

APPROVED BY
Decision No. SEN-N-7
of January 26, 2022,
of Vytautas Magnus University Senate

DESCRIPTION OF PROCEDURE FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF ACADEMIC AND NON-ACADEMIC STAFF AT VYTAUTAS MAGNUS UNIVERSITY

I. GENERAL PROVISIONS

1. The Description of Procedure for Professional Development of Academic and Non-academic Staff (hereinafter referred to as the “Description”) at Vytautas Magnus University (hereinafter referred to as the “University”) shall establish the functioning of the system of professional development at the University, the principles of planning, organization, and promotion of staff participation in professional development processes.

2. The Description was drawn up in accordance with the Law on Higher Education and Research of the Republic of Lithuania, the University Statute, the University Strategy, legal acts of the Republic of Lithuania, and internal documents of the University.

3. Activities aimed at the professional development of academic and non-academic staff shall be coordinated and carried out by the University Professional Competence Development Center (hereinafter referred to as the “Center”) in cooperation with other academic and non-academic units of the University.

4. To achieve personal and strategic objectives of the University, professional development at the University shall be based on the principles of equal participation, openness to innovation, freedom of choice, and responsibility for personal growth.

5. The primary purpose of the professional development system at the University shall be a socially sustainable organization that brings together highly skilled employees, ensuring opportunities for a person to develop professionally and achieve the highest performance results.

II. PRINCIPLES OF THE SYSTEM OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AT THE UNIVERSITY

6. The University shall provide professional development opportunities for all employees according to the nature of their work, their needs and opportunities. Staff professional development shall be an integral part of professional activities.

7. Professional development activities of the University staff shall be divided according to the following competence groups:

Group 1 – general competences (foreign language competences, intercultural communication and cooperation competences, management competences, etc.).

Group 2 – professional competences (didactic competences, digital competences, research competences, subject competences, etc.).

Group 3 – personal competences (personal development competences, time management competences, etc.).

8. Professional development activities of academic and non-academic staff shall include activities related to their professional activities (e.g., participation in professional development seminars, courses; participation in scientific practical conferences; participation in

internships in institutions for advanced research and studies, research and business centers; participation in mentoring, tutoring activities; participation in other activities).

9. Competences may be acquired and developed by participating in the activities organized by the University, Lithuanian and foreign higher education institutions, or other institutions that can provide such services.

10. Professional development can take place both through contact and distance participation.

11. Academic staff, having assessed their needs and opportunities, shall participate in professional development activities for at least 20 hours during the academic year (for a full-time position); non-academic staff, for at least 10 hours (for a full-time position).

12. It is recommended that teachers who teach in English or another language have proficiency in the English or any other foreign language in which the course is taught not lower than C1. Teachers whose foreign language proficiency is lower than C1 are recommended to take part in courses for the development of foreign language competences.

13. The staff shall submit the results of their professional development activities in the form of an individual report to the head of the unit.

14. When participating in competitions organized by the University for positions and in staff attestation, the consistent and purposeful participation of the employee in professional development activities shall be taken into account.

15. At the end of the year, the head of the academic unit shall initiate individual interviews with each teacher to discuss the teacher's professional development and results of student evaluation of teaching, as well as to recommend and provide directions for the following year. Depending on the performance, high performance bonuses may be awarded to academic staff.

16. At the end of the year, the head of the non-academic unit shall initiate individual interviews with each employee to discuss the employee's professional development and performance, as well as to recommend and provide directions for the following year. When awarding performance bonuses, account shall be taken of the employee's competences and his/her participation in professional development activities.

17. Employees shall plan their professional development activities independently, encouraged by the heads of academic or non-academic units or the administration of the University.

18. The heads of academic and non-academic units shall ensure and coordinate the continuity of professional development of the staff of the unit and shall carry out monitoring.

III. PLANNING, ORGANIZATION, IMPLEMENTATION, AND QUALITY ASSURANCE OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES AT THE UNIVERSITY

19. Taking into account the needs of the community, the strategic priorities of the University, the results of surveys of teachers and students, and market research, a preliminary annual plan for professional development shall be drawn up and presented to the University community by November 15.

20. Professional development activities *for academic and non-academic staff* shall be divided into the following 3 targeted directions:

20.1. *Level A training programs (for beginners)*, which shall be intended for those who want to acquire new competences, to update general knowledge.

20.2. *Level B training programs (for the experienced)*, which shall be intended for those who want to deepen their competences and/or acquire new competences or who want to maintain existing qualifications.

20.3. *Level C training programs (for experts)*, which shall be intended for those who want to develop existing competences and share their experience with colleagues. These are proactive activities for experts in their field, using active and inclusive methods (e.g., exchange of experience, mentoring) to develop expertise, to maintain expert qualifications through the exchange of experience, mentoring and other activities.

21. The lecturer selected to conduct professional development training shall provide (not later than within 5 working days prior to the training) a description of the training (extended version) in Lithuanian (if the training is conducted in Lithuanian) and a description of the training in English (if the training is conducted in English).

22. Professional development activities may be conducted by members of the University community and external experts (both national and foreign).

23. Academic and non-academic staff of other higher education institutions may participate in professional development training organized at the University.

24. The participants in professional development activities organized by the University shall be issued with certificates of participation.

25. At the end of each year, an analysis of the need for professional development activities of academic and non-academic units and a feedback survey shall be carried out.

26. Academic and non-academic units shall have the opportunity to get acquainted with the results of quality assessment and provide recommendations on how to improve professional development activities.

IV. PROMOTING PARTICIPATION IN PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

27. The University shall provide an opportunity for the entire University community to participate in professional development activities.

28. Such activities may be financed by the University, private funds, European Union structural funds, and other sources of funding.

29. The University staff may participate in activities organized at the University level or in trainings organized by other institutions, and self-finance the activities or receive funding by submitting an application to VMU Professional Development Fund, supervised by the Rector or a person authorized by him/her.

30. VMU Professional Development Fund shall finance high-level, specific knowledge activities according to the individual or group needs of the University community. The main functions of VMU Professional Development Fund shall be as follows:

30.1. To organize once a year an open competition for funding for professional development activities for the University community.

30.2. To accept applications and finance individual learning needs, taking into account the resources of the Fund.

30.3. The need for activities shall be assessed and applications shall be approved by an expert working group appointed by the order of the Rector.

31. The University shall create conditions for every teacher to improve his/her qualifications in professional development activities organized by the University free of charge, to the extent required by these requirements.

V. FINAL PROVISIONS

32. This Description, its amendments and/or additions shall be approved by the order of the Rector of the University.