APPROVED

by Rīga Stradiņš University

Senate Presidium decision of

27 June 2022,

Minutes No 2-SP-1/12/2022

Amendments approved by

Decision of the Senate of 13 February 2024

Minutes No 2-S-1/2/2024

**Regulations on Validation of Learning Outcomes and Commencement of Studies at Subsequent Study Stages**

**(****Consolidated text with highlighted amendments of 14.02.2024)**

Issued in accordance with

Section 4, Paragraph Three, Clause 9;

 Section 151, Clause 3(c),

Section 47, Paragraph One and 11 of the Law on Higher Education Institutions,

and the Cabinet

 Regulations No 932 of 16 November 2004 “Procedure for Initiation of Studies

 in Subsequent Study Stages”

1. **General Provisions**
	1. Regulations on Validation of Learning Outcomes (credit points) and Commencement of Studies at Subsequent Study Stages (hereinafter the Regulations) shall specify:
		1. the general procedure for comparing and validating study courses, study modules and parts of study programmes (hereinafter - the Study Courses) completed in person’s formal higher education, as well as knowledge, skills and competences acquired outside formal education or in professional experience and learning outcomes achieved in previous education (hereinafter - the Recognised Learning Outcomes);
		2. the procedure and criteria for comparing and validating credit points for students of Rīga Stradiņš University (hereinafter - the University);
		3. the criteria and procedure for applicants commencing studies at subsequent study stages;
		4. additional requirements for admitting to regulated professions and for education completed abroad;
		5. the procedure and criteria for validation of knowledge, skills and competences acquired outside formal education or in professional experience and learning outcomes achieved in previous education;
		6. the procedure and criteria for validating the results of scientific activity.
	2. The purpose of validating the Study Courses, Recognised Learning Outcomes and the results of scientific activity is to increase the availability of education by reducing the number of credit points to be obtained, shortening the duration of studies or commencing studies at subsequent study stages in the study programmes implemented by the University, while maintaining the quality of education.
2. **General Procedure for Comparison and Validation**
	1. Comparison and validation shall be made in the following cases:
		1. when transferring from another higher education institution to the University;
		2. when transferring from one study programme to another (including change of qualification, form, type and language) within the University;
		3. when resuming studies after a break (after exclusion or academic leave), if substantial changes have been made to the relevant study courses;
		4. continuing studies for obtaining a Bachelor's degree or the second-level professional higher education after having completed the first level professional higher education;
		5. for a University student who has completed a study course at the Open University (hereinafter - the OU) within another study programme of the University;
		6. after completing study courses outside formal education in another higher education institution.
	2. Validation in full scope and without comparison shall be made:
		1. on return from international exchange programmes, the completion of which has been previously agreed in writing by the student and the Director of the Study Programme;
		2. in medical residency and doctoral study programmes, if the study stages are validated;
		3. for a University student who has completed study courses at the OU within the same study programme (the assessment shall be transferred from the study course completed at the OU to the Study Course to be validated at the University without attaching a certificate);
		4. if the University Committee for recognition of competences acquired outside formal education or in professional experience and learning outcomes achieved in previous education (hereinafter - the Recognition Committee) has taken a decision on the Recognised Learning Outcomes;
		5. and in other cases.
	3. Previously acquired Study Courses and Recognised Learning Outcomes, as well as the results of scientific activity shall be compared with the content of the study courses, the type of examination and the amount in credit points within the study programme curriculum in force at the time of the assessment.
	4. The Director of the Study Programme or a person designated by the Director of the Study Programme (hereinafter - the Director of the Study Programme) shall prepare a comparability record for study courses, indicating which Study Courses are to be fully validated and which are to be partially validated to the Study Programme, and the individual study plan. If necessary, the comparability record shall be accompanied by a detailed comparison and justification. For an international student/applicant, the comparability record and the individual study plan shall be prepared in English.
