective operation and sustainable development of the Agency, as a continuation of the previous Agency's strategy (2017–2023). The Strategy outlines the Agency's guidelines, strategic directions, tasks, and achievable results.



Agency is independent in the execution of its tasks, recognised in accordance with the laws and regulations of Latvia, and is listed in the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education as an institution for quality assurance in higher education. It was established with the aim to enhance the system for external quality assurance in higher education in Latvia to ensure its compliance with the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (hereinafter – the ESG)<sup>1</sup> and to promote the quality, visibility, and international recognition of Latvian higher education.



The Agency actively collaborates with HEIs/colleges, sectoral experts, professional and academic organisations in Latvia, and international organisations in implementation of the strategic directions.



The Agency operates in accordance with the Articles of Association of AIC, pursuant to ESG, the laws and regulations of Latvia and the Education Development Guidelines 2021–2027 "Future Skills for Future Society".

The Agency's external regulatory framework consists of laws and the relevant Cabinet Regulations. Given that Cabinet Regulations are regularly subject to changes, the following laws stipulate the aspects related to the Agency's operation:

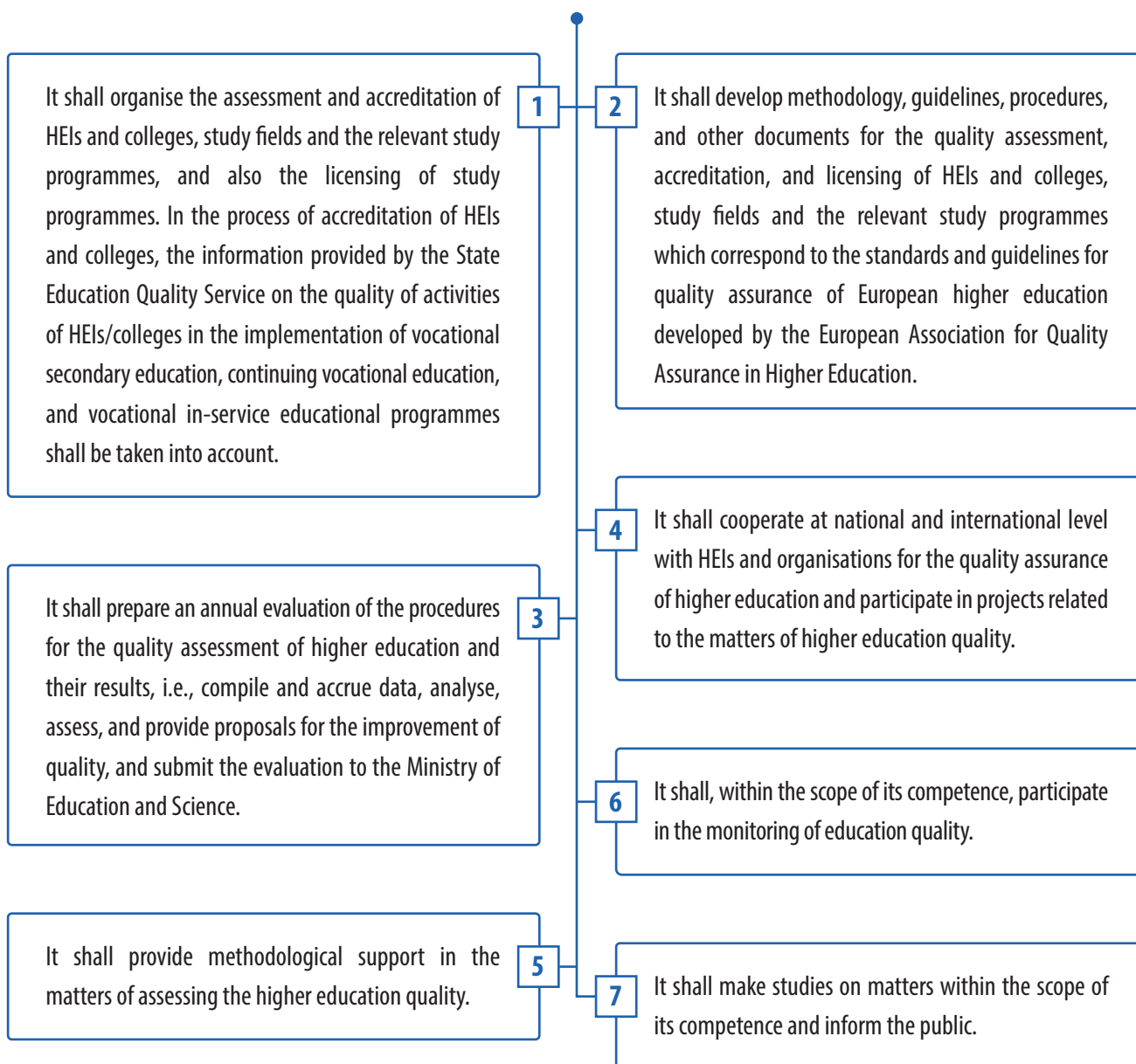


LAW ON HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS  
EDUCATION LAW  
VOCATIONAL EDUCATION LAW  
LAW ON SCIENTIFIC ACTIVITY

<sup>1</sup> Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area.  
See: [https://www.enqa.eu/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/ESG\\_2015.pdf](https://www.enqa.eu/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/ESG_2015.pdf)

## AGENCY'S FUNCTIONS

The Agency fulfils the following functions<sup>2</sup> under the Education Law:



<sup>2</sup> Education Law, Section 20<sup>1</sup>.

See: [https://likumi.lv/ta/id/50759#p20\\_1](https://likumi.lv/ta/id/50759#p20_1)

## VISION, MISSION, VALUES



### VISION

- The Agency is a reliable and internationally recognised institution that promotes the continuous improvement of higher education quality in Latvia and actively participates in the processes of European and global higher education quality assurance.



### MISSION

- To promote the improvement of higher education quality in Latvia and the European Higher Education Area, contributing to the development and maintenance of a quality culture in line with the ESG.
- To provide publicly available information on aspects related to the assessment and enhancement of higher education quality.
- To take a role as a reliable partner for HEIs/colleges, policymakers, current and prospective students, and other stakeholders in Latvia and abroad.



### VALUES

- **OBJECTIVITY**  
In fulfilling its functions and tasks, the Agency operates as an independent, transparent, and professional institution through appropriate personnel and expert selection processes and adherence to predefined procedures.
- **COMPETENCE**  
The quality of the functions and tasks carried out by the Agency is ensured by the professional competence and experience of its employees and engaged experts, along with the continuous development of professional competence.
