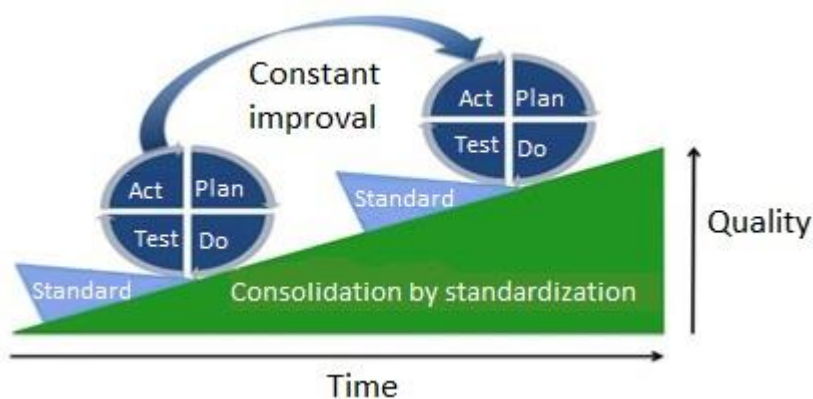


## Quality Management System of Luther Academy

1. Luther Academy (hereinafter referred to as the LA) implements LA's Quality Management System (hereinafter – the QMS) aimed at sustainability in achieving its mission and strategic goals.
2. LA's QMS is based on LA's Quality Policy that defines continuous Christian value-based development towards excellence in order to ensure a balanced and sustainable result in line with the needs of all stakeholders.
3. LA defines quality as the measure of excellence that characterizes the ability to meet and exceed the expected and future needs of the parties involved in its activity and ensure that processes meet the regulatory and standard requirements of the industry.
4. QMS ensures preparation of specialists required on the international labor market who are not only knowledgeable and skillful each in their own field but also prepared for professional life, are active citizens and are willing to work to ensure their future career, have grown personally, have a broad and deep knowledge base and willingness to do research as well as a solid Christian and moral value system and a positive attitude.
5. LA ensures a body of actions and methods for planning, introduction, systematic assessment and continuous improvement of quality thus facilitating that goals are achieved and needs of the involved parties are met.
6. LA's QMS is designed so as to ensure effective management of all processes according to the normative documentation of Latvia and ESG – Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in European Higher Education Area developed by the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education and Deming's Cycle Plan-Do-Study-Act (*see Figure 1*).



1. Figure 1. Deming's Cycle (<http://agilescrum.lv/05-deminga-aplis/>).

7. LA's Quality Management System is implemented according to the **principles of TQM – Total Quality Management**

(<https://www.techtarget.com/searchcio/definition/Total-Quality-Management>) which is the philosophy of organizational management and emphasizes involvement of all employees in quality assurance and achievement as well as the fact that employees should make continuous improvements to their area of responsibility. Moreover, it is about quality of both – products (in LA's case – theology studies) and processes. This management method applies to all levels of hierarchy. Comprehensive quality management also includes ethical matters and attitude towards society, environment, people which in LA's case is manifested in popularizing and spreading Christian values and norms in society.

8. The main requirements of TQM are:

- 8.1. Client focus (both internal and external);
- 8.2. Employee involvement;
- 8.3. Process approach;
- 8.4. Systems approach to management;
- 8.5. Fact-based decisions;
- 8.6. Management role;
- 8.7. Continuous improvement.

9. LA applies quality management methods of the European Foundation of Quality Management (EFQM) in order to implement TQM (see Figure 2).



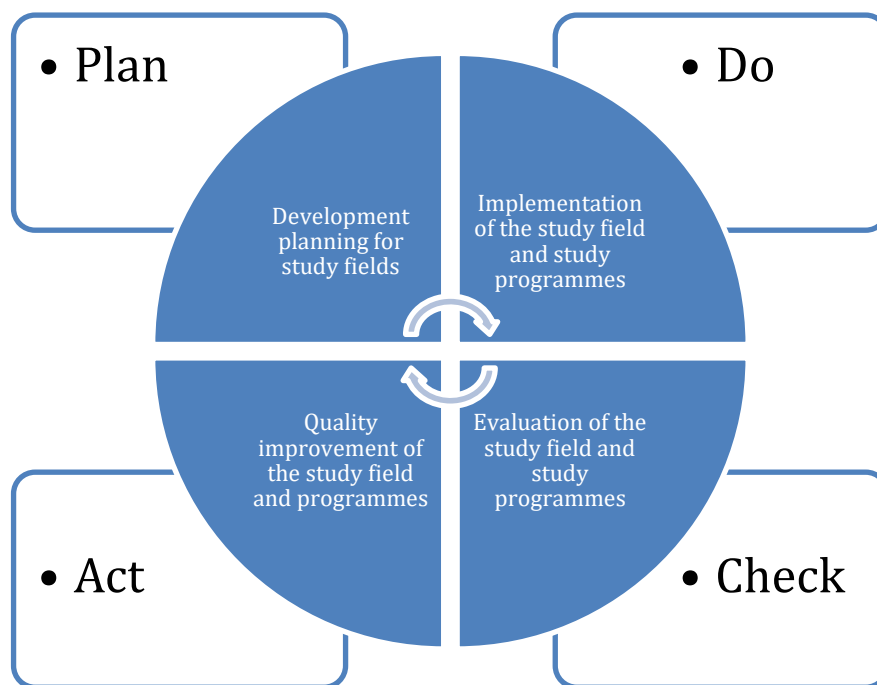
Figure 2. EFQM model ( <https://www.kvalb.lv/efqm/> ),

