Plan for implementing the recommendations of the University of Tartu institutional accreditation (IA) 2022

No.	IA recommendation/area for improvement	UT activities (completed, in progress, planned)	Priority[1]	Deadline	Responsible
1	**STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT**				
1.1	The action plans for the university and its fields are not sufficiently detailed as regards the implementation of the directions for action. Therefore, the university should review the concept of its action plans, clearly indicating a detailed plan for each strategic strand. Such plans should include specific actions.	From 2023 onwards, the annual action plans of the university's strategic plan A2025 have been more concrete, including clearer content of activities and expected results. For example, the strategic development activities in degree studies are set out in more detail by faculty and by institute.	1	2022–2023	Director of Development
1.2	At university level, activities at the level of the field, which should be aimed at achieving university-wide strategic objectives, are not monitored with sufficient attention. The university should take more proactive care to ensure that the action plans of the faculties and other units are in place and of sufficiently high quality, for example by establishing a system of regular reporting or other ways of monitoring action plans and their implementation.	Since 2023, the performance agreements with the deans and the faculties' action plans also include institute-based activities. In the future, the faculties present their action plan and/or institutes' performance targets to the rector each year. Monitoring of the implementation of the action plan of the university's strategic plan has been stepped up. The annual interim report is prepared in September, before the start of the drafting of the following year's action plan, and the final report is made after the end of the year. The current status of the key performance indicators can be monitored on the statistics dashboard statistika.ut.ee.			

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[1] **1** – 0–3 years; **2** – 3–5 years; **3** – 5–7 years; **0** – non-priority.

2	RESOURCES				
2.1	*In order to raise awareness of the principles of human resource management at the university among employees, review and improvement of existing practices could be considered.[2]*	The IA report states that the regulations regarding the employment relations of academic staff are fair and transparent, but it appears that not all staff are aware of them. Therefore, there is a particular need to increase employees' knowledge of existing regulations. A first step has already been taken in connection with the amendments to the Employment Contracts Act, which entered into force on 1 August 2022, aiming to make employment relations more transparent and clearer. Employment contracts for new employees have been updated, references to leave rules, training arrangements, etc. were added, and existing staff received an email about the amendments. References to the job descriptions of academic staff are also included in the employment contracts of all academic staff and are followed in the staff evaluation process. As a second step, we plan to make the application process for academic staff easier to understand by providing candidates with more information on the entire process	1	2024	Area of responsibility of the director of administration: Human Resources Office

[2]Sentences in italics are suggestions from the expert panel/HAKA assessment council for further developments

		(incl. an estimated timeline) and suggestions on how to prepare documents.			
2.2	*The principles for the allocation of funds within the university would require a more systematic approach to ensure that the allocation of funds can be guided by the university's strategic development plans.*	The university's budgeting principles include financial means to finance strategic decisions – the development fund, strategic support for degree studies.	0		
2.3	*The University may wish to consider the possibility of covering the costs of open access publications to all its staff.*	We disagree. Firstly, there is no national open science policy in Estonia, and a number of important issues related to open-access publishing remain unresolved, incl. the sharing of costs. Secondly, using either baseline funding or grants to cover the costs of open-access publishing is not prohibited, and this option has sometimes been used.	0		
2.4	*In the field of IT: the IT strategy should be completed; the complexity of IT services should be reduced and the integration of IT systems improved; the IT responsibilities of the University and institutes should be clearly defined; the central investments as well as investments at unit level into cybersecurity should be increased to ensure the reliability and security of all systems; work should be continued towards the planned ISO27001 standard.*	The IT strategy (digital development strategy) is linked to the university's strategic plan. When drafting the new strategic plan, the plan is to integrate the digital development strategy into the strategic plan. Refactoring the Study Information System, which contains different registers (personal data, rooms, etc.), is a first step in improving the smooth organisation of IT services and integration between IT systems. The refactoring project has received funding from the university's development fund. The IT Office continues to work on updating the university's IT policies, and an important part of this process is to outline roles and	2	2025–2027	Area of responsibility of the director of administration: IT Office

		responsibilities in the commissioning and delivery of IT services. With the help of an external expert, we will also continue other necessary preparations for implementing an ISO 27001-compliant information security management system (deadline autumn 2025).			
2.5	*The University may wish to consider developing a business continuity plan to ensure the smooth and continuous operation of all processes in the event of failures or disruptions of critical services (e.g. IT).*	The obligation to ensure risk management in the field of IT comes from the ISO 27001 standard as well as from the amendment to the Cybersecurity Act that came into force in the summer of 2022.	1	2025	Area of responsibility of the director of administration: IT Office
2.6	*The University could consider developing a method for assessing the effectiveness of the implementation of communication plans, both internal and external.*	We disagree. At the end of each year, the Office of Marketing and Communication analyses the university's media coverage, the readability of the internal newsletter and the circulation of specific news items. In addition, various surveys (e.g. reputation survey, a survey on the awareness of micro-credential programmes, etc.) provide an indication of performance. These were also presented to the IA expert panel.	0		
3	**QUALITY CULTURE**				
3.1	A quality assurance system based on trust and personal ethos needs to be balanced with additional monitoring and intervention processes. All elements of the PDCA (Plan-Do-Check-Act) cycle must be logically and causally linked. Quality should be delineated in all relevant documents	In part, we disagree with the evaluators on this, because instead of increasing the administrative burden, we want to strengthen a quality culture based on trust and employees' values. The university's strategic plan, together with the action plan and key performance	1	2024	Area of responsibility of the director of development: Rector's Strategy Office