- **COLLABORATION**  
The Agency's brand and reputation are built on effective collaboration with stakeholders involved in ensuring higher education quality at both local and international levels.

## SWOT

## STRENGTHS

- Transparency in Agency's operations that fosters trust and respect among HEIs/colleges, assessment experts, and other stakeholders.
- Collaboration with sectoral organisations.
- Compliance with the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area, as confirmed by international organisations.
- Active participation in quality assurance projects, events, and other activities at the international level.
- Established procedures and experience in implementing quality assurance processes abroad.
- Seminars organised by the Agency that facilitate the exchange of information, opinions, and experiences, enhancing the professionalism of stakeholders involved in the quality assessment of higher education.
- Public database providing consolidated information on accredited HEIs/colleges, study fields, programmes, related data, and assessment expert opinions.
- A functioning internal quality management system, including detailed documented processes (methodologies, guidelines), associated activities, including handbooks, and form templates.
- Professional and proficient employees.
- Highly developed ICT solution that facilitate the implementation of assessment procedures, including the exchange of information between the HEI/college, assessment experts, the Study Quality Commission, and the Agency, while also serving as a database of external assessment experts.
- Ability to adapt flexibly to changing external circumstances.

## WEAKNESSES

- The e-platform of the Agency currently does not support the implementation of all types of assessment procedures, which would optimise the related processes.
- Insufficient human resources to develop more active communication with the public.
- Lack of a unified management platform/tool for managing the Agency's internal processes.
- The impact of inflation and rising average salary levels on the costs of assessment procedures and the Agency's sustainability.

## OPPORTUNITIES

- Increased involvement in the enhancement of external regulatory framework and the implementation of cyclical institutional accreditation in Latvia.
- Targeted market analysis to actively offer assessment procedures abroad.
- Greater employee engagement and regular participation in projects organised by international organisations, which would expand opportunities to develop the necessary skills for job responsibilities and improve work quality.
- Professional competence development for employees, thereby ensuring that diverse development activities are implemented in parallel to coordinating assessment procedures.
- Intensified efforts to ensure the exchange of best practices both abroad and in Latvia among HEIs/colleges and other stakeholders.
- Provision of the training for middle management of HEIs/colleges to ensure a broader awareness of the external quality assessment processes and the responsibilities of various parties.
- Improvement of the e-platform of the Agency, thereby expanding its functions and potentially integrating internal process management.