	5. The Study Courses and Recognised Learning Outcomes, as well as the results of scientific activity, which have been completed at the same or greater amount of credit points and whose content, aims, objectives and learning outcomes correspond to the study course compared, may be fully validated to the Study Programme.
	6. For the Study Courses partially validated to the study programme, the additional examinations to be taken shall be indicated in the comparability record.
	7. The Study Courses may be validated to different types and levels of study programmes according to the following rules:
		1. the Study Courses completed in the first-level professional higher education programme may be validated to the study courses to be completed in the first years of a Bachelor's or a second-level professional higher education study programme (to be followed after completion of general or vocational secondary education);
		2. the Study Courses completed within a Bachelor's study programme may be validated to the study courses to be completed in the first years of a second-level professional higher education programme (to be followed after completion of general or vocational secondary education);
		3. the Study Courses completed within a second-level professional higher education programme may be validated to the study courses to be completed in the relevant years of the Bachelor's or Master's programme.
	8. the Study Courses shall not be validated if the content, scope or acquired knowledge and developed skills within these courses do not meet the requirements of the study programme.
	9. the Study Courses may not be validated if they were completed more than 4 (four) years ago, if there are grounds to consider that the content of the Study Course has changed significantly during this period.
	10. The Study Courses which have been validated as a result of the comparison shall be included in the student’s fulfilled academic obligations, replacing study courses of the compulsory part (A), restricted elective part (B) or elective part (C) of the study programme.
	11. The examinations passed in the comparable study course shall be validated in accordance with the following procedure:
		1. the examination named “examination” shall be regarded as conforming to the type of examination “examination” or “test” specified in the existing study course;
		2. the examination named “test” shall be regarded as corresponding to the examination “test”. If the specified examination is a “test” but the examination in the existing study course of the University is an “examination”, or if there is no examination in the comparable study course, the requirement for validating the study course shall be taking the examination specified in the existing study course, unless the Director of the Study Programme determines otherwise;
		3. the type of final examinations passed in international exchange programmes shall not be changed;
		4. if the type of examination specified for the comparable study course is adequate, the assessment for the validated study course shall be the assessment given to the student in the examination according to the 10-point grading scale or “pass”.
	12. The Director of the Study Programme shall submit the comparability report and the individual study plan to the employee of the Student Services or the support staff of the relevant faculty (department).
	13. If, after validation of study courses, the applicant does not commence his/her studies within the nearest semester or stops studying at the University, the decision taken shall become invalid. The applicant or the University student may resubmit an application with a request to compare and validate study courses before the planned commencement or resumption of studies.
	14. The application shall be accompanied by one of the relevant documents (copies, files):
		1. an academic transcript or certificate from the University or another higher education institution, indicating the completion of the study course;
		2. the decision of the University Recognition Committee on the Recognised Learning Outcomes;
		3. a diploma with a diploma supplement;
		4. for students returning after studying at higher education institutions abroad within international exchange programmes: a study contract or a placement agreement with a student of an international exchange programme.
3. **Procedure and Criteria for Comparing and Validating Credit Points for University Students**