	(starting from the strategic plan) as assessed categories, defining minimum standards and institutional/national/international benchmarks to help monitor and assess achievement.	indicators, and the supporting regulations and agreements, is a sufficient basis for ensuring the quality of the university's core and support activities. We have also included a number of development activities based on the recommendations of institutional accreditation in the university's action plan for 2023 and the performance agreements of the members of the Rector's Office. This is one example where recommendations based on external evaluation are integrated into core development processes. On making the PDCA cycle more coherent, see also responses 3.2 and 3.3.			
3.2	It is necessary to clearly define the individual roles and responsibilities of university members in quality assurance and to monitor and guide the implementation of the agreements. This would also help prevent the absence of some elements of the PDCA cycle or their low implementation.	We have also supplemented and updated the table of quality management activities and persons in charge. In the future, we will ensure that it is reviewed and updated at least once a year.	Ongoing	Several times a year	Area of responsibility of the director of development: Rector's Strategy Office
		Based on agreements on the division of responsibilities for quality management, we clarify the role of the head of the institute, among others; where necessary, we update job descriptions or institutes' statutes. We will make quality topics and monitoring part of future performance appraisals.	1	Dec 2024	Area of responsibility of the director of administration: Human Resources Office
3.3	It is necessary to raise awareness of quality assurance processes among all university staff members. Awareness among the	The quality assurance process is not anything separate, but an organic part of the core processes.	Ongoing		Area of responsibility of the director of

	University community of the components of the quality system, their interrelationships and bottlenecks would allow for a more consistent implementation of the PDCA cycle.	A clearer definition of each employee's responsibilities, incl. implementing 1.2 and 3.2, will help increase awareness.			development: Rector's Strategy Office
3.4	*Quality assurance processes in the area of service to society could be much more clearly defined, as the current documentation is mainly a set of guidelines and reports with little relevance for quality assurance.*	There is a quality assurance system in place for continuing education. Museums, libraries, the Youth Academy, sports clubs, etc. have their own strategic and action plans, the implementation of which is regularly assessed. Formalising and measuring the participation of university staff in advisory boards, etc., does not enhance the quality of the activity and is not relevant.	0		
3.5	*In addition to the questionnaires, other approaches to collecting feedback could be used, such as systematic and documented interviews with students and external stakeholders, which would provide an additional dimension to quality assessment.*	Interviews with students and external stakeholders have been part of the internal evaluation of curricula (teaching quality) since 2021. The university does not plan any additional separate activities to collect feedback.	0		
4	**ACADEMIC ETHICS**				
4.1	*The system for dealing with misconduct and the procedures for handling complaints are clear, but these procedures involve rather high-ranking university staff (Academic Secretary, Director of the Institute) and a formal committee is set up as soon as a complaint is lodged. This may lead to the avoidance of discussions in borderline cases. At the level of institutes,*	Note: there are a number of the panel's comments grouped together in the box on the left – the report mentions equal treatment and Equal Treatment Complaints Officers, not academic ethics (see pages 32–33). In spring 2023, we launched a network of equal treatment support persons. The role	1	2023	Academic Secretary

	there are no persons with whom to discuss borderline cases and who would have an advisory role. This could potentially mean that incidents will not be reported, especially if the boundary between the prohibited and inappropriate is blurred. The UT could consider the appointment of one support person for academic ethics at each institute. This could be particularly useful for students. The sample of study programmes revealed the need for more information on academic ethics for students on the Biology and Biodiversity Conservation study programme.	of the support persons is to advise the complainant on how to lodge an unequal treatment complaint (whom to contact and how). See https://ut.ee/en/content/equal-treatment-support-persons The creation of a network of experts is also in progress: it is useful to involve external partners and/or recognised experts in the field in dealing with specific and complex situations (e.g. to avoid accusations that the organisation is not objective in its investigation of sensitive issues). We would also point out that the guidelines for equal treatment do not require a committee to be set up as soon as a complaint is lodged. A committee is only set up if a formal complaint has been lodged and the academic secretary considers that he cannot resolve it alone. In most cases, however, no formal complaint is lodged and the situation is resolved at institute or faculty level. This was also explained to the expert panel in writing.			
4.2	*The UT relies on cases that have occurred in determining the extent of both harassment and mental health problems. The university could consider introducing regular surveys to get a better overview of the issues.*	Since 2022, the job satisfaction survey has included the statement "People are treated fairly and with respect in my unit, in accordance with principles of equal treatment" to help to monitor the situation better. In addition, respondents can further explain their rating of the statement.	Implement ed	Dec 2022	Area of responsibility of the director of administration: Human Resources Office