## THREATS

- A high volume of assessment procedures may lead to employee overload and turnover at the Agency.
- Frequent and contradictory changes in external laws and regulations, which could negatively impact assessment procedures and the Agency's overall work.
- New delegated tasks are not always fully publicly funded, thereby creating a risk of resource shortages for the Agency's development activities.
- The inability of external parties involved in the Agency's work to provide timely exchange of information.
- A shortage of competent assessment experts in certain/specific fields of education.
- Unexpected obstacles and rapidly changing global conditions, such as pandemics and wars.

The Agency's strategic development directions for 2024–2028 are defined, based on the achievements of the previous reporting period and the identified needs for further development.

A significant contribution to defining the Agency's strategic directions has been made by the self-assessment process conducted in 2022–2023 and the preparation of the self-assessment report for the Agency's external assessment, carried out by the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (hereinafter – ENQA). The recommendations provided within the framework of external assessment were evaluated and, where possible, integrated into the defined strategic development directions and tasks for 2024–2028.<sup>3</sup>

The strategic directions were defined, taking into account the feedback provided by the collaboration partners and the Agency's employees regarding the Agency's activities during the previous reporting period.<sup>4</sup>

#### PUBLIC AWARENESS



To promote the Agency's visibility in Latvia by informing the public about its achievements and current developments regarding quality assurance.

#### QUALITY ASSURANCE



To promote the continuous improvement and development of higher education quality by implementing quality assessment procedures and organising educational events for representatives of the higher education sector.

#### POLICYMAKING



To take a more active role in shaping national higher education/quality assurance policies in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and Science and other stakeholders.

#### AGENCY'S PERFORMANCE



To make sure the Agency's performance meets the required quality for fulfilling its mission by enhancing the availability of resources and improving the effectiveness of internal processes.

#### INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATION



To develop international collaboration that would enhance the quality of higher education in Latvia, increase the Agency's visibility, and promote the exchange of experiences within the European Higher Education Area.

Several tasks have been defined for each strategic development direction, while for each task, measurable activities have been established to demonstrate the implementation of strategic directions and the execution of each set task.

To measure the implementation of the strategy, an annual action plan will be developed each year, based on the defined strategic development directions, by setting the quantitative and qualitative indicators for the measurable activities included in the action plan and specified in this Strategy, which will demonstrate the execution of the tasks during the year and, accordingly, the implementation of the strategic direction over a five-year period. For instance, in 2024, the implementation of task 3.1.1 will involve organising 2 webinars for HEIs/colleges. An example of the table with quantitative and qualitative indicators is provided in Annex 1 of the Strategy.

<sup>3</sup> Report of the Experts of External Assessment organised by ENQA.

See: <https://www.enqa.eu/wp-content/uploads/AIC-external-review-report.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> Surveyed collaboration partners: HEIs/colleges, the Council of Rectors, Latvian Association of Colleges, the Council for Higher Education, the Student Union of Latvia, the Trade Union of Education and Science Workers of Latvia, the Employers' Confederation of Latvia, Latvian Council of Science, the State Education Quality Service, the Education, Culture, and Science Commission of the Saeima, the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Latvia, and the Ministry of Education and Science.

## PUBLIC AWARENESS

## TASK 1 OF 3

To improve the discussion platform on issues related to external quality assessment, various aspects of higher education quality, governance, study programmes, etc., thereby encouraging a culture based on the adoption of best practices among HEIs/colleges.

The Agency will organise seminars and webinars on topics relevant for HEIs/colleges, encouraging HEIs/colleges with identified examples of best practices to share their experience. In parallel to seminars, the Agency will ensure the dissemination of current developments and examples of best practices through its communication channels (website, informative e-mails, social media accounts, etc.), while also evaluating the effectiveness of the existing communication channels and the need for their updating and promotion. Based on the current developments in the European Higher Education Area, the Agency will promote initiatives in Latvia related to European university networks, micro-credentials, and academic integrity. During the reporting period, the Agency will strengthen its role as an academic integrity centre in Latvia, including by formally engaging in the Global Academic Integrity Network (GAIN) and drawing on experiences from initiatives in other countries.

## TASK 2 OF 3

To prepare analytical reports on the results of the assessment of study fields and the relevant study programmes and to inform the public and policymakers about those reports and conclusions contained therein, thereby encouraging a shared understanding of education quality and opportunities for further improvement.