	1. A student who wishes to reduce the amount of credit points to be acquired and shorten the duration of his/her studies shall submit an electronic application no later than by the end of the first month of the relevant semester. If the application is submitted later, the University may refuse to validate the respective study course in whole or in part for the relevant semester.
	2. If the document attached to the application is in a foreign language (except English), the student shall submit a translation of the document into Latvian or English, which is notarised or certified by the issuing authority.
	3. The Director of the Study Programme shall examine the application, carry out the comparison and validation no later than two weeks after the submission of all documents to the Student Services.
	4. An individual study plan shall be drawn up in the Student Information System on the basis of the comparability report.
	5. The student contact person shall recalculate the tuition fees (for study places financed by natural and legal persons) and inform the student. After conclusion of the agreement on amendments, the duration of studies shall be shortened or the amount of credit points to be acquired shall be reduced for the student of the University if the comparison of study courses has been commenced not later than within one month from the beginning of the semester. Tuition fees for the part of the study course already completed shall not be refunded.
4. **Criteria and Procedure for Applicants Commencing Studies at Subsequent Study Stages**
	1. An applicant may qualify for admission to subsequent study stages if:
		1. the previously received education meets the admission requirements of the study programme;
		2. at least 20 credit points or 30 credit points of the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System or one full semester of study may be validated in accordance with the study programme curriculum;
		3. in study programmes with sequential completion of study courses study, the validated credit points shall apply to at least one full semester of study in accordance with the study programme curriculum;
		4. there is a free place in the study programme[[1]](#footnote-2), which is ascertained according to the current information at the Student Services at the time of assessment.
		5. Completion of the study programme or part thereof and successfully passed examinations within the previously acquired education shall be confirmed by a certificate issued by the university or college.
		6. If the number of applicants for admission to subsequent study stages is higher than the number of available study places, applications from applicants who had good or excellent academic performance in their previous studies and meet the following criteria shall be given priority consideration:
			1. no failed final assessment in any of the study courses taken as part of the previous education (if such information is available);
			2. no expulsion (exclusion from the list of students) for disciplinary offences or breaches of academic integrity within the previously received education (if such information is available).
	2. A student who wishes to commence studies at subsequent study stages and who participates in the admission competition shall submit an electronic application at the time of the admission competition.
	3. If the document attached to the application is in a foreign language (other than English), the applicant shall submit a translation of the document into Latvian or English, which is notarised or certified by the issuing authority.
	4. If the content and scope of the study courses to be validated for the applicant do not meet the requirements for eligibility for admission at subsequent study stages (also in case of limited study places), the applicant shall continue to participate in the admission competition, and the content and scope of the study courses to be compared and validated shall be taken into account when drawing up an individual study plan for the conclusion of the study contract as a result of the admission competition.
	5. If at least one sequential semester has been fully validated for the applicant, the Director of the Study Programme may decide to validate the remaining study courses immediately.
	6. If the applicant’s previous formal education was acquired abroad and does not meet the admission requirements for the study programme, the missing assessment in the subject may be replaced by:
		1. an assessment in a relevant study course from other formal higher education, as evidenced by a diploma supplement or an academic transcript;
		2. an assessment in a relevant study course completed outside formal education, as evidenced by a certificate issued by a higher education institution.