		Results of the job satisfaction survey are available for the university members in the corresponding dashboard: https://statistika.ut.ee/toorahulolu/			
4.3	*Plagiarism detection software "Ouriginal" is often used, but it could be mandatory for all written works.*	The university is undertaking outreach and training activities for teaching staff to promote the use of plagiarism detection software, but will continue to use plagiarism detection software according to actual need. As the software is used by the teaching staff member, it is up to the teaching staff member to decide when plagiarism checks are necessary and when they are not. Also, the software will change as the Ouriginal platform will be closed. In the second half of 2023, universities will start using Turnitin plagiarism detection software.	0		
5	**INTERNATIONALISATION**				
5.1	The University of Tartu defines itself as a national and international university. Unfortunately, the university lacks a common and shared understanding of what it means to be both a national university and an international university at the same time. It should be more clearly defined and communicated to the university family so that the unique role of the university is equally well understood both inside and outside the university.	The roles of the national and international university are clearly defined in the University of Tartu Act, the UT Strategic Plan A2025 and the administrative contract between the UT and the MoER. These are the roles that the university fulfils on a daily basis. For example, the language and internationalisation principles have been developed at the university. For a more efficient implementation of these principles, the university's organised a language	Ongoing		Rector

		attitudes survey among its academic staff, which revealed that there are quite a few international staff members who rarely or never use Estonian. In addition, international staff tend to lack information about the university's language policy and the opportunities for learning Estonian. Based on the results of the survey as well as to follow the university's strategic plan, a project for teaching Estonian was developed in autumn 2022. Within the project, a wide range of Estonian language courses and language practice opportunities have been created to support the Estonian language learning of international staff, international students and students who speak Estonian as a foreign language.			
5.2	There is no common understanding of the structure and functioning of the mobility window at the university. The approach to the mobility window and the different options for its implementation must be clearly defined and the dissemination of relevant information among the university community ensured.	The module of a semester abroad is stipulated with the university's Statutes of curriculum, a guideline with examples has been compiled, counselling has taken place and performance pay was awarded to programme directors who made the module of the semester abroad, together with online information, visible to students by spring 2020. During the coronavirus pandemic, the university decided to temporarily suspend the task of implementing the module of a semester abroad because student mobility was largely halted. Not all curricula has been able to properly launch the study abroad module	1	Dec 2023	Area of responsibility of the vice rector for academic affairs and deans: Office of Academic Affairs, programme directors

		before that, which we also explained to the external evaluators. The university did not organise a wider outreach campaign at a time when foreign universities were closed for face-to-face studies and cross-border movement of people was restricted. The university continues to support the implementation of the mobility window in 2023. Corresponding actions were included in the 2023 performance agreements with the deans. This is also related to the development activity "enabling students to plan their studies across the curriculum" in 7.1.			
5.3	It should be better explained to the students on the Computer Engineering and Robotics study programme how the mobility window works so that they do not have to extend their studies due to their participation in mobility. The international mobility of students in the Biology and Biodiversity Conservation study programme could also be increased by better informing students about mobility and funding opportunities and the transfer of credits acquired abroad.	The curriculum of Biology and Biodiversity Conservation will enhance information exchange on mobility opportunities and expand the network of partner universities. Also, the Biosciences Students' Association works on promoting student exchange. An information session on mobility for biology students was held in spring 2022, and a new information seminar will be held in the coming months, incl. presentations by students who have recently studied abroad. Newly admitted students of the curriculum of Robotics and Computer Engineering will be informed of mobility opportunities at the information session in autumn 2023. Students who have studied abroad are entitled to an extra semester and this is	1	2023	Area of responsibility of the dean of the Faculty of Science and Technology: Institute of Technology, Institute of Ecology and Earth Sciences

		used if the study abroad period does not fit into the curriculum (the mobility period is agreed in the study plan before going abroad).			
5.4	The Law study programme should significantly increase both the physical and virtual international mobility of students.	The implementation of the new version of the Law curriculum will reorganise the order of courses so that students will have natural semesters of mobility. Students will be given information on mobility, incl. recommendations of universities that support legal education in Estonia. *An increase in mobility among block-mode students is unlikely.*	1	2024	Area of responsibility of the dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences: School of Law
6	**TEACHING STAFF**				
6.1	The situation of academic staff depends to a large extent on existing research grants and on the situation of institutes, both in terms of pay and promotion opportunities. The time between obtaining a doctorate and becoming a co-professor is likewise too long. The University must provide resources for merit-based promotions of a sufficient number of academic staff each year and clearly communicate promotion opportunities to ensure staff motivation. More frequent assessments of younger academic staff could also be considered, for example by using performance interviews to support development in	The unreasonably high share of competition-based funding in Estonian R&D funding has been acknowledged for a long time, and various parties are constantly working to increase the share of stable funding (core funding for R&D institutions). As this is an issue at the level of the state budget, the UT cannot solve it alone. To increase the success of academic staff in applying for competition-based funding, the Grant Office was established in 2017 as a central support unit. The Grant Office is constantly developing its services to offer the best possible support.	2	2026	Area of responsibility of the vice rector for research: Grant Office