The Agency will prepare analytical reports on all study fields assessed from 2020 to 2025. The analytical reports will include analytical information on the study field subject to assessment, a summary of the assessment and accreditation results, and an overview of the main conclusions and recommendations. The analytical reports will be published on the Agency's website and presented to policymakers and HEIs/colleges subject to assessment, thereby promoting a deeper understanding of the conclusions drawn from the assessment process and identifying areas for improvement.

## TASK 3 OF 3

To publicly share the information on the Agency's activities in the international arena and examples of best practices that could be integrated into the higher education system in Latvia.

The Agency will keep up with the current developments within and beyond the European Higher Education Area and identify aspects relevant for the higher education system in Latvia, along with examples of best practices to share.

## MEASURABLE ACTIVITIES INDICATING THE TASK EXECUTION:

Seminars and webinars.

Informative announcements through the Agency's communication channels.

Participation in international networks (Global Academic Integrity Network (GAIN)).

Updating of communication channels by evaluating the effectiveness of the Agency's communication channels.

Analytical reports (analyses).

Presentations/webinars for policymakers and HEIs/colleges.

Presentations/webinars for policymakers and the higher education community.

Informative announcements through the Agency's communication channels.



## QUALITY ASSURANCE

## TASK 1 OF 5

To implement quality assurance procedures in accordance with the guidelines and methodologies developed by the Agency, while complying with national laws and regulations and the ESG.

The Agency will implement the quality assessment procedures outlined in the regulatory framework and the Agency's strategic planning documents. Each assessment procedure will be implemented in accordance with the relevant laws and regulations, methodology, and guidelines. Based on the current HEI accreditation model, the Agency will develop an institutional accreditation model for assessments abroad.

## TASK 2 OF 5

To engage competent external experts in the assessment process, the assessments and recommendations of which contribute to improving the quality of studies.

As for the engagement of experts, the Agency will collaborate with sectoral expert councils, the Student Union of Latvia, and its partner organisations abroad, maintaining an experts database that includes representatives from the community of employers and students, and the academia. At the same time, the opportunity to apply for being included in the experts database will be constantly available to any representative of the academia in Latvia or abroad. During the reporting period, the Agency will also work on expanding the database to include representatives from the community of employers and students. The engagement and selection of experts will be organised according to priority areas, ensuring that the experts included in the experts database have extensive experience in study quality assurance. The Agency will ensure that the experts engaged in the assessment procedures have a clear understanding of the purpose of assessment and the roles of the experts. The preparation for the transition to cyclical institutional accreditation will involve identifying the required competences of experts and evaluating the suitability and readiness of the experts included in the database for performing an institutional assessment. Based on that evaluation, opportunities for professional development will be offered, along with targeted activities to expand the experts database.

## MEASURABLE ACTIVITIES INDICATING THE TASK EXECUTION:

Assessment and accreditation of study fields and the relevant study programmes,

Licensing of study programmes.

Assessment of changes in the study fields and the relevant study programmes.

Accreditation of HEIs.

Inclusion of a licensed study programme in the accredited study field.

Accreditation of study programmes abroad.

Assessment of study programmes.

Evaluation of the type of HEI determined by the founder.

Expansion of the experts database.

Regular updating of the data of experts included in the experts database.

Profiling of the experts database, ensuring the necessary expert competencies for conducting institutional assessments.

Informative and upskilling seminars/webinars for experts included in the database.

Training for experts engaged in assessment procedures.

## QUALITY ASSURANCE

## TASK 3 OF 5

To improve the guidelines and methodologies of the assessment procedures based on the feedback provided by HEIs/colleges, assessment experts and the Agency's employees, ensuring their compliance with the external regulatory framework and the objectives of the procedures.

The Agency will enhance the guidelines and methodologies for assessment procedures, based on the latest developments in higher education and the recommendations provided in the Agency's external assessment. The Agency will engage in discussions with the experts and gather recommendations from HEIs/colleges. Considering the conclusion of the cycle of the study field assessment and the transition to a new external assessment model, special focus will be placed on the implementation of assessment follow-up activities during the reporting period. Based on the provided recommendations, including the practices of other ENQA members, the Agency will evaluate the effectiveness of the implemented assessment follow-up activities, prepare an analytical report, and use it as a basis to enhance the Agency's regulations on assessment follow-up activities.

## TASK 4 OF 5

To participate in the development of a cyclical institutional accreditation model based on the data obtained following the cycle of the study field assessment, which entails the development of quality assessment procedures and the relevant guidelines and methodologies.