**For local applicants:**

* 1. The applicant qualifying for studies at subsequent study stages in study programmes in Latvian:
		1. shall register electronically in the e-Admissions system of the University (<https://uznemsana.rsu.lv>);
		2. shall submit the necessary documents as stipulated in the admission regulations.
	2. The Director of the Study Programme shall carry out the comparison and validation during the admission competition.
	3. Based on the comparability report and the individual study plan, the employee of the Student Services shall inform the applicant about the decision made, if necessary, calculate the tuition fee, prepare a study contract, and after fulfilling the obligations stipulated in the contract (after the first payment of the tuition fee) the applicant shall be matriculated for studies at subsequent study stages.

**For international applicants:**

* 1. The applicant qualifying for studies at subsequent study stages in study programmes in English:
		1. shall register electronically in the e-Admissions system of the University (<https://admission.rsu.lv/en>);
		2. shall upload the documents required by the admission procedure for study programmes in English to the e-Admissions system of the University;
		3. shall complete subsection *“Application for credit transfer”* of the section *“Terms and Conditions”* in the e-Admissions system of the University for the comparable Study Courses and the amount of credit points.
	2. The Committee approved by the Rector’s decree (according to the field of science of the study programme)shall carry out the comparison and validation after the International Admissions Office has carried out a preliminary check of the formal adequacy of the comparison and validation of the study courses completed abroad (the format of the application, attached documents and information on the number of available places in the study programme, etc.).
	3. On the basis of the comparability report and the individual study plan, a specialist of the International Admissions Office shall inform the applicants of the English-language study programmes of the decision taken by sending the comparability report and the individual study plan in English to that applicant. If the applicant agrees with the comparability report and the individual study plan, the International Admissions Office of the University shall calculate the tuition fee, prepare the study contract, and organise the conclusion of the study contract, immigration procedures and matriculation.
1. **Additional Conditions for Validation in Regulated Professions and for Education Completed Abroad**
	1. In order to ensure that the professional qualification to be awarded complies with the requirements laid down by the legislation in study programmes corresponding to the regulated professions in Latvia, the Study Courses and Recognised Learning Outcomes may be validated if the following additional requirements are met:
		1. the study course has been completed in the territory of the European Union, the European Economic Area or the Swiss Confederation. The Study Courses and Recognised Learning Outcomes may also be validated if the study course has been completed in other territories and if the available documentation does not cast doubt on the relevance of the acquired educational content to the Study Courses of the University (for example, a statement from the Academic Information Centre (hereinafter - the AIC) on conformity has been received);
		2. the respective profession or specialty is also recognised as a regulated profession (specialty) in the foreign country where the study course was completed. If the respective profession is recognised as a regulated profession, but the specialty is not, the decision on the validation of the study course shall be taken after the evaluation of the content of the completed study courses, the recognised competences and the learning outcomes achieved;
		3. the study course has been completed in an institution which meets the requirements of the external regulatory legislation of Latvia or of the European Community in the relevant regulated profession;
		4. other restrictions or additional requirements laid down in the specific regulatory legislation governing the regulated profession have been complied with.
	2. If the study course has been completed outside the territory of the European Union, the European Economic Area or the Swiss Confederation, it may be validated only in exceptional cases, if the available documentation does not cast doubt that the Recognition Committee may carry out the assessment and that the total amount of study courses in the regulated profession completed in all forms in such places and to be validated is in any case less than 50 per cent of the total amount of the study programme.
	3. In the study programmes which do not correspond to the regulated professions as defined in Latvia, study courses completed abroad may be validated if the following additional requirements are met:
		1. an assessment grade has been obtained in the study course. If there is no assessment, the applicant must take the examination provided for in the study course;
		2. in study programmes of the study direction “Law” - in the compulsory (A) and restricted elective part (B), the study courses may be recognised if they have been completed in a country whose legal system is part of the Continental European (Romano-Germanic) legal system. This restriction shall not apply to special study courses regarding the legal system of the respective country or the range of other laws, or to the study courses of the elective part (C).
2. **Procedure and Criteria for Validating Knowledge, Skills and Competences Acquired Outside Formal Education or in Professional Experience and for Validating Learning Outcomes Achieved in Previous Education**
	1. The procedure and criteria, in accordance with which the Recognition Committee shall examine a person's application and decide regarding the learning outcomes to be recognised, shall be laid down in a separate internal law of the University.
	2. If, in an application to the Recognition Committee of the University regarding the learning outcomes to be recognised, an applicant or a University student indicates the commencement of studies at subsequent study stages or the shortening of the period of study in the nearest semester as the purpose of recognition, it shall be treated as a simultaneous request to the Director of the Study Programme to validate the Recognised Learning Outcomes. The Director of the Study Programme shall take a decision on the validation following the decision of the Recognition Committee.