Area of responsibility of the director of administration: Human Resources Office |

	addition to formal attestations every 5 years.	As for promotion, this is a very new mechanism in Estonian higher education. Promotion requirements are reviewed and fine-tuned as necessary, with the most recent changes made in March 2023. By May 2023, seven academic staff members have been promoted to higher positions. Junior research fellows undergo evaluation every year, twice in their first year. Work is also underway to develop a performance appraisal system. We have offered internal training courses for managers on conducting interviews; as the second stage, a digital solution for work plans needs to be created (together with an annual interview solution).			
6.2	The quality of the teaching carried out by the lecturer should be taken into account in the attestation of academic staff. An independent assessment of the teaching skills of the teaching staff could be applied in the attestation process, the attestation should not rely solely on student feedback, as this may not adequately reflect the quality of the teaching and learning experience.	In the evaluation of academic staff, the assessment of teaching skills is not based solely on student feedback. On the contrary, the university has abandoned this practice. However, advocates of an earlier approach based on student feedback scores still have to get used to the change. Teaching academic staff members prepare a teaching development analysis (teaching portfolio) for the evaluation. The programme director will provide a written evaluation of the teaching staff member's teaching and contribution to the curriculum development. The academic developer is involved in the evaluation, who is not a member of the committee but an	0 (regarding recommen dation) Ongoing (evaluation s)	Implement ed	Area of responsibility of the director of administration: Human Resources Office Area of responsibility of the vice rector for academic affairs: Office of Academic Affairs

		independent member supporting the committee in the assessment of teaching skills. Support for the self-development of teaching staff is also guided by the internal evaluation, during which each semester, the Office of Academic Affairs informs the managers responsible for the quality of teaching about the courses with the lowest feedback, where improvement and the development of teaching staff are carried out in collaboration with academic developers. The university will continue to provide regular training for both the members of the evaluation committee (what and how to assess, how to conduct the interview) and the staff evaluated (how to prepare for the evaluation, what to pay attention to in their teaching development analyses).			
6.3	From the sample of study programmes, the teaching staff of the Entrepreneurship and Digital Solutions curriculum should meet more regularly to discuss inter-subject links, coherence between teaching and assessment and problems related to drop-outs. This would make it possible to strengthen cooperation between research-oriented and practice-oriented teaching staff.	We organise regular (online) meetings with the School of Economics and Business Administration, teaching staff at NC and develop the curriculum to achieve better coherence between modules and courses.	Implemented	Implemented	Area of responsibility of the dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences: Narva College

6.4	*The proportion of teaching and research burden varies widely among academic staff. The student-teacher ratio is very good (>8:1), but if the total hours of teaching is divided by the total number of students, the result may be different. This indicator could be refined taking into account the teaching burden of academic staff.*	The career model implemented in 2021 was designed to increase flexibility within positions, so the difference in teaching/research workload within positions will certainly remain. A study on the use of the working time of academic staff will be completed in 2023, the results of which will help to refine, if necessary, the metrics used to assess the workload of academic staff.	1	Dec 2024	Area of responsibility of the director of administration: Human Resources Office
6.5	*Thanks to its international visibility, the University is involved in a number of international networks, and this supports mobility and cooperation. However, networks could be used much more widely for staff development purposes.*	We work with partner universities to provide academic staff with experience abroad. For example, in the framework of the curriculum design project supported by the UT development fund, which started in spring 2023, there is a collaboration with Ghent University, where a similar curriculum development project is coming to an end. The aim of the cooperation is to establish contact between the curriculum contact persons of the UT and Ghent and to share experiences on the activities the universities have implemented in curriculum development. Training academic and support staff is a central goal of the next period of the ENLIGHT project (Nov 2023 to Oct 2027).	2	2027	Area of responsibility of the director of development: International Cooperation and Protocol Office Area of responsibility of the director of administration: Human Resources Office
6.6	*Attestations could become more open and collegial. Gender balance should be ensured in the evaluation panels and the*	Since autumn 2022, we offer a training course for members of evaluation committees called "Multi-interviewee	1	May 2024	Area of responsibility of