The Agency will evaluate the effectiveness of the implemented quality assurance procedures on a regular basis, based on the feedback provided by HEIs/colleges and assessment experts. Based on the provided feedback and the best practices from other countries, the Agency will, in collaboration with other stakeholders, take an active role in the development of the external assessment model coordinated by the Ministry of Education and Science, ensuring that the model aligns with the best practices in the European Higher Education Area and considers the type of HEIs/colleges, and also develop the relevant guidelines and methodologies.

## TASK 5 OF 5

To assist HEIs/colleges and assessment experts in the transition to the new cyclical HEI/college accreditation model, ensuring a shared understanding of the established requirements, criteria, and procedures.

The Agency will assist HEIs/colleges in the transition to the new cyclical HEI/college accreditation model, in collaboration with the field experts and the competent Agency's employees. The Agency will also prepare informative materials on the new model and organise meetings with the representatives of HEIs/colleges and informative seminars/webinars prior to implementing the model.

## MEASURABLE ACTIVITIES INDICATING THE TASK EXECUTION:

Collection and evaluation of recommendations from HEIs/colleges and assessment experts.

Improvement of assessment procedures in accordance with the recommendations and the legal framework.

Revised regulations on assessment follow-up activities.

Development of guidelines and methodologies for the new external assessment model.

Incorporation of recommendations from HEIs/colleges into the scope of the external assessment model.

Submission of a report on substantive changes to EQAR.

Seminars/working groups with representatives of HEIs/colleges on the new accreditation model and its implementation.

Informative materials on the new model.

## POLICY MAKING

## TASK 1 OF 3

To keep up with the changes in the regulatory framework and participate in the development of regulations.

Given that decisions on the results of all quality assessment procedures implemented by the Agency in Latvia are made in accordance with the Administrative Procedure Law, it is crucial to adhere to all legal norms established in the external regulatory framework. The Agency will closely monitor any changes in the regulatory framework to appropriately update its internal regulations. The Agency will propose amendments to laws and regulations to enhance and improve the regulatory framework. When offering opportunities for improving the regulatory framework, the Agency will take into account best practices in quality assessment within the European Higher Education Area. The Agency will place a special focus on ensuring that the external regulatory framework related to assessment and accreditation processes is consistent, creates a unified system of laws and regulations in higher education, aligns with good governance principles and the unified legal practice of the Study Quality Commission, and is in accordance with the latest developments in the field of higher education.

## TASK 2 OF 3

To ensure the consistency of external quality assessment results in accordance with the legal framework and their consistent application in future quality assessment procedures.

When transitioning to the new external quality assessment model, i.e. the cyclical HEI/college assessment and accreditation model, the Agency will, to the extent possible, ensure that all results of the assessment procedures obtained before the implementation of the new model are consistently integrated into the new model, which includes making similar decisions in similar factual and legal circumstances and different decisions in different factual and legal circumstances, as well as adopting best practices in decision-making.

## TASK 3 OF 3

To take a proactive role as a partner in the development of the new external quality assessment model.

While developing the cyclical HEI/college accreditation model, the Agency will, when bringing forward its proposals, take into account the feedback provided by HEIs/colleges, the Study Quality Commission, and assessment experts in the previous reporting period, including the opinions provided by collaboration partners. The Agency will, in accordance with the regulatory framework and in collaboration with the MoES, develop methodologies and guidelines within the framework of cyclical HEI/college accreditation, which will be put forward for discussion with collaboration partners, including HEIs/colleges.

## MEASURABLE ACTIVITIES INDICATING THE TASK EXECUTION:

Proposals for amendments to laws and regulations.

Adjustment of internal regulations to changes in the external regulatory framework.

Development of a report on the results of the assessment of study fields.

Compilation of the Agency's best legal practices in the form of key points and their explanation to HEIs/colleges.

Discussions with HEIs/colleges, the Study Quality Commission, assessment experts, and collaboration partners.

Involvement in the development of a conceptual report.

Development of methodologies and guidelines in accordance with the concept and laws and regulations.

## AGENCY'S PERFORMANCE

## TASK 1 OF 3

To strengthen the Agency's human resources by implementing an effective human resource management system, which includes professional development and the provision of a motivating work environment and conditions.

The Agency regularly identifies the professional and personal development needs of its employees, and also the possibilities for expanding its human resources. The Agency will implement appropriate personnel policy, based on the identified development needs. In the long term, the Agency will facilitate the provision of a motivating work environment and competitive conditions for its employees.

