**Criteria for assessing the quality of the final project results under Measure 14.1.1.1 “Digitalisation initiatives to improve the quality of studies” of the Specific Support Objective 14.1.1 “Recovery measures in the education sector” of the Operational Programme “Growth and Employment”**

1. **COMPLIANCE**

*The expert assesses the information provided in section 1 “Description of project progress” and section 2 “Compliance” of the report to assess the quality of the project deliverables.*

**The expert must assess:**

Has the project strengthened the acquisition of all five digital competences according to the digital competence framework for citizens (DigComp 2.1[[1]](#footnote-1) or DigComp 2.2[[2]](#footnote-2)) to at least level 5 as planned?

**Expert assessment:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Corresponds to the plan | 85% - 100% of the target achieved |
| Partially corresponds to the plan | 25% - 84% of the target achieved |
| Does not correspond to the plan | Less than 24% of the target achieved |

1. **QUALITY OF PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION**

*The expert reviews the information provided in section 1 “Description of project progress” and section 3 “Quality of project implementation” of the report to evaluate the quality of the project outputs.*

**The expert must assess:**

Has the implementation of the project ensured the achievement of the objectives and results planned in the project application; to what extent have the project results been achieved (the results indicated in section 1.5 “Project activities and results to be achieved” of the project application and the result indicator under section 1.6 “Monitoring indicators to be achieved in the project” of the project application)?

**Expert assessment:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Corresponds to the plan | 85% - 100% of the target achieved |
| Partially corresponds to the plan | 25% - 84% of the target achieved |
| Does not correspond to the plan | Less than 24% of the target achieved |

1. **IMPACT**

*The expert reviews the information provided in section 1 “Description of project progress” and section 4 “Impact” of the report to assess the quality of the project outputs.*

**The expert must assess:**

1. During the implementation of the project, have the beneficiary and the cooperation partners (universities) carried out an institutional self-assessment (baseline measurement) of digitalisation, adapting the framework proposed by the European University Association (EUA)[[3]](#footnote-3); how well have the results of this self-assessment been analysed and how valid are the conclusions and proposals that are or will be included for evaluation in the university’s strategy?

2. Is the developed system (method) to evaluate the impact of the project results on the quality of studies qualitative?

3. Are the adapted study content and the possibilities to use the project results for other levels of education provided as planned both in the beneficiary and in the partner universities?

*Note: Project evaluation criterion 2.3.8 required that the project application justifies that a regular institutional self-assessment of digitalisation will be carried out in the institution of the applicant and the cooperation partner (**explaining that, based on the analysis of the results of the baseline measurement carried out during the project, the university’s development strategy (annex “Digital Transformation Plan” to the strategy) will include a description of the institution’s digital transformation monitoring system including a plan for measuring the level of digital transformation for the duration of the university development strategy. The institutional self-assessment of digitalisation was not foreseen as an eligible activity in the project, but it was a condition for the approval of the project application.*

**Expert assessment:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Corresponds to the plan | 85% - 100% achieved |
| Partially corresponds to the plan | 25% - 84% achieved |
| Does not correspond to the plan | Less than 24% achieved |

**Assessment procedure**

1. The quality assessment of the final results of the project consists of two steps:

1) an initial individual assessment by each expert against the evaluation criteria;

2) formulation and approval of the consolidated opinion of the expert group.

2. In the initial individual evaluation, the expert reviews the information provided in the report on the quality assessment of the final results of the project for each of the evaluation criteria (i.e. Compliance, Quality of project implementation, Impact), indicating its compliance with the specific criterion “Corresponds to the plan / Partially corresponds to the plan/ Does not correspond to the plan”; substantiates their assessment and indicates the degree to which the project has achieved the expected results (percentage) compared to those originally planned.

3. To produce a consolidated evaluation (Consensus Evaluation Report), including a uniform opinion on the degree of achievement of the project’s results against the original target (percentage), the experts have to agree on a consolidated opinion. The consolidated evaluation includes an assessment, a reasoned justification for each of the evaluation criteria.

4. If the experts agree that there is a fundamental disagreement between them and that it is not possible to reach a consolidated assessment of the project, the experts inform the Central Financial and Contracts Agency (hereinafter referred to as the CFCA) and terminate the evaluation of the project.

In such a case, the CFCA will call in a third expert, the Dispute Resolution Officer. The third expert receives all documentation previously prepared for the quality assessment of the project, including the draft consolidated assessment that the two previous experts could not agree upon. The third expert prepares a new consolidated report. The score for each criterion in this opinion must not exceed the lowest or highest score given in the individual assessments. For each criterion, the arguments of all three experts should be summarised.

5. The anonymous peer review, without the experts’ names, is available to the beneficiary.

In the uniform opinion on the degree of achievement of the project’s results against the original plan, the experts’ assessment has the following meaning:

The rating of “Corresponds to the plan” is given if the overall percentage of the criteria is between 85% and 100%. The assessment is awarded if the project has met or exceeded its original target and if there is a partial failure to meet one or more of the evaluation criteria which has not significantly affected the achievement of the project’s objective and results.

The rating of “Partially corresponds to the plan” is given if the overall percentage of the criteria is between 25% and 84%. The assessment is awarded if the project has partially achieved its original objectives and there has been a total failure to meet one or more of the evaluation criteria, which has had a significant impact on the achievement of the project’s objectives and results.

The rating of “Does not correspond to the plan” is given if the overall percentage of the criteria is between 0% and 24%. The assessment is awarded if the project has failed to achieve almost all or all of its original objectives, has failed to meet one or more of the evaluation criteria and it can be concluded that the overall objective of the project and the planned results have not been achieved or have not been achieved sufficiently.

The final assessment of the level of achievement of the project’s objective and the planned results is based on a uniform expert assessment in percentage terms. This final evaluation is used to decide on the achievement of the project’s objective and planned results and, if necessary, to apply the Ministry of Finance Guidelines No. 2.7 “Guidelines on the application of financial corrections, reporting of irregularities detected in the implementation of European Union funds, recovery of undue payments in the 2014-2020 planning period”.

On the basis of the experts’ assessment of the level of achievement of the project’s objective and results in percentage terms, the CFCA decides on the recovery of the funding paid under the project implementation agreement/contract, setting the amount of such financial corrections:

1. if the assessment percentage is 60% to 64% inclusive, a flat rate of 5% applies;
2. if the assessment percentage is between 50% and 59%, a flat rate of 10% applies;
3. if the assessment percentage is below 50%, a flat rate of 25% applies.

Where it is possible to clearly identify/differentiate expenditure related to the non-achievement of an objective, result or performance indicator, this must be clearly documented and accordingly a correction may also be applied to this expenditure related to the specific irregularity and not to the total eligible costs of the project.

1. [*http://muzizglitiba.gov.lv/sites/default/files/muzizglitiba-Digitala-kompetence.pdf*](http://muzizglitiba.gov.lv/sites/default/files/muzizglitiba-Digitala-kompetence.pdf) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. [*https://publications.jrc.ec.europa.eu/repository/handle/JRC128415*](https://publications.jrc.ec.europa.eu/repository/handle/JRC128415) [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. https://eua.eu/downloads/publications/digi-he desk research report.pdf [↑](#footnote-ref-3)