	number of international experts could be increased.	interviews", which also include guidance on how to plan such interviews. We will analyse the gender composition of the committees and make proposals for rebalancing.			the director of administration: Human Resources Office
6.7	*So-called open competitions for the recruitment of teaching staff are generally internal competitions due to a number of constraints. The university could consider how to increase out-of-university recruitment.*	As the first measure, we plan to extend the application period for associate professors and professors (currently one month). As the second measure, we plan to publish competition information on more international recruitment portals.	1	Dec 2024	Area of responsibility of the director of administration: Human Resources Office
6.8	*Research cooperation with private sector companies and various public authorities (e.g. Ministry of the Environment) is rightly considered a priority and employees have the freedom and motivation to do so. Efforts to involve private sector actors in teaching should continue.*	We agree and continue working on this.	Ongoing		Area of responsibility of the deans: Institutes/ colleges
6.9	*Given the global competition and the relative small size of Estonian universities in the global context, close cooperation is necessary. The UT should rethink its rather reluctant position with regard to cooperation within Estonia and contribute more to it for Estonian higher education to be better prepared in the face of the global competition.*	We disagree with the assessment that the UT has a "reluctant position" with regard to cooperation within Estonia. The UT actively collaborates with other universities where it is necessary and reasonable. For example, universities work very closely together in Universities Estonia (participation in policy-making). The UT often plays a leading role in universities' development cooperation (for example, in the development of various support services).	Ongoing		Rector

7	STUDY PROGRAMME				
7.1	The format of design and development of curricula at the university is not uniform. When developing or reviewing curricula, a clear and coherent form based on quality criteria must be introduced, based on which to formulate learning objectives and expected learning outcomes at curriculum and module level. This template should provide clear guidance on the elements to be included in the description of each study programme.	In curriculum design, the UT aims to ensure that learning outcomes are appropriate to the level of study and that assessment and teaching are appropriate to the level of the learning outcomes. In addition, we want to find good ways of displaying the curriculum (when which skills are developed in the curriculum) and to give students the opportunity to plan their studies in advance across the curriculum. This means that a plan for teaching the curriculum has been drawn up for the years ahead. In spring 2023, we had an in-depth look at the study planning solution of the University of Helsinki (in their study information system SISU). With the support of the development fund, activities of the curriculum design project started. The project is aimed at curriculum development activities at the first and second levels of study, so that teaching and assessment methodologies, the content of courses and modules and international studies (incl. internationalisation at home) support the acquisition of future skills. Ten UT curricula have been involved in the project. We started cooperation with Ghent University, at which 20 curricula are developed in a similar project (workshop with Ghent University on 17 May, seminar in Ghent in October).	2	2027	Area of responsibility of the vice rector for academic affairs: Office of Academic Affairs

		Building on the renewal of the learning outcomes in the higher education standard, and taking advantage of the opportunities arising from the opening up of the structural funds action, we are planning to organise workshops as part of the internal evaluation to review and improve the learning outcomes, also by creating an understanding that lower-level competencies are contained in higher-level ones and that the formulation of learning outcomes should start by aligning them with the assessment method. One of the inputs to be gathered is the knowledge of which learning outcomes at which level could be taught and assessed by which methods.			
7.2	The Faculty of Law should look beyond traditional legal professions and explore the employment opportunities for graduates with a Bachelor's degree in both the public and private sectors and what additional competences (including soft skills) are needed for this purpose.	The School of Law, in cooperation with the programme council, will analyse the labour market for BA graduates of law and what additional skills are needed for such a workforce. The School of Law will analyse the competencies taught through similar curricula in neighbouring countries and consider the possibility of implementing them in its own curriculum. When the new version of the curriculum is put into operation, the syllabuses will	1	May 2024	Area of responsibility of the dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences: School of Law

		formulate more clearly the general competencies to be acquired in the courses.				
7.3	The wording of the learning outcomes of the curriculum is uneven. The learning outcomes of modules must be harmonised in terms of their style, length, and level (go beyond the mere list of expected knowledge) and ensure their coherence with the learning outcomes of the curriculum as a whole. (Law)	The School of Law supports its teaching staff in improving the wording of learning outcomes. Teaching staff are offered advice on this and are supported in adopting new teaching methods appropriate to the learning outcomes. The School of Law participates in the curriculum design project to develop both bachelor's and master's curricula. Curriculum design starts with defining the graduate's knowledge, skills, values and roles, followed by the outputs of modules and courses, and the matching of teaching and assessment methods.	1	May 2024	Area of responsibility of the dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences: School of Law
7.4	The study programme has problems with the options for selecting the courses listed in the curriculum, their sequence, and the correspondence of the credits to the actual workload of the student. The study programme must be reviewed in this respect to ensure the availability of electives prescribed in the curriculum, to ensure that the volumes of courses correspond to the workload of the student and ensure an appropriate place of the courses in the curriculum. For example, the appropriateness of the broad set of requirements in the basic courses, the balance between public and criminal law should be reviewed and a solution should	In developing the new version of the law curriculum, the balance between the different disciplines was analysed, and the curriculum now better meets the needs of the labour market. The number of electives offered in the new version of the curriculum will be revised, and most electives will yield 3 ECTS to allow students to choose more electives. The development and teaching of new courses that cut across legal disciplines are supported.	1	May 2024	Area of responsibility of the dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences: School of Law

	be found for using problem-based learning on topics across different areas of law. (Law)	The curriculum of the School of Law was updated in the spring of 2022, and we believe that the new version of the curriculum has already addressed several critical points, including this one. The changes now need to be implemented.			
7.5	The study programme must review the learning outcomes and ensure that they correspond to Master's level. (Robotics and Computer Engineering, International Relations and Regional Studies)	Led by the Office of Academic Affairs, the curriculum design project (2023–2024) has been launched to develop activities and tools, with the support of experts and external experience, for developing coherent curricula at the first and second levels of study so that the teaching and assessment methodology, the content of courses and modules, and student mobility best support the development of students' skills. As part of this project, the learning outcomes will also be aligned to the level of the curriculum.	Ongoing		Area of responsibility of the dean of the Faculty of Science and Technology: Institute of Technology