## TASK 2 OF 3

To support the consistency of the Agency's financial resources with its tasks and their sufficiency in the long-term.

The Agency will actively demonstrate its performance results and the increase in the scope and significance of the public administration tasks it performs, in order to ensure the stable allocation of State grants to the Agency in the long term. The Agency will evaluate its financial situation and potential financial risks on a regular basis. The Agency will, where necessary and depending on the overall financial situation, propose an update to the price list of fee-based services provided by the foundation "Academic Information Centre", in line with inflation indicators. Furthermore, the Agency regularly identifies and evaluates opportunities for participation in international collaboration projects.

## TASK 3 OF 3

To strengthen the Agency's ICT solutions, ensuring that they meet the Agency's needs and promoting long-term development.

The Agency will regularly evaluate the ICT solutions at its disposal – the website, e-platform for ensuring the accreditation of study fields and the licensing of study programmes (hereinafter – the e-platform), and e-mail and information storage solutions. The Agency will, within the scope of available funding, improve the solutions and plan their long-term improvement, including the implementation of an internal IT solution for managing organisational processes. During the reporting period, it will continue working on the improvement and maintenance of the e-platform, primarily ensuring that the functionality of the e-platform meets the requirements outlined in the regulatory framework and enabling the organisation of cyclical institutional accreditation procedures on the e-platform. During the reporting period, the Agency will work towards fully linking the e-platform with the State Education Information System and the National Scientific Activity Information System.

## MEASURABLE ACTIVITIES INDICATING THE TASK EXECUTION:

Regular development discussions with employees.  
Provision of upskilling opportunities.  
Regular evaluation of the work environment and conditions, and rectification of the identified shortcomings.

Regular evaluation of financial resources.  
Agreement with the MoES on State funding grants.  
Evaluation of opportunities for international collaboration projects and participation therein.  
Review of the Agency's price list of fee-based services.

Regular updating of the website.  
Enhancement of the e-platform to ensure a smooth cyclical institutional accreditation.  
Linking of the e-platform with other information systems.  
Updating of social media account content.

## INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATION

## TASK 1 OF 3

To expand the network of foreign collaboration partners who would provide comprehensive information on the methods and principles applied in other countries to improve Latvia's external quality assessment procedures, particularly during the transition to a new external quality assessment model.

The Agency will evaluate the collaboration with both individual quality assurance agencies and agency networks, including its alignment with the Agency's strategic priorities. The Agency will encourage closer collaboration in the form of memorandum of cooperation, experience exchange visits, and long-term collaboration projects with agencies whose activities most closely align with the Agency's priorities during the reporting period.

## TASK 2 OF 3

To strengthen the Agency's position as an opinion leader in higher education quality assessment in the international arena, promoting visibility and trust in the Latvian higher education system.

The Agency will be represented in significant quality assurance forums, including the European Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education, the Central and Eastern European Network of Quality Assurance Agencies (hereinafter – CEENQA), and the International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (hereinafter – INQAAHE). The Agency will be a member of ENQA and registered in the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR). The Agency's employees will be active in the structures of international quality assurance agency networks. The Agency will present at significant events related to higher education quality assurance and, as a representative of Latvia, will participate in the activities within the European Higher Education Area. The Agency will regularly prepare publications and opinion pieces on internationally relevant topics. During the reporting period, one of the main international activities will be the review of the current ESG edition, in which the Agency will take an active role. The Agency will also assess the possibility of hosting one of the annual meetings or seminars/conferences organised by the quality assurance agency network in Latvia, focused on a specific topic.

## TASK 3 OF 3

To ensure the engagement of the Agency's employees in international events, encouraging their upskilling.

The Agency will regularly participate in various international events in the field of higher education. The Agency's employees will participate in various working groups and conferences within the scope of their competence. Participation in international events will allow broadening the perspective of the Agency's employees and enhancing their knowledge.

## MEASURABLE ACTIVITIES INDICATING THE TASK EXECUTION:

Collaboration partnerships.

Experience exchange visits.

Strengthening of the Agency's position as an opinion leader in the international arena by promoting visibility and trust in the Latvian higher education system.

Collaboration projects.

Membership of international organisations.

Elected and appointed positions in international organisations related to quality assurance.

Participation in international events, Involvement in the development of the next version of the ESG.

Organisation of international events related to quality assurance in Latvia.