10. EFQM model is based on self-assessment. It has the following benefits:
  - 10.1. Offers a structured, fact-based approach to identify the strengths of institution's activity, to analyze aspects that need improvement as well as to measure process results;
  - 10.2. Helps educate employees about the basic concepts and improvement of management as well as their role in it;
  - 10.3. Integrates various initiatives in daily activities;
  - 10.4. Facilitates comparison with other organizations with a similar or different experience using criteria common and recognized in Europe as well as creates an opportunity to adopt examples of good practice (<https://tap.mk.gov.lv/valsts-parvaldes-politika/kvalitates-vadiba/Kvalitates-vadibas-modeli/EFQM-izcilibas-modelis/>).
  
11. LA's **Quality Management System is based on:**
  - 11.1. **Global trends:**
    - 11.1.1. Industry policy
    - 11.1.2. International directives
    - 11.1.3. Economic development trends
    - 11.1.4. Development trends in higher education
  - 11.2. **Local trends:**
    - 11.2.1. National development strategies
    - 11.2.2. Industry policy documentation
    - 11.2.3. Economic development
    - 11.2.4. Development trends in education
  
12. LA's QMS chart (*see Figure 3*).



Figure 3. LA's Quality Management System.

13. LA's **study quality assurance system** (hereinafter – the QMAS) is implemented to ensure quality of higher education and it includes procedures for planning, ensuring, measuring and assessing the quality of higher education in line with the laws and regulations of the Republic of Latvia, Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG) as well as the internal need.
14. Internal study quality assurance system is depicted in Figure 4.



*Figure 4. LA's internal study quality assessment system.*

15. LA's QMS has the following permanent **operational areas** of sustainable development framework:
  - 15.1. Facilitating student-centered education through forming a culture of excellence at LA by creating an atmosphere of fairness, respect, and trust at the Academy in order to shape competent and creative individuals who would implement and facilitate the culture of excellence and sustainability in wider public;
  - 15.2. Improving knowledge, skills and competencies of LA's staff in assurance and improvement processes of the quality management system;
  - 15.3. Maintaining and developing LA's QMS to facilitate achievement of goals and continuous improvement.
16. LA's QMS goals for individual areas are set for each period of time as part of the self-assessment reports and include indicators of LA's Development Strategy.

17. LA's QMS is based on the following principles that determine the implementation of LA's QMS in each area: **Continuous improvement, Openness and Responsibility.**
18. Continuous improvement includes regular (1) collection of data, (2) analysis, (3) planning analysis-based improvements and (4) introduction of analysis-based improvements in each LA area.
  - 18.1. Data collected and summarized consist of indicators of LA's Development Strategy and other data that are stipulated, if needed, in each area in the respective period in the course of planning analysis-based improvements.
  - 18.2. As a result of planning analysis-based improvements the self-assessment report is created and then approved by the Academy Senate.
  - 18.3. Introduction of analysis-based improvements according to the plan described in the self-assessment report is the responsibility of the head of each area.
  - 18.4. Frequency of the continuous improvement cycle depends on the need in each individual area based on the data stipulated in the course of planning analysis-based improvements and time periods of indicators stipulated in LA's Development Strategy. Several parallel cycles of continuous improvement are possible within one area, however, continuous improvement should take place at least once a year.
19. Principle of **Openness** includes informing LA's stakeholders about the developments at LA that shape LA's Transparency Policy and proactively seeking their feedback by ensuring broad involvement in LA's development progress and facilitating sustainability of development.
  - 19.1. Self-assessment reports of all areas are publicly available and the big picture is captured in the annual Rector's report – Overview.
  - 19.2. LA's stakeholders are: students, academic staff, administrative staff, graduates, guest lecturers, employers, partners.
  - 19.3. LA's external assessment experts are: accreditation agency, external education experts.
  - 19.4. For the purpose of continuous improvement the principle of openness is applied as follows:
    - 19.4.1. Each area includes LA's stakeholders relevant to its activity in its continuous improvement processes;
    - 19.4.2. Representatives of LA's stakeholders get involved in data collection as quantitative data suppliers (survey questionnaires);