Area of responsibility of the dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences: Johan Skytte Institute of Political Studies |
7.6	*Experts from outside the university and, where appropriate, international experts should be involved throughout the development and evaluation of study programmes.*	External partners have been involved in both curriculum design and internal evaluation.	Ongoing		
8	**LEARNING AND TEACHING**				
8.1	The understanding of learner-centred learning and teaching and its implementation in university study	Learner- or learning-centred teaching means that the learner sets their own goals, participates in the planning of learning, and is in charge of and responsible for their own	Ongoing		Area of responsibility of the vice rector

	programmes is uneven. It must be ensured that a clear approach to student-centredness is included in the curriculum design and internal evaluation, allowing for the consistent application of this principle.	learning. Learning-centredness is the first focus topic of the university's good practice of teaching, but definitely not the only one. It is also a focus of teaching skills-related training and academic developers' consulting activities. Learner-centredness is reflected in the feedback survey for both courses and curricula, and the results are addressed in the internal evaluation. We are therefore constantly striving, through various activities, to ensure that all the principles of the good practice of teaching are consistently applied.			for academic affairs: Office of Academic Affairs
8.2	*The UT could consider improving the admission process by offering earlier or longer admission time, proactively recommending alternative study places to student candidates and/or, if necessary, carrying out a mapping of educational gaps before admission.*	Some of the suggestions have already been done or are planned. In the second and third levels of study, where applicants have a varied educational background, the admission period is also longer or more flexible. Application to English-taught curricula opens at the beginning of January, admission to all master's curricula opens at the beginning of February, and admission to doctoral studies takes place four times a year. For teacher education, pre-assessment tools are planned to be developed to provide a more flexible way of assessing the existing knowledge and skills of already employed teachers to make recommendations for them on continuing their studies. Discussions on the admission process take place every year, and we currently do not see the admission window in the first level	0		

		of study as a problem and do not plan to introduce the (costly) changes suggested.			
8.3	*To ensure a more consistent and integrated use of digital technologies in teaching, rules could be developed at university level.*	For an overview of the university's recommended teaching environments, see https://ut.ee/en/e-learning-possibilities. We are preparing a guide for starting teaching staff and lecturers with authorisation agreements or contracts for services, which will give an overview of the recommended digital solutions and how to use them in teaching at the university. The university has not decided to restrict or regulate the freedom of academic units to use different environments (a similar position is taken by the University of Helsinki, with whom we discussed the topic). It is important to raise awareness among teaching staff about security issues (data protection) in different environments and to guide them to centrally use environments that have been found secure (by sharing information on this in the guidelines). Teaching staff are advised and trained in the use of digital technologies, and these activities will be continued systematically. In the spring of 2023, we organised discussion seminars on the possibilities of using AI chatbots, which resulted in the preparation of guidelines and training courses.	1	2023	Area of responsibility of the vice rector for academic affairs: Office of Academic Affairs Area of responsibility of the director of administration: IT Office
8.4	*UT could consider intensifying practical learning in curricula where it is not sufficiently rooted.*	One topic in the curriculum design project that we would like to test and implement in some master's curricula (to make recommendations to others) is work-based	Ongoing		Area of responsibility of the vice rector

		learning or industrial master's. Participation in traineeship is one of the performance indicators for curricula. In 2023, programme directors were asked for feedback on the performance indicators of curricula and the academic affairs committee updated the indicators (incl. the addition of a curriculum feedback indicator). The traineeship indicator was considered important, has had an impact and will be continued. For instance, starting from the next academic year (2023/2024), traineeship is compulsory in all curricula of the Faculty of Arts and Humanities.			for academic affairs: Office of Academic Affairs
8.5	*The University could consider supplementing the Code of Good Practice in Teaching with a section on teaching and learning in English.*	The principles described in the good practice of teaching ('teaching ethics') apply equally to teaching in both Estonian and English. To support the adaptation of new teaching staff (incl. English-speaking ones) to the UT teaching environment, a handbook for new teaching staff members will be prepared, see also 8.3.	1	2023	Area of responsibility of the vice rector for academic affairs: Office of Academic Affairs
9	**STUDENT ASSESSMENT**				
9.1	The learning outcomes and assessment methods of the Entrepreneurship and Digital Solutions study programme need to be better aligned, as well as coordination and harmonisation of assessment practices across the curriculum. Assessment practices should be more diverse and less dependent on teaching staff preferences.	The training course "From learning outcomes to assessment" took place in Narva College 28.11.2022–30.01.2023 (8 hours of face-to-face work, plus independent work on organising learning outcomes and assessment). With the participation of 10 teaching staff members, the formulation of learning outcomes and assessment were analysed and harmonised across the curriculum.	Implement ed	Implement ed	Area of responsibility of the dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences: Narva College