Publications on aspects related to quality assurance.

Active participation in various international events.

Provision of a feedback on participation in events to the Agency's colleagues.

- The Agency's internal and external communication mechanisms are indispensable in implementing the defined strategic directions. Reliable operation and the involvement of collaboration partners are both integral to the Agency's mission and a key criterion for ESG compliance.
- At the outset of the Agency's operation, a network of external national and international collaboration partners was defined (Annexes 2 and 3 to the Strategy), which has remained unchanged over time and with whom the Agency maintains regular and extensive exchange of information.
- During the previous strategic period, special focus was placed on strengthening the Agency's capacity and promoting the Agency's visibility both within the Latvian higher education community and in the European Higher Education Area and beyond it, reinforcing the Agency as a separate brand, distinct from the other functions of the Academic Information Centre. The Agency's internal communication was primarily carried out in the context of the Agency's work organisation, assessment procedures, and decision-making bodies.
- The central element during the period of implementing the Strategy for 2024–2028 is the transition to a new accreditation model – a cyclical HEI/college accreditation – and the relevant preparation processes. Interaction between the Agency and its partners plays the key role in the transition to the new model, which will be achieved, jointly working on the development of the new model and finding solutions that will enhance the quality of higher education in Latvia in the long term. In order to ensure the successful implementation of the new accreditation model, the collaboration between the Agency, the Ministry of Education and Science, HEIs/colleges, the Study Quality Commission, and various sectoral organisations will be of great importance. During this Strategy implementation period, the Agency will enhance communication processes to improve work effectiveness and employee satisfaction. Special focus will be placed on the selection and training of external experts to ensure the necessary skills for institutional assessment.
- During the reporting period, the Agency's internal and external communication will be a significant cornerstone in order to improve the overall quality of processes and results, continuing to work towards the enhancement of higher education and relevant study programmes that meet the needs and expectations of students, applicants, employers, and other stakeholders.

## TABLE FOR MEASURING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

PLANNED ACTIVITY INDICATING THE TASK EXECUTION	ACHIEVABLE RESULT (QUANTITATIVE AND/OR QUALITATIVE)	TIMEFRAME
<p>To strengthen the Agency's visibility in Latvia by informing the public about its achievements and current developments regarding quality assurance.</p>		
<b>TASK</b>		
<p>To improve the discussion platform on issues related to external quality assessment, various aspects of higher education quality, governance, study programmes, etc., thereby encouraging a culture based on the adoption of best practices among HEIs/colleges.</p>		
SEMINARS AND WEBINARS		
INFORMATIVE ANNOUNCEMENTS THROUGH THE AGENCY'S COMMUNICATION CHANNELS		
PARTICIPATION IN THE GLOBAL ACADEMIC INTEGRITY NETWORK (GAIN)		
EVALUATION OF THE EFFICIENCY OF THE AGENCY'S COMMUNICATION CHANNELS		
CREATION OF NEW COMMUNICATION CHANNELS AND CLOSURE OF THE OLD ONES		

## NATIONAL COLLABORATION PARTNERS

### STUDENT UNION OF LATVIA (LSA)

LSA represents the interests of all students in Latvia in the national and international arena. The organisation is a significant partner for higher education policymakers in matters concerning students. LSA is a collegial union of student self-governments, comprising the representatives from the student self-governments of all accredited HEIs. The LSA's role is established in the Law on Higher Education Institutions. LSA is a member of the European Students' Union (ESU).

### COUNCIL FOR HIGHER EDUCATION (AIP)

AIP is a legal entity the operation of which is governed by its regulations. AIP develops long-term plans and proposals for the development of education and science within the higher education system and maintains connections with institutions from other countries that address issues related to higher education, among other activities.

### COUNCIL OF RECTORS (RP)

RP is a collegiate advisory institution that coordinates the collaboration of HEIs and organises the necessary joint activities. RP fulfils the functions and tasks established in the Law on Higher Education Institutions.

### LATVIAN ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGES (LKA)

The LKA's goal consists in promoting the development and growth of colleges and HEIs that implement short-cycle professional higher education programmes and enhancing the effectiveness of their activities.

### EMPLOYERS' CONFEDERATION OF LATVIA (LDDK)

LDDK is the largest organisation representing employers in Latvia. LDDK is a social and economic dialogue partner for the Saeima, the Cabinet of Ministers, and the Free Trade Union Confederation of Latvia.