	3. If the decision of the University Recognition Committee on the Recognised Learning Outcomes is wholly or partially favourable, the Director of the Study Programme shall validate the recognised study courses and draw up the individual study plan for the applicant or the University student for the commencement of studies in the nearest semester or shortening of the period of studies in accordance with the general procedure set out in the Regulations.
	4. If the decision of the University Recognition Committee on the Recognised Learning Outcomes is wholly or partially favourable, but the applicant or the University student:
		1. does not commence or continue his/her studies within the nearest semester, the Director of the Study Programme shall not validate the Recognised Learning Outcomes or, in the case of validation, the individual study plan shall become invalid. In such a case, before the planned commencement of studies or resumption of studies, the applicant or the University student shall resubmit a separate application to the Director of the Study Programme regarding the validation of the Learning Outcomes recognised by the University Recognition Committee in accordance with the general procedure set out in the Regulations;
		2. disputes the decision of the University Recognition Committee, the Director of the Study Programme shall not validate the Learning Outcomes not recognised in the contested part of the decision or, in the case of validation, the individual study plan shall become invalid.
	5. If the applicant or the University student submits a separate application regarding the validation of the Recognised Learning Outcomes by the University Recognition Committee and:
		1. if no significant changes have been made to the respective study course since the decision was made, the Director of Studies shall validate the Recognised Learning Outcomes without comparison and shall draw up an individual study plan for the commencement of studies in the nearest semester or for continuation in accordance with the general procedure set out in the Regulations;
		2. if significant changes have been made to the respective study course since the decision was taken, the Director of the Study Programme shall not validate the Recognised Learning Outcomes. In such a case, the person may resubmit an application to the University Recognition Committee regarding the learning outcomes to be recognised in accordance with the new content of the study course.
	6. The deadlines set out in the Regulations for the consideration of the application for validation by a person, an applicant or a University student shall not be binding on the University Recognition Committee in taking its decision on the Recognised Learning Outcomes. The person, the applicant and the University student shall be responsible for the timely submission of an application to the University Recognition Committee, if the purpose of the recognition is to commence studies at subsequent study stages, to validate credit points or to shorten the duration of studies in the nearest semester.
3. **Procedure and Criteria for Validating Results of Scientific Activity**
	1. The department of Doctoral Studies shall advise interested parties individually on the recommended procedure for comparison and validation of scientific activity for studies at subsequent study stages in doctoral study programmes, or regarding the comparability of the academic activities with the requirements of a doctoral study programme in accordance with the laws and regulations regarding promotion.
	2. If an applicant applies for admission to subsequent study stages in a doctoral study programme and wishes the results of scientific activity to be validated, he/she shall indicate the topic of the planned doctoral thesis and the supervisor of the doctoral thesis in the application in accordance with the requirements of the Academic Regulations III - Academic Regulations for Doctoral Studies, as well as attach an abstract in accordance with the requirements of admission regulations for doctoral study programmes and documents certifying the results of scientific activity on the topic of the doctoral thesis. The application should also be accompanied by a permit of the relevant Ethics Committee, consents or authorisations for the processing of personal data and other permits, if applicable.
	3. The results of the scientific activity shall be compared and validated at the relevant stage of studies by the Scientific Activity Evaluation Committee composed of not less than 3 (three) members, approved by a decree of the Vice-Rector for Science of the University. The Scientific Activity Evaluation Committee shall include the Dean of the Department of Doctoral Studies, the Director of the Study Programme, and experts of the field or sub-field relevant to the topic of the doctoral thesis.
	4. When comparing the results of scientific activity, the Scientific Activity Evaluation Committee shall take into account the indicators of scientific activity in accordance with the requirements of Academic Regulations III - Academic Regulations for Doctoral Studies, the stage of development of the planned doctoral thesis. Upon agreement with the applicant, the Scientific Activity Assessment Committee may specify the topic of the planned doctoral thesis.
	5. The results of the scientific activity may be validated for the applicant for individual Study Courses or for a study stage. In addition, the decision on the validation of the results of scientific activity shall indicate the planned topic of the doctoral thesis and the supervisor of the doctoral thesis.
4. **Final Provisions**
	1. These Regulations shall apply insofar as they do not conflict with external and internal regulations of the University (admission regulations).
	2. Comparison and validation in joint study programmes shall be carried out in accordance with the Regulations, unless otherwise stipulated in the agreement on the development and implementation of the joint study programme.

Chairperson of the Senate J.Gardovskis

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AMENDMENTS AGREED

at Rīga Stradiņš University

meeting of the Council of Deans of 22 January 2024, minutes No 4-SD.1-2/2/2024

meeting of the Rectorate of 29 January 2024, minutes No 1-PB-1/4/2024

AGREED

at Rīga Stradiņš University

meeting of the Council of Deans of 25 April 2022, minutes No 4-SD.1-2/15/2022

meeting of the Rectorate of 20 June 2022, minutes No 1-PB-1/22/2022

1. The number of available study places in the study programme shall be assessed taking into account the possibility of providing studies in accordance with the individual study plan; the faculty may provide additional information necessary for the assessment. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)