9.2	*Students are aware of the possibilities of contesting grades, but in order to monitor the situation, the rules for documenting appeal cases could be clarified.*	It is not entirely clear what is meant. The contesting is documented in the document management system as all such documents; a separate register or other place of registration only for the contesting of grades would not be practical. We gather that this reflects a desire to further improve students' awareness of the opportunity to contest results. However, we have outlined the procedure clearly and understandably on our homepage. The university does not see the need to change the documentation rules at the moment.	0		
9.3	*In order to implement a common approach to the assessment of students, it would be desirable to agree on a good practice of moderation of assessments at the university, which would help to ensure the objectivity of the assessment and the equal treatment of students.*	The wording of the proposal is difficult to understand. At the moment, the university does not see a solution in the formulation of a good practice. The good practice of teaching has been agreed upon, teaching staff must ensure the objectivity of the assessment and the equal treatment of students under university regulations. If there are problems, student feedback draws attention to it, and it is important to address student feedback. Based on the experience of the first year of the new internal evaluation, one of the deans' performance targets for 2023 is to take student feedback into account and involve students more actively in the internal evaluation. Based on the suggestions from the internal evaluation, the necessary improvement actions are planned.	0		

10	LEARNING SUPPORT SYSTEMS				
10.1	*Work with students and employers should continue to improve progress and graduation rates.*	This is part of the internal evaluation and is motivated by performance funding of the faculties. Ways that could help are also being reiterated when setting targets.	Ongoing		Area of responsibility of the vice rector for academic affairs: Office of Academic Affairs Deans
10.2	*It should be ensured that independent counsellors are available to students in all campuses. It is advisable not to combine the role of lecturer and counsellor.*	This is ensured. There are 16 independent counsellors working for students at the Counselling Centre. Psychologists also work part-time in regional colleges, and counselling is also offered remotely. We try to avoid the role of the teaching staff member in the selection of counsellors.	Ongoing		Area of responsibility of the vice rector for academic affairs: Office of Academic Affairs
10.3	*In case of mental health problems, there are long waiting times for receiving professional help. The university could find a solution to this problem.*	The number of psychologists has increased and waiting times have been reduced. To this end, the university has done its best. The UT employs eight psychologists with a total workload of 4.1. Students are most in need of psychological support at the end of the semester and at the beginning of the exam session.

Students can also get help from outside the university, and the centre also provides information about these options. | Ongoing | | Area of responsibility of the vice rector for academic affairs: Office of Academic Affairs |

		The university continues its activities to prevent mental health problems.			
10.4	*Where possible, a special fund should be set up to support students with special needs.*	We disagree with the recommendation. It is neither reasonable nor feasible to address the issue of funding for students with special needs at the level of an individual university through the activity support for degree studies. Discussions on support for students with special needs are held jointly with higher education institutions under the leadership of the MoER. The solution must be found at the national level.	0		
10.5	*The possibilities of the libraries of the Narva College and the Tallinn Department of the Faculty of Law of the University of Tartu are not sufficient, although students can use other libraries.*	Libraries' collections are constantly updated according to the needs of readers and the resources available. Central databases are accessible to all members of the university.

The physical upgrading of the library of the Tallinn office of the School of Law depends on the renovation plan of the Tallinn building of the School of Law. | 2 | 2026 | Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences |
11	**RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT AND/OR OTHER CREATIVE ACTIVITY**				
11.1	Promotion opportunities for academic staff are very limited and may also lead to future challenges for the sustainability of R&D. Attestation, with clear guidance on promotion options along with specific objectives, should increase staff satisfaction.	See 6.1.	2	2026	Area of responsibility of the director of administration: Human Resources Office
11.2	*The evaluation of research is mainly internal and quantitative. It would also be*	We disagree with the evaluators on the recommendation. Given the very high share	0 (regarding	Implement ed	Vice Rector for Research

	advisable to use qualitative external assessments. A vision for the future could be developed to support young researchers who do not yet have a high level of research performance but clearly have good potential.	of competition-based funding in Estonian R&D funding compared to many other countries, the evaluation of research is predominantly external and qualitative (e.g. evaluation of grant proposals, peer review of publications, etc.). There is also regular (qualitative) research evaluation every seven years, as well as various (also qualitative) target evaluations. There is no point in duplicating these processes within the university. The evaluation of the academic staff of the UT can also in no way be described as purely quantitative, although the harmonisation of the quality of evaluation and the assessment of results must certainly be a continuous process. To support the careers of young researchers, the university has developed a career model, which must also, of course, be constantly monitored to ensure that it is implemented as intended. Training will also be provided to evaluation committees on the use of different assessment models, incl. qualitative ones.	recommen dation) Ongoing (other assessment s)		(general principles of research assessment), Area of responsibility of the director of administration: Human Resources Office (evaluation, career model)
11.3	*The evaluation of research could also be extended from individual researchers to research groups or units. Currently, the evaluation is carried out only at individual or institutional level, while research is predominantly carried out in teams.*	We partly disagree here. See also comment on proposal 11.2. Research teams are evaluated externally as part of the peer-review of grant proposals and publications, and there is no need to duplicate this process at the university. However, there is also a lot of individual research in the Faculty of Arts and Humanities, and to some	1 mapping research teams 2 general principles	Dec 2023; ongoing	Area of responsibility of the vice rector for research: Grant Office