### TRADE UNION OF EDUCATION AND SCIENCE WORKERS OF LATVIA (LIZDA)

LIZDA is an independent public organisation and currently the largest sectoral trade union in Latvia. It unites 900 trade unions representing 20 000 workers and retirees in the education and science sectors, advocating for their economic, social, and professional rights and interests. With 40% of its members from the education and science sectors, LIZDA plays a key role in advocating for the improvement of their working and living conditions, including the development of the education and science sectors.

### FREE TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION OF LATVIA (LBAS)

LBAS is an umbrella organisation uniting the trade unions and trade union associations in the Republic of Latvia on a voluntary basis and operating in accordance with the Law on Trade Unions, the Associations and Foundations Law, and other laws.



## NATIONAL COLLABORATION PARTNERS

### MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND SCIENCE (MoES)

MoES is the leading public administration institution in the education, science, and sports sector, including in the area of youth and State language policy.

### LATVIAN COUNCIL OF SCIENCE (LZP)

LZP was established by the Council of Ministers Decision No. 44 of 3 July 1990 "On Establishment of the Latvian Council of Science" in order to democratise the system for the management of scientific activity, improve the effectiveness of scientific work, and ensure the most effective use of budget funds allocated for science, based on research project competitions. The Council's main objective consists in promoting the development and implementation of science and technology policies in Latvia in line with the objectives and requirements of the European Union.

### STATE EDUCATION QUALITY SERVICE (IKVD)

IKVD is a direct administration authority that operates under the supervision of the Ministry of Education and Science. IKVD aims at ensuring high-quality and lawful education by monitoring education quality and providing support for the implementation of the educational process.

### CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY OF LATVIA (LTRK)

LTRK is the largest association of entrepreneurs in Latvia, bringing together more than 2500 members. It represents the interests of entrepreneurs and provides services aimed at fostering excellent enterprises within an excellent business environment.

### MINISTRY OF HEALTH (MoH)

The Ministry of Health is the leading public administration institution in the health sector. It is responsible for public health, healthcare, and pharmaceuticals. Its goal consists in developing and implementing national policies aimed at ensuring public health in a healthy environment by promoting prevention, advocating for a healthy lifestyle, and creating conditions that enable citizens to access cost-effective, accessible, and high-quality healthcare services.

### MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (MoD)

The primary task of Latvia's national defence is to anticipate and prevent military threats to the State, ensure national independence, territorial integrity, and the safety of its citizens.

### EDUCATION, CULTURE, AND SCIENCE COMMISSION OF THE SAEIMA

One of the permanent commissions of the Saeima, as defined by the Rules of Order of Saeima. The commission focuses on education, culture, and science, prepares draft laws for Saeima sessions, and conducts parliamentary oversight of government activities.

## INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATION PARTNERS (ORGANISATION NETWORKS)

### • **EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE IN HIGHER EDUCATION (ENQA)**

European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education. ENQA is an association that represents its members at both the European and international level. ENQA members include higher education quality assurance organisations that operate in the European Higher Education Area.

### • **EUROPEAN QUALITY ASSURANCE REGISTER FOR HIGHER EDUCATION (EQAR)**

European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education. EQAR is a register of quality assurance agencies that contains information on agencies which operate in accordance with the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area.

### • **CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPEAN NETWORK OF QUALITY ASSURANCE AGENCIES IN HIGHER EDUCATION (CEENQA)**

Central and Eastern European Network of Quality Assurance Agencies. CEENQA is a non-governmental, non-profit organisation aimed at fostering collaboration among member organisations to develop and harmonise quality assurance activities in higher education within Central and Eastern Europe, thereby contributing to the development of the European Higher Education Area.

### • **INTERNATIONAL NETWORK FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE AGENCIES IN HIGHER EDUCATION (INQAAHE)**

International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education. INQAAHE is a global association of organisations actively engaged in the theory and practice of quality assurance in higher education. Out of the current 300 members, the majority are quality assurance agencies (as full members), although other organisations active and interested in higher education and quality assurance are also accepted as associate members.

### • **CHEA INTERNATIONAL QUALITY GROUP (CIQG)**

The International Quality Group of the U.S. Council for Higher Education Accreditation. CIQG serves as a global forum for colleges, HEIs, accreditation bodies, quality assurance organisations, and other institutions worldwide to discuss issues and challenges related to quality and its assurance. It was established to bring together people, ideas, and resources from around the world to address topics ranging from defining and classifying quality to discussions on qualifications to be acquired and the accreditation.



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