

1 LITHUANIAN NATIONAL UNION OF STUDENTS GUIDELINES FOR THE VISION OF HIGHER
2 EDUCATION

3 **THE PURPOSE OF HIGHER EDUCATION**

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5 Lithuanian National Union of Students, adopting these guidelines for the vision of higher education
6 states, that the purpose of higher education is to develop a coherent and fair, socially, culturally and
7 technologically developed society. Higher education carries out this function recruiting, developing
8 and passing (to the new generations) intellectual and cultural heritage of the community and
9 disseminating it to the society. Intellectual and cultural heritage of the community is protected,
10 taught and developed by higher education institutions by carrying out scientific research which
11 creates and expands new knowledge, ideas, technology and contributes to the modern society
12 problem identification and solutions.

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14 By carrying out the function of education, higher education institutions must base their study
15 program content on the latest scientific achievements, thus fulfilling the principle of unity of science
16 and studies. For those, who seek higher education, the institutions have to provide not only the
17 professional knowledge and skills that will enable the graduate to enter the labor market successfully
18 but also to develop their minds, to provide general skills - the ability to critically evaluate the
19 environment, to observe and analyze trends and phenomena, systemize knowledge and solve
20 problems in a creative way. The transfer of knowledge, skills, values and attitudes ensures the
21 veracity of values acquired on the basis of higher education.

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23 The institutions of higher education help to adapt new knowledge, cutting- edge techniques and
24 modern technology in private and public sectors. This activity is carried out by the institutions
25 providing a wide variety of services to the public: consultations, training, analyzes. The community
26 of higher institutions, engaging in solving and analyzing the most relevant society issues, actively
27 participates in public discussions and uses its intellectual potential to overcome modern challenges
28 and create a civil society.

29 **THE THREAT OF NARROWING THE PURPOSE OF HIGHER EDUCATION**

30 Lithuanian National Union of Students recognizes the broad concept of higher education function,
31 which includes but not limited to providing students with a wide range of education, today is in
32 danger of narrowing the short- term goals, only qualifications and quick employment after study-
33 orientated concept of higher education. The influence of the European Union on the national
34 education policy, the strong voice of business associations and their significant influence on
35 education policy and policy decisions focused on the most easily assesses indicators (e.g.
36 employment, income of graduates) coincided with the quality of studies and the mission of higher
37 education, are factors contributing to the narrowing of the notion of higher education. Academic
38 communities and the state must constantly defend the broader concept of higher education by
39 creating counterbalance to the external factors mentioned.

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41 Lithuanian National Union of Students believes that the community of higher education must
42 preserve one of foundations and strengths of its activities: dualistic experience of scientific activity.
43 In the communities there must be fostering a natural curiosity leading to the research of the most
44 complexed and less perceived topics of the least perceived topics of humanity. In addition to
45 scientific activities that expand perception of humanity, higher education institutions must also carry
46 out scientific activities that seek to bring the latest discoveries to the benefit of a man and society
47 and address the problems facing contemporary society.

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49 The threat to the dualistic nature of scientific activity is compounded by the increasing public
50 demand for higher education institutions scholarly results that will generate the greatest possible
51 economic benefit and be put into practice. Such public desire acquires political and financial
52 incentives and encourage higher education institutions to orientate themselves towards adapts
53 science, targeting them from scientific activities that deepen human perception. The factor causing
54 pressure on the authorities can create the opposite result and are based on a false premise - the
55 belief that the results of scientific activities can be predicted and planned. They direct the community
56 from dominant areas in which breakthroughs can create predictions for the emergence of applied
57 and commercialized scientific achievements.

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59 Lithuanian National Union of Students states, that the creation of an intellectual and creative
60 environment in which the community is aimed at satisfying the curiosity and the desire for
61 knowledge will create a science that meets and exceeds the needs of society. The community that
62 understand the responsibility of Lithuania itself will seek to direct its investigative activities to
63 solving problems that are relevant to society and will seek to apply new knowledge in business or
64 state governance.

65 A THE ROLE OF A HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION

66 Higher education institutions, having assessed their resources and their position and experience in
67 society, may choose to concentrate their attention on the performance of one, several or all
68 functions. To reach that, public-sector regulation must give higher education institutions a lot of
69 freedom to shape their activities.

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71 Lithuanian National Union of Students recognizes that the pursuit of scientific activities, the
72 provision of skills that a person can use in the labor market or a high level of education cannot be
73 artificially separated and while focusing on one of these aims, other aims are also partly pursued. It
74 is also understandable that Lithuanian higher education institutions have limited financial and
75 human resources and that each student attends a high school for a limited time. Lithuanian National
76 Union of Students states that the chain of Lithuanian higher education institutions should be
77 composed of higher education institutions that are seeking and capable of fulfilling the full range of
78 higher education functions, and those who choose to orient themselves to a specific function. The
79 activities of a higher education institution must be in line with a mission that is communicated to
80 the public, emphasizing the uniqueness of a higher education institution, choice to focus on scientific
81 activities or studies, practical or theoretical knowledge, or to have a defined qualification or broad
82 erudition.

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ACCESSIBILITY OF HIGHER EDUCATION

86 Higher education as an institute, whose goal is to make the society more decent, must be accessible
87 to all individuals desiring to acquire a degree; irrespective of their gender, age, origin, religion or
88 other discriminative factors. The community of education together with the broader society should
89 aim at eliminating all the social, physical, and other barriers, which hinder in obtaining the needed
90 level of competences and knowledge of learning in advance when applying to university. Also, during
91 the study years, students should be provided with proper financial support, allowing to overcome the
92 social and physical barriers, which limit their studying success. The only barrier, which may be applied
93 for limiting the higher education system's accessibility is the requirement of preliminary knowledge,
94 which is necessary for a successful study's beginning.

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96 The success of tertiary education is directly dependent on the earlier educational system's stages
97 of providing with activity's quality: knowledge and abilities required for a successful study beginning.
98 That's why other parts of the educational system should be properly financed too; improvement of
99 the educational system must be a country's constant priority.

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PEOPLE'S INTEREST AND RESPONSIBILITY

101 The Lithuanian Student's Union claims that the scientific achievements by the institutions of higher
102 education must be widely appealed in the public and private sectors; due to these attainments: public
103 services need to be prospered, businesses created and developed, various processes optimized, and
104 workplaces established. Having obtained tertiary education, individuals form an intellectual and
105 public-spirited nation, which is able to cope with the present and future social, cultural, technologies
106 and economic challenges.

107 In spite of being vital, higher education must be not only properly financed by the country but receive
108 enough of society's and politician's attention as well. Higher education is assumed to be a public
109 goodness, society's interest, and responsibility since The Lithuanian Student's Union truly believes
110 that higher education's usefulness, to one as well as the society, is doubtful.

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