		extent in the Faculty of Social Sciences, where it would be more accurate to talk in broad terms about research directions. The UT Grant Office has started mapping research directions (and within them, research groups), which, however, is not directly aimed at evaluating them, but at making them publicly visible, both internally to support interdisciplinary cooperation within the university, externally to find partners and more broadly to support research communication. Currently, there is an international focus on the renewal of research assessment (the so-called research assessment initiative), in which the UT is also participating in various working groups and discussions, and is reviewing its internal assessment processes. Centrally, it is important not to increase researchers' already heavy evaluation burden. Research teams are free to organise the way they work, incl. benchmarking or other forms of evaluation. Some groups/institutes are known to implement them, but the central harmonisation of these practices is not in line with the academic culture of the UT. However, as part of the development of the overall UT feedback system, the possibilities of such evaluations could also be communicated to research groups.	of research assessment		
11.4	*In order to increase the societal impact of university research, it would be necessary to address societal challenges in a*	Partly it is already being implemented, partly we disagree. See also comment on proposal 11.3. Today's research is largely	1 Regarding sustainable	2023	Vice Rector for Research.

	systematic and interdisciplinary manner. This could be done by setting up a separate unit to better link the competences of different faculties for joint research in order to provide solutions to societal challenges.	interdisciplinary, whether because of the complexity of the research questions, the inherent interdisciplinarity of new research directions, or the funding conditions. However, interdisciplinarity can first and foremost emerge from a perceived need among researchers themselves. Creating separate unit(s) will not help to increase this. Exceptions to this are the UT Centre for Ethics or the creation of the UT Centre for Sustainable Development at the end of 2022, which, however, have broader objectives than scientific research. At the same time, we agree that the development of an interdisciplinary mindset is very necessary, including starting it already in doctoral studies, but changing mindsets is always a longer process. Discussions could therefore start on what changes are needed in the first place and on the most appropriate ways to achieve them.	development 2 Regarding doctoral studies and discussions		Director of Development (regarding sustainable development)
11.5	*In supporting new businesses, the focus on patents and licenses is one of the business dimensions. More emphasis should be put on developing services to encourage the emergence of profit-oriented companies as well as NGOs.*	Process and support service descriptions have been created to make it easier for entrepreneurial researchers to embark on the journey of commercialising their research and setting up investor-ready companies. A university-owned asset management company UniTartu Ventures has been launched to attract co-investors, hold stakes and accumulate competencies in the field we have created and which will open up content.	1	2023	Area of responsibility of the vice rector for research: Centre for Entrepreneurship and Innovation, UniTartu Ventures

		We have created an action plan for the development of an ecosystem for science- and technology-intensive start-ups, (see Figure 1): https://media.voog.com/0000/0037/5345/files/DeepTech%20tegevuskava%202023-2027.pdf			
11.6	*The use of university networks to promote different activities is very commendable. However, networking activities could be further intensified to support mobility and joint research.*	Supporting research cooperation (partnerships, mobility programmes, etc.) is one of the tasks described for the Grant Office and the office does that as much as possible within the resources available. However, the intensity of participation in networks depends on the researchers and cannot be controlled by the support units.	Ongoing		Area of responsibility of the vice rector for research: Grant Office Area of responsibility of the director of development: International Cooperation and Protocol Office (university networks)
11.7	*The mobility of academic staff plays an important role in ensuring the influx of new ideas and continuously improving research. Mobility needs to be supported at all levels of RDC.*	We agree and are constantly working on this.	Ongoing		Area of responsibility of the director of development: International Cooperation and Protocol Office
12	**SERVICE TO SOCIETY**				
12.1	*The UT could consider establishing a coordination mechanism at university level*	The proposal is not understandable.	0		

	between different entities (colleges, institutes, museums, etc.) in order to ensure maximum utilisation of available resources in the provision of services to society.	Activities of service to society are extremely diverse, ranging from research communication, museum work, continuing education to business cooperation and policy advice, and more. We do not consider it appropriate to set up a separate coordination mechanism for these different types of activities.			
12.2	*Similarly to the Strategic Plan of the University of Tartu, specific aspects of the provision of services to society (promotion of scientific thinking, lifelong learning, rental of university premises, etc.) could be included in the action plans at the level of institutes.*	Already today, the statutes of all institutes/colleges include the task of ensuring that, in addition to teaching and research and development, they provide services to society in line with their specialisations and specificities.		Implemented	