- 19.4.3. LA's stakeholders are consulted in the course of planning analysis-based improvements and development of the resulting self-assessment report and given an opportunity to actively participate in developing the self-assessment report by supplying quality data;
  - 19.4.4. Data analysis is conducted autonomously within each area, however, its conclusions may be contested as well as basic data from which conclusions were drawn may be requested in the course of development of the self-assessment and when the report is forwarded to the Academy Senate for approval meeting representatives of LA's stakeholders in both phases;
  - 19.4.5. Analysis-based improvements are introduced in each area autonomously, while results form a new beginning of a continuous improvement cycle that gives an opportunity for LA's stakeholders to get to know its progress;
  - 19.4.6. Conclusions may be contested and basic data from which conclusions were drawn may be requested in the course of development of the self-assessment and when the report is forwarded to the Academy Senate for approval meeting representatives of LA's stakeholders in both phases.
20. Principle of **Responsibility** includes clear delegation of job duties dividing them into separate achievable, measurable duty phases with a clear sequence, terms and division of responsibility. Due to the small number of LA's administrative and academic staff it is essential that each decision, process and LA's area of activity is clearly defined and delegated. Only by following the principle of clear responsibility may one find solutions in a constructive manner, seek mutual help and make improvements to work organization.
21. LA's QMS is applied to all LA's activities that are divided into 3 areas: **Supervision, Study field** and **Administration**.
22. Responsibility for **supervision** lies with the Deputy Rector who ensures the following:
- 22.1. Supervision of implementation of the QMS in other areas according to LA's principles of quality incl. introducing and administering a motivation system for the introduction of improvements and achievement of more excellent results;
  - 22.2. Collection of indicator data relevant to the supervision area stipulated in LA's Development Strategy;
  - 22.3. Representatives of LA's stakeholders for the implementation of the principle of **Openness** of LA's Quality Management System;

- 22.4. Annual assessment of the supervision area according to LA's principles of quality.
23. Responsibility for the Quality Management System in each **field of study** lies with the head of the respective field of study who ensures that LA's principles of quality are applied in:
  - 23.1. Development of new study programs of a field of study;
  - 23.2. Collection of indicator data relevant to the field of study stipulated in LA's Development Strategy;
  - 23.3. Development of the annual assessment of a field of study – self-assessment report according to the Guidelines for the Development of a Self-assessment Report of a Field of Study by the Quality Agency for Higher Education (AIKA);
  - 23.4. Data collection for continuous improvement by collecting data in addition to the relevant indicators of LA's Development Strategy:
    - 23.4.1. Changes to the student numbers (annually);
    - 23.4.2. General student satisfaction with their study experience – study barometer (annually);
    - 23.4.3. Graduate survey results (annually);
    - 23.4.4. Student survey results (per implementation of each study course);
    - 23.4.5. Results of hospitations (per implementation of each study course);
    - 23.4.6. Qualification and upskilling of the academic staff (annually);
    - 23.4.7. Development of research and scientific activity (annually);
    - 23.4.8. And other data necessary for the annual self-assessment report of a field of study.
24. Responsibility for the **Administration** area of the Quality Management System lies with the Management Board that ensures that LA's principles of quality are applied to:
  - 24.1. Collection of indicator data relevant to the administration area stipulated in LA's Development Strategy;
  - 24.2. Data collection for continuous improvement by collecting data in addition to the relevant indicators of LA's Development Strategy;

- 24.2.1. Strategic management (per strategic period);
  - 24.2.2. Supervision of the financial situation – budget (annually);
  - 24.2.3. Improvement of administrative processes incl. information management, structural and organizational culture;
  - 24.2.4. General work efficiency of the staff and its improvement.
25. LA implements the following **mechanisms** to ensure quality:
- 25.1. Survey of the stakeholders, result analysis and introduction of improvements;
  - 25.2. Analysis of employer feedback and introduction of improvements;
  - 25.3. Annual assessment of activity of lecturers and administrative staff and development planning;
  - 25.4. Hospitation;
  - 25.5. Defining and improvement of the minimum requirements for the development of study courses;
  - 25.6. Quality check and improvement of study course websites;
  - 25.7. Support for students and lecturers for the improvement of quality of studies;
  - 25.8. Organization of methodological seminars for lecturers;
  - 25.9. Training for the administrative staff;
  - 25.10. Assessment of student performance (study achievements, academic debts, final work evaluations) and introduction of improvements;
  - 25.11. Monitoring of interruptions of studies and taking preventative measures to reduce them;
  - 25.12. LA's annual self-assessment (annual study report);
  - 25.13. Self-assessment and planning and introduction of improvements using EFQM principles;
  - 25.14. Annual self-assessment of Study field and programs and development planning;
  - 25.15. Self-assessment of a field of study for accreditation and a plan for introduction of recommendations;



- 25.16. Development and introduction of operational and development plans for structural units, strategies of functional areas;
- 25.17. Development and improvement of procedures;
- 25.18. Review of quality mechanisms;
- 25.19. Preventing issues and review of proposals.

Chairman of Senate

Bishop Hans Martin Jönsson

Riga, \_\_\_\_\_ 2021